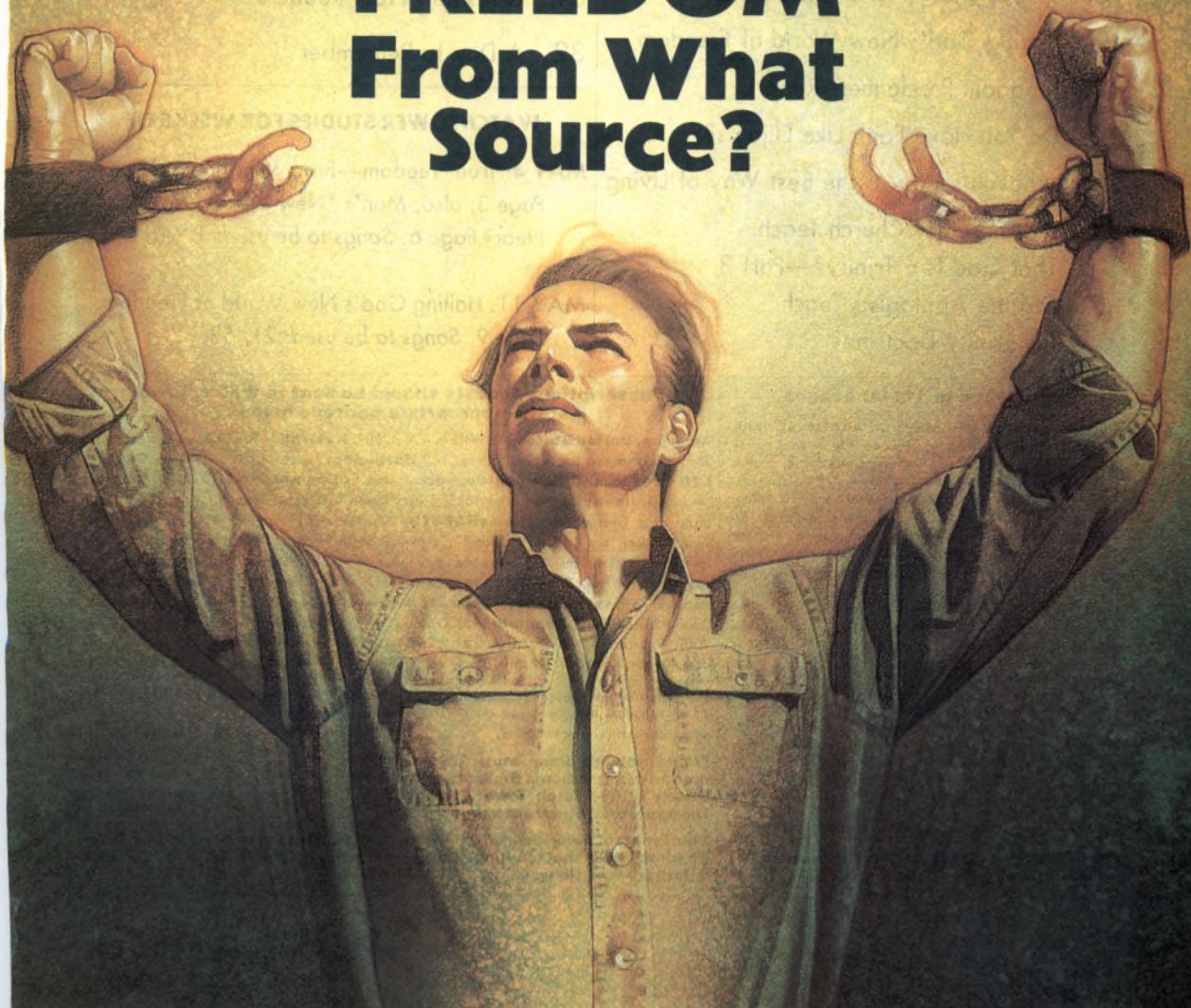


# THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

APRIL 1, 1992

## TRUE FREEDOM From What Source?



# THE WATCHTOWER<sup>®</sup>

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

April 1, 1992

Average Printing Each Issue: 15,570,000

Vol. 113, No. 7

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.

## IN THIS ISSUE

- 3 True Freedom—From What Source?
- 6 Man's "New World Order" Near?
- 9 Hailing God's New World of Freedom
- 15 Kingdom Proclaimers Report
- 16 Do You Have Faith Like Elijah's?
- 20 Jehovah's Way Is the Best Way of Living
- 24 Did the Early Church Teach  
That God Is a Trinity?—Part 3  
Did the Apologists Teach  
the Trinity Doctrine?

- 30 Religion of 'Flexible Faith'
- 31 Questions From Readers
- 32 A Day to Remember

## WATCHTOWER STUDIES FOR WEEKS OF

**MAY 4:** True Freedom—From What Source?  
Page 3; also, Man's "New World Order"  
Near? Page 6. Songs to be used: 1, 201.

**MAY 11:** Hailing God's New World of Freedom.  
Page 9. Songs to be used: 21, 53.

### Now published in 111 languages.

SEMINMONTHLY LANGUAGES AVAILABLE BY MAIL:  
Afrikaans, Arabic, Bislama, Cebuano, Chichewa, Chinese,  
Cibemba, Croatian, Czech, Danish,\* Dutch,\* Efik, English  
(also Braille and cassettes), Estonian, Ewe, Finnish,\*  
French,\* Ga, German,\* Greek,\* Hiligaynon, Hiri Motu,  
Hungarian, Igbo, Iloko, Italian,\* Japanese,\* Kannada, Korean,\*  
Macedonian, Malagasy, Malayalam, Maltese,  
Myanmar, New Guinea Pidgin, Norwegian, Polish,  
Portuguese,\* Rarotongan, Romanian, Russian, Samoan, Se-  
pedi, Serbian, Sesotho, Shona, Slovak, Slovenian, Span-  
ish,\* Swahili, Swedish,\* Tagalog, Tahitian, Tamil, Thai,  
Tsonga, Tswana, Twi, Ukrainian, Wallisian, Xhosa, Yoruba,  
Zulu

MONTHLY LANGUAGES AVAILABLE BY MAIL: Albanian,  
Armenian, Bengali, Bicol, Bulgarian, Fijian, Greenlandic,  
Gujarati, Gun, Hausa, Hebrew, Hindi, Icelandic,  
Kinyarwanda, Kwayama/Ndonga, Luganda, Marathi,  
Nepali, Niuean, Pangasinan, Papiamento, Samar-Leyte,  
Sango, Silazi, Sinhalese, Solomon Islands Pidgin, Sranan-  
tongo, Telugu, Tongan, Turkish, Tuvaluan, Urdu, Venda,  
Vietnamese

\* Study articles also available in large-print edition.

© 1992 Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. All rights reserved.

Frederick W. Franz, President

### Subscription requests should be sent to Watch Tower at the appropriate address below.

**America, United States of:** Wallkill, N.Y. 12589. **Australia:** Box 280, Ingleburn, N.S.W. 2565. **Bahamas:** Box N-1247, Nassau, N.P. **Barbados:** Fontabelle Rd., Bridgetown. **Canada L7G 4Y4:** Box 4100, Halton Hills (Georgetown), Ontario. **England NW7 1RN:** The Ridgeway, London. **Germany:** Postfach 20, W-6251 Selters/Taunus 1. **Ghana:** Box 760, Accra. **Guyana:** 50 Brickdam, Georgetown 16. **Hawaii 96819:** 2055 Kom IV Rd., Honolulu. **Hong Kong:** 4 Kent Road, Kowloon Tong. **India:** Post Bag 10, Lonavla, Pune Dis., Mah, 410 401. **Ireland:** 29A Jamestown Road, Finglas, Dublin 11. **Jamaica:** Box 180, Kingston 10. **Japan:** 1271 Nakashinden, Ebina City, Kanagawa Pref., 243-04. **Kenya:** Box 47788, Nairobi. **Liberia:** P.O. Box 10-0380, 1000 Monrovia 10. **New Zealand:** P.O. Box 142, Manurewa. **Nigeria:** P.M.B. 1090, Benin City, Edo State. **Philippines, Republic of:** P.O. Box 2044, 1099 Manila. **South Africa:** Private Bag 2067, Krugersdorp, 1740. **Trinidad and Tobago, Republic of:** Lower Rapsey Street & Laxmi Lane, Curepe. **Zambia, Republic of:** Box 21598, Kitwe. **Zimbabwe:** 35 Fife Avenue, Harare.

The Bible translation used is the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures—With References*, unless otherwise indicated.

**Would you welcome more information or a free home Bible study? Please write Watch Tower, using the appropriate address above.**

**This is part of a worldwide Bible educational work that is supported by voluntary donations.**

**Changes of address** should reach us 30 days before your moving date. Give us your old and new address (if possible, your old address label).

The *Watchtower* (ISSN 0043-1087) is published semimonthly by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201. Second-class postage paid at Brooklyn, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. **Postmaster:** Send address changes to *Watchtower*, Wallkill, N.Y. 12589.

Printed in U.S.A.

---

# TRUE FREEDOM —FROM WHAT SOURCE?

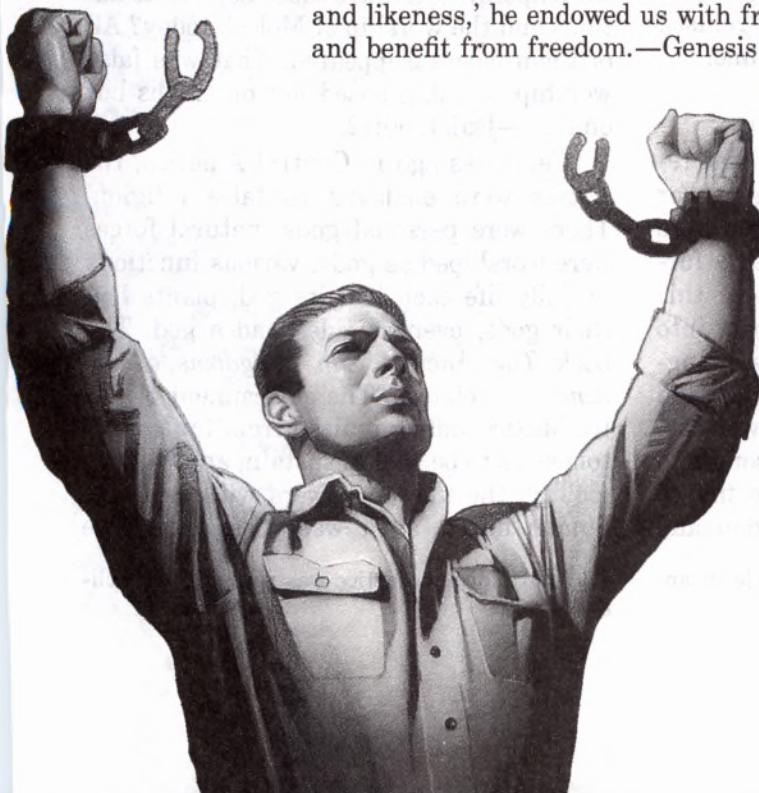
---

*"It does not belong to man who is walking even to direct his step. Correct me, O Jehovah."*—JEREMIAH 10:23, 24.

**N**O DOUBT you appreciate true freedom. You want to be free to express your own views, free to decide where and how you live. You want to choose the work you do, choose your food, music, friends. You have preferences about many things, large and small. No normal person wants to be enslaved to dictatorial rulers, with little or no free choice.

<sup>2</sup> However, would you not also want a world where others as well as you would benefit from true freedom? Would you not want a world where freedom would be protected so that everyone's life could have the fullest expression? And if it was possible, would you not also want a world free from fear, crime, hunger, poverty, pollution, sickness, and war? Surely such freedoms are highly desirable.

<sup>3</sup> Why do we humans feel so strongly about freedom? The Bible states: "Where the spirit of Jehovah is, there is freedom." (2 Corinthians 3:17) So Jehovah is the God of freedom. And since he created us in his 'image and likeness,' he endowed us with free will so that we could appreciate and benefit from freedom.—Genesis 1:26.



## Freedom Abused

<sup>4</sup> Throughout history millions of people have been enslaved, tortured, or killed because others misused free will. The Bible relates that some 3,500 years ago, "the Egyptians made the sons of Israel slave under tyranny. And they kept making their life bitter with hard slavery." (Exodus 1:13, 14) *The Encyclopedia*

- 1, 2. How do most people view freedom, but what else needs to be considered?
3. Why do we value freedom?
- 4, 5. How has freedom been abused throughout history?

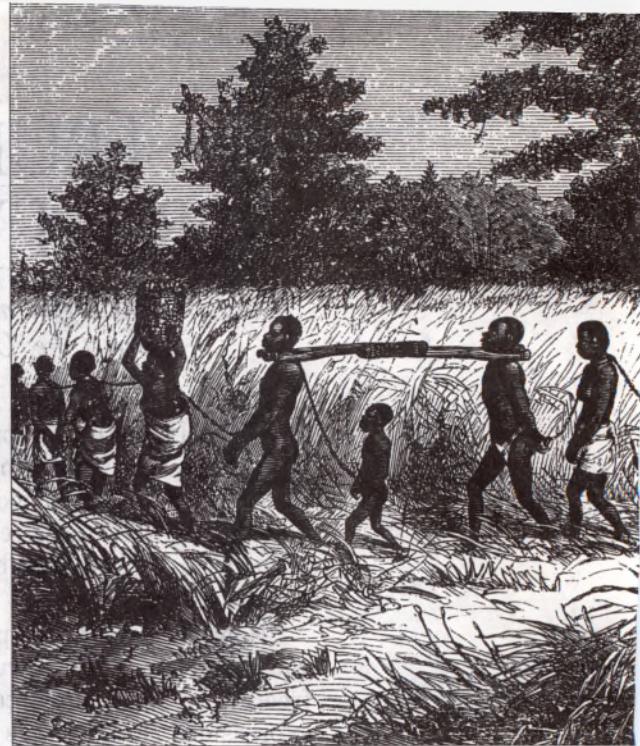
*Americana* says that in the fourth century B.C.E., slaves in Athens and two other Greek cities outnumbered the free population by about 4 to 1. This source also says: "In Rome the slave had originally no rights. He could be put to death for the smallest misdemeanor." *Compton's Encyclopedia* notes: "In Rome slave labor was the foundation of the state. . . . In the fields the slaves often worked in chains. At night they were bound together and shut into great prisons, which were half buried under the ground." Since many slaves had once been free, imagine the bitterness of those broken lives!

<sup>5</sup> For centuries, Christendom engaged in an oppressive slave trade. Says *The World Book Encyclopedia*: "From the 1500's to the 1800's, the Europeans shipped about 10 million black slaves from Africa to the Western Hemisphere." In this 20th century, millions of captives were worked to death or killed in Nazi concentration camps as a matter of government policy. The victims included many of Jehovah's Witnesses who were imprisoned because they refused to support the murderous Nazi regime.

### Bondage to False Religion

<sup>6</sup> There also exists the bondage that results from adherence to false religion. For instance, in ancient Canaan, children were sacrificed to Molech. It is said that a furnace blazed inside a huge image of this false god. Live children were thrown into the outstretched arms of the image, plunging through them into the fire below. Even some Israelites practiced this false worship. God says that they made 'their sons and their daughters pass through the fire to Molech, a thing that He did not command

6. How did false religion enslave people in ancient Canaan?



them, neither did it come up into His heart to do this detestable thing.' (Jeremiah 32: 35) What benefit did Molech bring to his worshipers? Where are those Canaanite nations and the worship of Molech today? All of them have disappeared. That was false worship, worship based not on truths but on lies.—Isaiah 60:12.

<sup>7</sup> Centuries ago in Central America, the Aztecs were enslaved to false religion. There were personal gods, natural forces were worshiped as gods, various functions in daily life each had its god, plants had their gods, even suicides had a god. The book *The Ancient Sun Kingdoms of the Americas* relates: "The government of Aztec Mexico was organized from top to bottom so as to be able to sustain, and thereby mollify, the unseen powers with as many human hearts as it was possible to give

7. What hideous practice was part of Aztec religion?



**Throughout history some have misused their free will to enslave others**

them. Blood was the drink of the gods. To obtain appropriate prisoner victims as sacrifice for the gods, there were ceaseless little wars." When a large pyramid temple was dedicated in 1486, thousands of victims "were lined up in rows waiting to be spread-eagled over the sacrificial stone. Their hearts were cut out and held briefly to the sun" to appease the sun-god. *The World Book Encyclopedia* says: "Worshippers sometimes ate portions of a victim's body." Yet, those practices did not save the Aztec Empire or its false religion.

<sup>8</sup> Visitors were once touring a museum where a display case portrayed Aztec priests cutting out a young man's heart. When the tour guide explained the exhibit,

8. What did a tour guide have to say about a modern slaughter far greater than that which took place among the Aztecs?

a gasp went up from some in the tour group. The guide then said: "I see that you are upset by the Aztec practice of sacrificing young men to pagan gods. Yet, in this 20th century, millions of young men have been sacrificed to the god of war. Is that any better?" It is a fact that in war the religious leaders of all nations pray for victory and bless the armies even though people of the same religion are often on opposing sides killing one another.—1 John 3:10-12; 4:8, 20, 21; 5:3.

<sup>9</sup> The sacrificing of the young to Molech, to Aztec gods, or to war is being exceeded by the killing of unborn babies in abortions, some 40 or 50 million a year worldwide. The number aborted in just the past three years is larger than the hundred million people killed in all the wars of this century. Each year, several times more babies are aborted than all the people murdered in 12 years of Nazi rule. In recent decades thousands of times more babies have been aborted than all those sacrificed to Molech or to Aztec gods. Yet many (if not most) of those who have an abortion, or who perform them, profess a religion.

<sup>10</sup> False religion enslaves people in other ways too. For example, many people believe that the dead are alive in the spirit world. One result of such a false belief is the fear and worship of dead ancestors to get supposed benefits from them. This enslaves people to witch doctors, spirit mediums, and clergymen who are called on supposedly to help the living appease the dead. Well might the question be asked, Is there any way out of such enslavement?—Deuteronomy 18:10-12; Ecclesiastes 9:5, 10.

9. What practice takes more young lives than any other in history?
10. What is another way that people are enslaved to false religion?

# MAN'S "NEW WORLD ORDER" NEAR?

**T**ODAY, millions of people are in bondage to false religion, and many choose to remain that way. At the same time, more and more are demanding political freedoms. The extraordinary events of the past few years in Eastern Europe and elsewhere have demonstrated that people want freer forms of government. As a result, many are saying that a new era of freedom is at hand. The president of the United States called it "a new world order." Indeed, world leaders everywhere were saying that the Cold War and the arms race were over and that a new era of peace had dawned for mankind.—Compare 1 Thessalonians 5:3.

<sup>2</sup> Yet, even if human efforts resulted in fewer weapons and freer forms of rule, would true freedom really exist? No, because of the appalling problems that exist in all nations, including democratic ones, where the numbers of the poor increase and millions struggle to survive economically. A United Nations report states that in spite of advances in science and medicine, *every day worldwide an average of 40,000 children die from malnutrition or preventable diseases.* An expert in this field said: "Poverty is taking on structural characteristics that really threaten the future of humanity."

1. How has the desire for more political freedom been expressed in recent years?
- 2, 3. What conditions work against real freedom?

<sup>3</sup> In addition, more people than ever are victimized by crimes that get more and more vicious. Racial, political, and religious hatreds are fragmenting various countries. In some places the situation is not far from that future time described at Zechariah 14:13, when people will be "so confused and afraid that everyone [will] seize the man next to him and attack him." (*Today's English Version*) Drug abuse and sexually transmitted diseases are pandemic. Millions of people are infected with AIDS; in the United States alone, over 120,000 have already died from it.

## Bondage to Sin and Death

<sup>4</sup> However, even if none of those bad conditions existed, people would still not have true freedom. All would still be in bondage. Why is this the case? To illustrate: What if some dictator enslaved every person on earth and murdered them all? In effect, that is what happened to mankind when our first parents rebelled against God and became enslaved to the Devil's oppressive rule.—2 Corinthians 4:4.

<sup>5</sup> When God created humans, he purposed for them to live on earth forever in perfection, in a paradise, as Genesis chapters 1 and 2 show. But because of our forefather Adam's rebellion against God, all of us are under a sentence of death from

- 4, 5. Regardless of the freedoms that exist today, what type of bondage holds everyone in its grip?

the moment we are conceived: "Through one man [Adam, mankind's family head] sin entered into the world and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men." As the Bible says, "death ruled as king." (Romans 5:12, 14) So regardless of how much freedom we may personally have, all of us are in bondage to sin and death.

<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, the life that we do have now is very limited. Even for the fortunate, it is just a few decades. For the unfortunate, just a few years, or less. And a new study says: "Science and medicine have pushed human life expectancy to its natural limit." This is because our genetic system has imperfection and death built into it as a result of Adam's sin. How sad it is that if we live to be 70 or 80, when we should be getting wiser and better able to enjoy life, our bodies break down and we end up as dust!—Psalm 90:10.

<sup>7</sup> What type of human rule can prevent this enslavement to sin and death? Not one. No government officials, scientists, or doctors anywhere can free us from the curses of sickness, old age, and death, nor can any eliminate insecurity, injustice, crime, hunger, and poverty. (Psalm 89:48) However well-meaning humans may be, it is impossible

6. Why has there been little improvement in life expectancy since Psalm 90:10 was written?
7. Why can humans never be the source of the true freedoms we want and need?



**Man's life span is much the same as that stated 3,500 years ago at Psalm 90:10**

Courtesy of The British Museum

for them to be the source of the true freedoms we want and need.—Psalm 146:3.

### Misuse of Free Will

<sup>8</sup> The human family is in this sad situation because Adam and Eve misused their free will. First Peter 2:16 says, according to *The Jerusalem Bible*: "Behave like free men, and never use your freedom as an excuse for wickedness." Hence, it is clear that God did not purpose that man's freedom be unlimited. It was to be exercised within the boundaries of God's laws, which were righteous and would work for the benefit of everybody. And those boundaries were wide enough to allow for much personal freedom of choice, so that God's rule could never be oppressive.—Deuteronomy 32:4.

<sup>9</sup> However, our first parents chose to decide for themselves what was right and what was wrong. Since they deliberately moved outside of God's rule, he withdrew his support from them. (Genesis 3:17-19) They thus became imperfect, with sickness and death the result. Instead of freedom, mankind came into slavery to sin and death. They also became subject to the whims of imperfect and, often, cruel human rulers.—Deuteronomy 32:5.

<sup>10</sup> God has allowed humans this experiment in supposed total freedom for only a

- 8, 9. What put humankind in its present sad situation?
10. How has Jehovah lovingly handled matters?

limited period of time. He knew that the results would demonstrate beyond any doubt that human rule independent of God cannot succeed. Since free will, rightly exercised, is such a treasure, God in his love temporarily allowed what has happened instead of withdrawing the gift of free will.

### 'Man Cannot Direct His Step'

<sup>11</sup> The record of history has shown the accuracy of Jeremiah chapter 10, verses 23 and 24, which says: "It does not belong to man who is walking even to direct his step. Correct me, O Jehovah." History has also shown the accuracy of Ecclesiastes 8:9, which declares: "Man has dominated man to his injury." How true! The human family has gone from one calamity to another, with the end for all being the grave. The apostle Paul described the situation precisely when he said, as recorded at Romans 8:22: "We know that all creation keeps on groaning together and being in pain together until now." Yes, independence from God's laws has been disastrous.

<sup>12</sup> The book *Inquisition and Liberty* commented on freedom this way: "Independence is not, in itself, necessarily a virtue: it is not a thing to be proud of without further qualification. It may, in fact, be simply one of the baser forms of selfishness . . . Man is not, and cannot without absurdity even aspire to be, a wholly independent creature." And Prince Philip of England once said: "Freedom to indulge in every whim and instinct may be appealing, but experience teaches again and again, that freedom without self-

11. How has history supported the accuracy of the Bible?
12. What do some secular sources say about total freedom?

restraint . . . and behaviour without consideration for others is the surest way to destroy the quality of life of a community, no matter what its wealth."

### Who Knows Best?

<sup>13</sup> Who knows best how a home should be organized—loving, capable, experienced parents or young children? The answer is obvious. Similarly, the Creator of humans, our heavenly Father, knows what is best for us. He knows how human society should be organized and ruled. He knows how free will should be regulated to bring the benefits of true freedom to everybody. Only the almighty God, Jehovah, knows how to lift the human family out of its bondage and provide true freedom for all.—Isaiah 48:17-19.

<sup>14</sup> In his Word, at Romans 8:21, Jehovah makes this inspiring promise: "The creation itself also will be set free from enslavement to corruption and have the glorious freedom of the children of God." Yes, God promises to free the human family completely from its present wretched condition. The following article will discuss how this will happen.

- 13, 14. Who only can provide true freedom for the human family?

### How Would You Answer?

(Reviewing pages 3 through 8)

- Why do humans feel strongly about freedom?
- In what ways have people become enslaved throughout history?
- Why has Jehovah allowed the misuse of free will for so long?
- Who only can bring true freedom to all mankind, and why?

# HAILING GOD'S NEW WORLD OF FREEDOM

*"[God] will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore."*—REVELATION 21:4.

**H**ISTORY has proved the truth of what the prophet Jeremiah said: "To earthling man his way does not belong. It does not belong to man who is walking even to direct his step." Who only can properly direct man's step? Jeremiah went on to say: "Correct me, O Jehovah." (Jeremiah 10:23, 24) Yes, only Jehovah can bring true freedom from the problems plaguing the human family.

<sup>2</sup> The Bible contains many examples of Jehovah's ability to bring freedom to those who serve him. "All the things that were written aforetime were written for our instruction, that through our endurance and through the comfort from the Scriptures we might have hope." (Romans 15:4) Jehovah's judgments against false worship were also recorded, and these serve as "a warning to us upon whom the ends of the systems of things have arrived."—1 Corinthians 10:11.

## Freeing His People

<sup>3</sup> An example of God's ability to execute judgment against false worship and to free those who do his will took place when his people of ancient times were enslaved in Egypt. Exodus 2:23-25 says: "Their cry for help kept going up to the true God because of the slavery. In time God heard their

1. 2. Who only can bring true freedom, and what can we learn from the Bible about Him?
3. How did Jehovah show his ability to free his people in Egypt?

groaning." In an awesome display of his superiority over Egypt's false gods, Almighty God brought ten plagues on that nation. Each plague was designed to humiliate a god of Egypt, showing that they were false and could not help the Egyptians who worshiped them. Thus God freed his people and destroyed Pharaoh and his armies in the Red Sea.—Exodus, chapters 7 to 14.

<sup>4</sup> When God brought Israel into Canaan, its demon-worshiping inhabitants were destroyed and the land was given to God's people. As the Universal Sovereign, Jehovah has the right to execute his judgments on debased religions. (Genesis 15:16) And regarding Canaanite religion, Halley's *Bible Handbook* says: "The worship of . . . Canaanite gods consisted in the most extravagant orgies; their temples were centers of vice. . . . Canaanites worshipped, by immortal indulgence, as a religious rite, in the presence of their gods; and then, by murdering their first-born children, as a sacrifice to these same gods. It seems that, in large measure, the land of Canaan had become a sort of Sodom and Gomorrah on a national scale." He adds: "Did a civilization of such abominable filth and brutality have any right longer to exist? . . . Archaeologists who dig in the ruins of Canaanite cities wonder that God did not destroy them sooner than he did."

4. Why was it no injustice for God to execute his judgments against the Canaanites?



<sup>5</sup> This account of God's acting against false worship, freeing his covenant people, and providing a promised land for them serves as a pattern of things to come. It points to the very near future when God will crush this world's false religions and their supporters and will usher his modern-day servants into a new world of righteousness.  
—Revelation 7:9, 10, 13, 14; 2 Peter 3:10-13.

### True Freedom in God's New World

<sup>6</sup> In the new world, God will bless his people with all the marvelous facets of the freedom that he has purposed for the human family. There will be freedom from oppression by political, economic, and false religious elements. There will be freedom from sin and death, with people having the prospect of living forever on earth. “The righteous themselves will possess the

5. How does God's freeing his ancient people serve as a pattern for our time?
6. What are some of the marvelous freedoms that God will provide in the new world?

***Jehovah showed his superiority over Egypt's false gods, freeing his worshipers***

“...and I will give you the earth, and they will reside forever upon it.”  
—Psalm 37:29; Matthew 5:5.

<sup>7</sup> Soon after that new world has been ushered in, its inhabitants will be miraculously restored to perfect health. Job 33:25 says: “Let his flesh become fresher than in youth; let him return to the days of his youthful vigor.” Isaiah 35:5, 6 promises: “At that time the eyes of the blind ones will be opened, and the very ears of the deaf ones will be unstopped. At that time the lame one will climb up just as a stag does, and the tongue of the speechless one will cry out in gladness.”

<sup>8</sup> Those of you with physical ailments due to old age or poor health, imagine yourself in the new world waking up each morning healthy and vigorous. Your wrinkles have

- 7, 8. What will be experienced in regaining perfect health in the new world?

given way to smooth, healthy skin—no more need for skin lotions. Your dimmed or blinded eyes have been restored to perfect sight—no more need for glasses. Full hearing has been restored—throw away those hearing aids. Crippled limbs are now strong and whole—get rid of those canes, crutches, and wheelchairs. There is no more sickness—throw away all those medicines. Thus, Isaiah 33:24 foretells: “No resident will say: ‘I am sick.’” He also states: “To exultation and rejoicing they will attain, and grief and sighing must flee away.” —Isaiah 35:10.

<sup>9</sup> No more will anyone be sacrificed to war. “[God] 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) Weapons of war will never again be allowed by the Ruler of God’s Kingdom, Christ Jesus, whom Isaiah 9:6 calls the “Prince of Peace.” Verse 7 adds: “To the abundance of the princely rule and to peace there will be no end.”

<sup>10</sup> What a blessing it will be for mankind, and this earth, to be free of weapons of war! Why, at the present time, weapons used in previous wars are still destroying people. In one country, France, more than 600 bomb-disposal experts have been killed since 1945 while getting rid of explosives left over from previous wars. The head of the bomb-disposal agency there said: “We still find live cannon balls from the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. There are lakes filled with toxic grenades from World War I. Every so often, a farmer in a tractor rolls over an anti-tank mine from World War II and poof, that’s it. These things are everywhere.” Two years ago *The New York Times* com-

9. How will war forever be brought to an end?
- 10, 11. What will total peace mean for the earth?

mented: “In the 45 years since the end of World War II, [bomb-disposal units] have rid [French] soil of 16 million artillery shells, 490,000 bombs and 600,000 underwater mines. . . . Millions of acres remain fenced off, knee-deep in weaponry and surrounded by posters that warn: ‘Don’t Touch. It Kills!’”

<sup>11</sup> How different the new world will be! Everyone will have good housing, abundant food, and the rewarding, peaceful work of turning the entire earth into a paradise. (Psalm 72:16; Isaiah 25:6; 65:17-25) Never again will people, and the earth, be bombarded by millions of explosive devices. Such a new world is what Jesus had in mind when he said to one who showed faith in him: “You will be with me in Paradise.” —Luke 23:43.

### Global Education for Life

<sup>12</sup> When a person learns about God’s new world, he also learns that in our day, Jehovah has produced a worldwide congregation organized for true worship. It will be the nucleus of the new world, and God is using it now to instruct others about his purposes. This Christian organization is performing a global educational work of a nature and size never before seen. Jesus foretold that this would be done. He said: “This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come.” —Matthew 24:14.

<sup>13</sup> Isaiah also spoke of this global educational work: “It must occur in the final part of the days [in our time] that the mountain of the house of Jehovah [his exalted true worship] will become firmly established . . . and to it all the nations must stream. And many peoples will certainly go and say:

- 12, 13. What global educational work did Jesus and Isaiah foretell for our time?

'Come, you people, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, . . . and he will instruct us about his ways, and we will walk in his paths.'”—Isaiah 2:2, 3.

<sup>14</sup> Hence, the global work of witnessing about God's Kingdom is strong evidence that we are near the end of this wicked system and that true freedom is at hand. The ones calling on people with the hope-filled message of God's new world are described at Acts 15:14 as "a people for [God's] name." Who bear Jehovah's name and give the global witness about Jehovah and his Kingdom? The historical record of the 20th century answers: only Jehovah's Witnesses. Today they number more than four million in more than 66,000 congregations all over the world.—Isaiah 43:10-12; Acts 2:21.

<sup>15</sup> Another evidence that Jehovah's Witnesses are fulfilling the prophecies about the Kingdom-preaching work is noted at Isaiah 2:4: "They will have to beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning shears. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, neither will they learn war anymore." So those doing the global preaching work about God's Kingdom rule must 'learn war no more.' Jesus said that they must be "no part of the world." (John 17:16) This means that they must be neutral in political affairs, not taking sides in the controversies and wars of the nations. Who are no part of the world and learn war no more? Again, the historical record of the 20th century testifies: only Jehovah's Witnesses.

<sup>16</sup> The global educational work of Jehovah's Witnesses will continue even after

14. How can we identify God's people today?
15. In regard to political affairs, how can we identify God's true servants?
16. How thorough will God's global educational work be?

God brings this present wicked world to its end. Isaiah 54:13 states: "All your sons will be persons taught by Jehovah." So thorough will this teaching be that Isaiah 11:9 foretells: "The earth will certainly be filled with the knowledge of Jehovah as the waters are covering the very sea." Continued teaching will be needed not only for survivors of the end of this old world and for children who may be born in the new world but also for the billions who come back to life in the resurrection. Eventually, every person who lives on earth will be taught to exercise his free will properly within the boundaries of God's laws. The result? "The meek ones themselves will possess the earth, and they will indeed find their exquisite delight in the abundance of peace."—Psalm 37:11.

### Great Freedoms Even Now

<sup>17</sup> When the ancient Israelites were on the threshold of the Promised Land, Moses spoke to them and said: "I have taught you regulations and judicial decisions, just as

17. What did Moses tell God's ancient people to do?



Jehovah my God has commanded me, for you to do that way in the midst of the land to which you are going to take possession of it. And you must keep and do them, because this is wisdom on your part and understanding on your part before the eyes of the peoples who will hear of all these regulations, and they will certainly say, 'This great nation is undoubtedly a wise and understanding people.' For what great nation is there that has gods near to it the way Jehovah our God is in all our calling upon him?"—Deuteronomy 4:5-7.

<sup>18</sup> Today the millions who worship Jehovah are also on the threshold of a promised land—the new world. Because they obey God's laws, they have him near to them and stand out from all other peoples. Already God has freed them from false religious ideas, racism, illicit drug use, nationalism,

18. What great freedoms come even now to those serving God?

**Today, God's true servants are identified by carrying out his global educational work and bearing his name**



war, and the pandemic of sexually transmitted diseases. Furthermore, he has united them in an unbreakable international brotherhood of love. (John 13:35) They are not disturbed about the future but "cry out joyfully because of the good condition of the heart." (Isaiah 65:14) What great freedoms they enjoy even now by serving God as Ruler!—Acts 5:29, 32; 2 Corinthians 4:7; 1 John 5:3.

### Freeing Others From False Beliefs

<sup>19</sup> Many to whom Jehovah's Witnesses preach are also coming to find these freedoms. For example, in lands where ancestor worship is carried on, Jehovah's Witnesses are making known to others that the dead are not alive anywhere and cannot harm the living. The Witnesses point to Ecclesiastes 9:5, which states that "the living are conscious that they will die; but as for the dead, they are conscious of nothing at all." They also refer to Psalm 146:4, which says that when a person dies "he goes back to his ground; in that day his thoughts do perish." So the Bible shows that there is no ghostly spirit or immortal soul to perform cures or to terrify living ones. There is no need, therefore, to waste hard-earned money buying the services of witch doctors or priests.

<sup>20</sup> Such accurate Bible knowledge frees people from the false teachings of hellfire and purgatory. When people learn the Bible truth that the dead are unconscious, as if in a deep sleep, they no longer worry about what has happened to their dead loved ones. Instead, they look forward to the marvelous time that the apostle Paul spoke about when he said: "There is going to be a resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous." —Acts 24:15.

19, 20. How are people freed by the Bible teaching about the condition of the dead?

<sup>21</sup> In the resurrection the dead will come back to life on an earth forever freed from inherited Adamic death. No doubt the resurrected ones will include children sacrificed to Canaanite gods, such as Molech, young men sacrificed to Aztec gods, and countless millions sacrificed to the god of war. How amazed and delighted those former victims of false beliefs will be! Such resurrected ones can then happily declare: "Where are your stings, O Death? Where is your destructiveness, O Sheol?"—Hosea 13:14.

### Search for Jehovah

<sup>22</sup> Do you want to live in God's righteous new world, where there will be true freedom? If so, then take to heart the words at 2 Chronicles 15:2: "Jehovah is with you as long as you prove to be with him; and if you search for him, he will let himself be found by you, but if you leave him he will leave you." And keep in mind that your sincere efforts to learn about God and to please him will not go unnoticed. Hebrews 11:6 says that God is "the rewarder of those earnestly seeking him." And Romans 10:11 says:

21. Who will no doubt be included among those resurrected, and what will likely be their reaction?

22. If we want to live in God's new world, what do we need to keep in mind?

### How Would You Answer?

- How did Jehovah demonstrate his ability to free his people?
- What marvelous freedoms will there be in God's new world?
- How is Jehovah educating people for life?
- What are some freedoms God's people enjoy even now by serving Jehovah?

"None that rests his faith on him will be disappointed."

<sup>23</sup> Just on the horizon is God's new world of true freedom. There "the creation itself also will be set free from enslavement to corruption and have the glorious freedom of the children of God." And "[God] will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore." (Romans 8:21; Revelation 21:4) Then all of Jehovah's servants will lift their heads up and joyously hail God's new world of freedom by exclaiming, 'Thank you, Jehovah, for true freedom at last!'

23. Why should we hail God's new world of freedom?



# KINGDOM PROCLAIMERS REPORT

## Covering Isolated Territory in Paraguay Bears Fruit



THE Paraguay branch of the Watch Tower Society is fully aware of the need to preach the good news of the Kingdom in all its territory. (Acts 1:8) This is the time for all to learn about the Kingdom and to serve Jehovah before he brings an end to this wicked system in the coming "great tribulation." (Matthew 24:21, 22) The following experiences show what is being done to help people in unassigned territories. The branch reports:

Arrangements were made to cover all unassigned territory by means of temporary special pioneers. During the months November through January of the 1990 service year, 39 brothers and sisters covered a total of a hundred cities and small towns where there are as yet no Kingdom publishers. They were able to distribute 6,119 books, 4,262 booklets, and 5,144 magazines. As a result of this activity, new groups of publishers are being formed.

□ A woman accepted from a pioneer sister working in unassigned territory the book *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth*. The pioneer offered to conduct a Bible study with her, and she gladly accepted. When the pioneer returned, waiting for her were not only the lady but also her husband and their ten children. On the next visit, the family as well as their friends and neighbors were ready for the Bible study! The woman had invited them, saying that the study was very good and that the hope and blessings that Jehovah gives were wonderful. This was something that no one had ever told her before, so she felt that her neighbors and friends should also hear this good news.

Every time the pioneer conducted the study, there were so many in attendance that it appeared to be a small congregation. These interested persons asked many questions and shared in the study. When the pioneer explained that once the territory was worked, she would have to move on with her companions to a new area, the lady worriedly asked what would become of them. Arrangements were made with brothers from the nearest congregation to continue the study. Now special pioneers have been assigned to help these interested, sheep-like people.

□ While going from house to house in another unassigned territory, a pioneer sister found a man who some ten years previously had obtained the book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life*. Since that time he had lost all contact with Jehovah's Witnesses. However, he knew that Jehovah, whom he called Jehovah of armies, is the only true God and that He alone should be worshiped. On his own initiative, he had been talking about Jehovah to everyone he knew. In fact, every week he walked two miles to visit an interested couple to talk to them about God because, as he put it, 'If I stop visiting them, they will forget about Jehovah.' In addition to this married couple, there were about ten others who wanted a Bible study—all because this interested person had preached to them.

Remarkably, just a few days before the pioneer called on him, this same man would not let a local priest and his procession enter the house with an image of the virgin, explaining that he did not believe in images. The priest was furious. That night the man prayed to Jehovah for help. So imagine how excited and happy he was when the pioneer called! Arrangements were immediately made for a systematic Bible study, and the man continues to progress in association with the theocratic organization.

Truly, Jehovah is blessing the ingathering work in Paraguay as the brothers endeavor to give a thorough witness in these unassigned territories. —Matthew 24:14.



## Do you have faith like Elijah's?

HUMAN society today undermines faith. Intellectuals scoff at the existence of God. Religious hypocrites make a mockery of God. And the secular world increasingly acts as if God simply does not matter. Whether these attitudes intimidate a person, or discourage him, or infect him with apathy, in any case the result is the same: His faith is eroded. No wonder the apostle Paul called lack of faith "the sin that easily entangles us!"—Hebrews 12:1.

Perhaps that is why Paul made a point of drawing our attention to the lives of men and women of strong faith. (Hebrews, chapter 11) Such examples can inspire us and bolster our faith. For instance, let us

consider the prophet Elijah, focusing on just the early part of his long and full prophetic career. He lived during the reign of King Ahab and his pagan consort, Queen Jezebel, at a time when, as now, faith in the true God was at a low ebb.

### The Corrupt Ten-Tribe Kingdom

What a pair they made! Ahab was the seventh king of the ten-tribe Kingdom of Israel. Wicked though his six predecessors had been, Ahab was worse. Not only did he perpetuate the land's corrupt calf worship but he married the foreign princess Jezebel, thereby introducing a stronger form of the worship of the false god Baal than the land had ever known.—1 Kings 16:30-33.

Jezebel had been immersed in Baalism from infancy. Her father, Ethbaal, a priest of Ashtoreth (Baal's wife), had murdered his way to the throne of Sidon, the kingdom just north of Israel. Jezebel influenced her morally weak husband to establish Baalism in Israel. Before long, there were 450 prophets of that false god and 400 prophets of the goddess Asherah in the land, all eating at the royal table. How disgusting their form of worship was in the eyes of the true God, Jehovah! Phallic symbols, fertility rites, temple prostitutes (both male and female), even the sacrifice of children—such were the trappings of this revolting religion. With Ahab's blessing, it spread unhindered through the kingdom.

Israelites by the millions forgot Jehovah, the Creator of the earth and its water cycle. To them it was Baal who blessed the land with rains at the end of the dry season. Every year they looked hopefully to this 'Rider of the Clouds,' this so-called god of fertility and the rainy season, to end the dry spell. Year after year, the rains came. Year after year, Baal got the credit.

### Elijah Proclaims a Drought

It was probably at the end of a long, rainless summer season—just when the people were beginning to expect Baal to usher in the life-giving rains—that Elijah appeared on the scene.\* He bursts into the Bible record with the suddenness of a thunderclap. We are told little of his background, nothing of his parentage. But un-

\* Both Jesus and James say that it did not rain in the land for "three years and six months." Yet, Elijah is said to appear before Ahab to end the drought "in the third year"—no doubt counting from the day he announced the drought. Thus, it must have been after a long, rainless dry season when he first stood before Ahab.—Luke 4:25; James 5:17; 1 Kings 18:1.

like thunder, Elijah was not the harbinger of a rainstorm. He announced to Ahab: "As Jehovah the God of Israel before whom I do stand is living, there will occur during these years neither dew nor rain, except at the order of my word!"—1 Kings 17:1.

Picture this man, clad in his rustic garment of hair. He is a native of the rugged hills of Gilead, likely raised among humble shepherds of the flocks. He stands before the mighty king Ahab, perhaps right in his vast palace, with its fabled house of ivory, its rich and exotic decorations and imposing idols. There, in the bustling fortified city of Samaria, where the worship of Jehovah is all but forgotten, he tells Ahab that this god of his, this Baal, is impotent, a nonentity. For this year and for years to come, Elijah declares, there will be neither rain nor dew!

Where did he get such faith? Did he not feel intimidated, standing there before this arrogant, apostate king? Perhaps. Over a thousand years later, Jesus' half brother James assures us that Elijah was "a man with feelings like ours." (James 5:17) But note Elijah's words: "As Jehovah the God of Israel *before whom I do stand* is living." Elijah kept in mind that as Jehovah's servant, he was standing before a much higher throne than Ahab's—the throne of the Sovereign Lord of the universe! He was a representative, an emissary, of that throne. With this perspective, what had he to fear from Ahab, a puny human monarch who had lost Jehovah's blessing?

It was no accident that Jehovah was so real to Elijah. The prophet had surely studied the record of God's dealings with His people. Jehovah had warned the Jews that he would punish them with drought and famine if they turned to worship false gods. (Deuteronomy 11:16, 17) Confident that Jehovah always fulfills his word,



**Do you, like Elijah, have faith that Jehovah will care for the needs of his servants?**

Elijah "prayed for it not to rain."—James 5:17.

#### **Faith Expressed in Following Direction**

For the moment, though, Elijah's proclamation put him in mortal danger. It was time for another aspect of his faith to come into play. In order to stay alive, he had to be faithful in following Jehovah's instructions: "Go away from here, and you must turn your way eastward and conceal yourself at the torrent valley of Cherith that is east of the Jordan. And it must occur that from the torrent valley you should drink, and the ravens I shall certainly command to supply you food there."—1 Kings 17:3, 4.

Elijah obeyed immediately. If he wanted to survive the drought and famine that befell his land, he had to rely on whatever provisions Jehovah made for him. This was by no means easy. It meant concealing

himself, living in complete isolation for months on end. It meant eating meat and bread carried to him by ravens—carrion-eating birds deemed unclean in the Mosaic Law—and trusting in Jehovah that such meat was not carrion but meat that had been properly bled according to law. So unlikely does this extended miracle seem to some Bible commentators that they suggest that the original word here must have meant "Arabs" and not "ravens" at all. But ravens were the ideal choice. No one would suspect that these lowly, unclean birds flying off into the wilderness with their scraps of food were actually feeding Elijah, whom Ahab and Jezebel were seeking in all the kingdoms round about!—1 Kings 18:3, 4, 10.

As the drought dragged on, Elijah may well have grown concerned over his water supply in the torrent valley of Cherith. Most of Israel's torrent valleys dry up in times of drought, and "at the end of some days," this one did too. Can you imagine Elijah's feelings as the water gradually slowed to a trickle and the pools sank lower day by day? Surely he must have wondered what would happen when the water was gone. Nonetheless, Elijah faithfully stayed put. It was not until the stream was dry that Jehovah gave him his next set of instructions. Go to Zarephath, the prophet was told. There he would find sustenance at the home of a widow.—1 Kings 17:7-9.

Zarephath! That town belonged to the city of Sidon, where Jezebel hailed from and where her own father had ruled as king! Would it be safe? Elijah may have wondered. But "he rose up and went." —1 Kings 17:10.

### Jehovah Provides Sustenance and Life

His obedience was soon rewarded. He met up with the widow as foretold, and he found in her just the kind of faith that was so absent among his countrymen. This poor widow had only enough flour and oil to make one last meal for herself and her young son. Yet, even in her extreme need, she was willing to make bread for Elijah first, trusting in his promise that Jehovah would keep her jar of oil and her jar of flour supplied as long as there was a need. No wonder Jesus Christ recalled this widow's faithful example when denouncing the faithless Israelites in his own day! —1 Kings 17:13-16; Luke 4:25, 26.

In spite of this miracle, though, both the widow's faith and Elijah's were about to face a severe test. Her son died suddenly. Overwhelmed, the widow could only assume that this tragic blow had something to do with Elijah, the "man of the true God." She wondered if she was being punished for some past sin. But Elijah took her lifeless son from her arms and carried him to an upper room. He knew that Jehovah could provide more than sustenance. Jehovah is the source of life itself! So Elijah prayed earnestly and repeatedly for the child's life to return.

Elijah was not the first to have such faith in the resurrection, but in the Bible record, he was the first used to perform one. The boy "came to life"! The joy of his mother must have been a sight to behold as Elijah brought her son to her with the simple words: "See!"

Your son is alive." No doubt in tears, she said: "Now, indeed, I do know that you are a man of God and that Jehovah's word in your mouth is true." —1 Kings 17:17-24.

### "My God Is Jehovah"

How touching, and how appropriate, that Elijah's name means "My God Is Jehovah"! In a time of drought and famine, Jehovah gave him food and drink; in a time of moral chaos, Jehovah gave him sound guidance; in a time of death, Jehovah used him to restore life. And it seems that each time Elijah was called on to exercise his faith in his God—by trusting in Him to provide, by following His directions, by relying on Him to sanctify His name—he was rewarded with still more reasons to put faith in Jehovah. This pattern held true as he continued to accept difficult and even frightening assignments from his God, Jehovah; in fact, some of his most spectacular miracles lay yet ahead of him.

—See 1 Kings, chapter 18.

It is much the same for Jehovah's servants today. We may not be fed miraculously or be used to perform a resurrection; this is not the era for such miracles. However, Jehovah himself has not changed one bit since Elijah's day.—1 Corinthians 13:8; James 1:17.

We too may receive some daunting assignments, some difficult and frightening territories to reach with our God-given message. We may well face persecution. We may even go hungry. But to faithful individuals and to his organization as a whole, Jehovah has repeatedly proved that he still guides and protects his servants. He still gives them the power to carry out whatever tasks he has assigned them. And he still helps them to endure whatever trials may come upon them in this troubled world.  
—Psalm 55:22.

# JEHOVAH'S WAY IS THE BEST WAY OF LIVING

AS TOLD BY ERKKI KANKAANPÄÄ

FROM the time I was a child, my goal was to serve in the Finland branch of Jehovah's Witnesses, or Bethel as it is called. So when a traveling overseer asked me in the summer of 1941, "What plans do you have for the future?" I replied: "I've always wanted to go to Bethel." "You'd better give up those dreams; you will never be invited," he said. At first I was deeply disappointed, but then I decided simply to leave the matter in Jehovah's hands. A few months later, I received an invitation to serve at Bethel.

I was a shy, 17-year-old country lad when I rang the doorbell at the branch office in Helsinki on a very cold, clear November day in 1941. Soon I was being welcomed by Kaarlo Harteva, the branch overseer. At that time the branch had the oversight of 1,135 Witnesses in Finland.

## A Christian Heritage

In 1914 my father had obtained a copy of the Watch Tower publication *The Divine Plan of the Ages*. However, the first world war broke out soon afterward, and he didn't get around to reading it.

Finland's struggle for national independence created problems. Two powerful groups—the Whites and the Reds—were formed. The Whites represented the capitalists and the middle class, whereas the Reds represented the workers. My father tried to be neutral, staying completely away from both groups. Yet, both of them listed him as suspicious.

As it turned out, Dad was twice condemned to death, first by the Whites and then by the Reds. Once when a man was murdered and the murderer could not be apprehended, ten young men, including my father, were sentenced to death. One of my father's teachers, who was a member of the jury, recommended an exemption for him, and it was granted. The other nine youths were executed.

On another occasion Dad was again granted exemption from a death sentence. After that he decided to go underground, literally! He and his brother made a dugout, where they lived till the war was over. To keep them alive, their younger brother provided them with food and drink.

After the war ended in 1918, Dad married and built a home near that dugout. I later became well acquainted with it, since it served as a playground for me. Father told me that he had done a lot of praying while hiding there below ground. He promised God that if he ever learned how to serve Him, he would do it.

Shortly after getting married, Dad decided to take something along to read on a business trip. In the attic, he found *The Divine Plan of the Ages* that he had bought years before. He opened it to the chapter "The Day of Jehovah" and read it. He kept saying to himself: 'This is the truth, this is the truth.' Coming down from the attic, he told my mother: "I have found the true religion."

Almost immediately Dad started preaching to others about the things he was learn-

ing, first speaking to his relatives and neighbors. Then he started giving public talks. Soon others in the area joined with him. After coming in contact with the Bible Students, as Jehovah's Witnesses were then called, Dad was baptized in 1923. When we children came along—there were eventually four of us—Dad did not neglect to teach us. In fact, after a congregation was formed, we were required to attend every meeting.

### Early Remembrances

My early recollection is of an assembly arranged in our home congregation in 1929, when I was five years old. Many people gathered from nearby congregations, and a representative from the branch office was also present. In those days it was a custom, at least in Finland, to bless children at assemblies. So the brother from Bethel blessed the children, just as Jesus did during his ministry. I have never forgotten that.  
—Mark 10:16.

Another early remembrance is the adoption of the name Jehovah's Witnesses in 1931. My father, aware of the significance of the occasion, solemnly read to the congregation the announcement regarding our new name.

From about as far back as I can remember, I would join my father in the preaching work. To begin with, I would just listen to him, but eventually I was doing the work by myself. In 1935, when a traveling overseer visited us, I went to all our neighbors and invited them to attend the meeting. I also offered them booklets, and some people accepted these.

### School and an Important Decision

We four children were the only ones in school with Witness parents, and we were often mocked because of not joining other youths in unchristian behavior. Although schoolmates tried to entice me to smoke, I never did. We were also mockingly called

Russellites (Russell was the Watch Tower Society's first president) or Hartevalites (Harteva then being Finland's branch overseer). I am happy to say that some youths who once mocked us eventually became Witnesses.

My teacher encouraged me to further my education, and at one time I considered becoming an engineer. But then there was a convention of Jehovah's Witnesses in Pori in the spring of 1939, which proved to be a turning point in my life. Both my younger brother, Tuomo, and I dedicated ourselves to Jehovah and symbolized this by water baptism at that convention, on May 28, 1939. Then, during early September, World War II broke out.

Circumstances in Europe changed dramatically. The situation between Finland and the Soviet Union became critical. My father emphasized that Armageddon was getting closer and encouraged us to pioneer. Therefore, in December 1940, my brother and I began pioneering in northern Finland.

### Pioneering and Bethel Service

While pioneering, we lived most of the time with Yrjö Kallio. He was a brother who, about 30 years before, had become a Bible Student in Pennsylvania in the United States. Yrjö was extremely warmhearted, and he did his utmost to provide pleasant surroundings for us. His fleshly brother, Kyösti Kallio, served as president of Finland from 1937 to 1940. Yrjö told us that he had given his brother a thorough witness, explaining to him that God's Kingdom is the only hope for good government and for lasting, worldwide peace.

As time went by, my desire to become a member of the Bethel family grew. Happily, despite the traveling overseer's warning against getting my hopes up, my application to serve at Bethel was accepted. My first job

there was that of errand boy. Soon, however, I had the privilege of working in the factory. There I worked in many departments, including our small pressroom and Shipping Department.

### Maintaining Neutrality

In 1942, at the age of 18, I was called up for military service. Since I refused to be inducted, I was subjected to long sessions of interrogation, on two occasions with a gun pointed at me. At other times physical violence was applied. Also, during the period of interrogation, I was kept in an unheated prison cell where it was bone-chilling cold.

Finally, in January 1943, the time came for me and other Witnesses to be sentenced. The army officer that had interrogated us demanded that our imprisonment be no less than ten years. The army chaplain wanted an even severer sentence, demanding in a letter 'the death sentence or sending these traitors into Russia as reconnaissance parachutists [almost certain death], which would serve them right.'

A mock trial was arranged. I was called before the court and given the death sentence. However, this turned out to be another effort at intimidation, since later that day I was called before the court again and sentenced to three and a half years in a penitentiary. I appealed the sentence, and it was reduced to two years.

In prison, food was scarce, and there were malicious threats from other prisoners. Twice I was attacked by homosexuals, but fortunately I was able to escape. One of them threatened to kill me if I would not consent to his demands. But as I did in all my trials, I called on Jehovah, and he helped me. Actually, the prisoner's threat was no trivial thing, for he had killed before. After his release, the man committed another murder and was returned to prison.

No doubt it is because Jehovah's Witnesses are known to be trustworthy that I was soon made a trusty. My job was to issue food rations to other prisoners, and I was allowed to walk freely about the prison premises. Therefore, not only did I have enough food for myself but I was also able to see to it that my Christian brothers were well cared for. One brother even put on several pounds while in prison, a very rare thing considering the shortage of food!

I was released from prison in September 1944, the same day as Brother Harteva was released. My release meant a return to Bethel service. I thought to myself, 'Working hard 16 hours a day at Bethel is to be highly preferred to life in prison.' I have never shunned work since!

### Various Service Privileges

Later in 1944, I met Margit, a pretty young pioneer, who responded to my interest in her, and we were married on February 9, 1946. During our first year as a married couple, I served at Bethel while Margit worked in Helsinki as a pioneer. Then in January 1947 we were assigned to the circuit work.

In the traveling work, we often stayed with families and shared one room with them. We knew that they provided us the best they had to offer, and we never complained. The circuits were small in those days, and some congregations had no baptized Witnesses at all!

In 1948 we were invited to return to Bethel service. Two years later Wallace Endres came to Finland from the United States, and he was soon afterward appointed as the branch overseer. He warmly encouraged us to continue studying English, which we did. Thus, we were invited to attend the 19th missionary class of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead, which began in South Lansing, New York, in February 1952.

**Erkki Kankaanpää today,  
with his wife Margit**

After graduation we were assigned back to Finland. However, before we left the United States, I was trained in working with the printing presses at the international headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses in Brooklyn, New York.

Upon returning to Finland, we were assigned to the traveling work, but then in 1955 we were invited back to the Finland branch. That year I became the factory overseer, and two years later, in 1957, I was appointed branch overseer. Since 1976, I have served as the coordinator of the Finland Branch Committee.

Happily, both my father and mother remained faithful to Jehovah until their death. In time, over a hundred of Father's relatives became Witnesses. And to this day, my brother and sisters and their families are all serving Jehovah, one of my sisters being a pioneer.

### A Rich, Rewarding Life

The years have consisted of work and more work, but the work, because it is God's work, has been rich and rewarding indeed. (1 Corinthians 3:6-9) My life has by no means been all smooth sailing and pleasantness. There have been troubles and hardships as well. Very early in life, I realized that you have to learn to discipline yourself. You cannot always do exactly as you wish. I was often corrected, and gradually I learned the right way of living.

For example, the trials and shortages suffered during the war taught me to live without luxuries. I learned to discern whether a



thing was really necessary or not. I still have the habit of asking myself whether I need this or that. And then if I realize that it is not so important after all, I do not buy it.

The guidance provided by Jehovah through his organization has been obvious. I have had the joy of seeing the number of Jehovah's Witnesses grow during my years in the Finland branch from 1,135 to over 18,000! Truly, I can see that my work has been blessed, but I know that it has been blessed because the work is Jehovah's, not ours. (1 Corinthians 3:6, 7) Early in life I chose Jehovah's way, and it has truly proved to be the best way of living.

# DID THE EARLY CHURCH TEACH THAT GOD IS A TRINITY?

## Part 3

### Did the Apologists teach the Trinity doctrine?

In its issues of November 1, 1991, and February 1, 1992, *The Watchtower* showed that the Trinity doctrine was not taught by Jesus and his disciples nor by the Apostolic Fathers of the late first and early second centuries C.E.

Did churchmen later in the second century teach it?

FROM near the middle of the second century of our Common Era through its end, there appeared churchmen who are today called Apologists. They wrote to defend the Christianity they knew against hostile philosophies prevalent in the Roman world of that time. Their work came toward the end of, and after, the writings of the Apostolic Fathers.

Among the Apologists who wrote in Greek were Justin Martyr, Tatian, Athenagoras, Theophilus, and Clement of Alexandria. Tertullian was an Apologist who wrote in Latin. Did they teach modern Christendom's Trinity—three coequal persons (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) in a Godhead, each being true God, yet there being not three Gods but one God?

#### "The Son Is Subordinate"

Dr. H. R. Boer, in his book *A Short History of the Early Church*, comments on the thrust of the Apologists' teaching:

"Justin [Martyr] taught that before the creation of the world God was alone and that there was no Son. . . . When God desired to create the world, . . . he begot another divine being to create the world for him. This divine being was called . . . Son because he was born; he was called Logos because he was taken from the Reason or Mind of God. . . .

"Justin and the other Apologists therefore taught that the Son is a creature. He is a high creature, a creature powerful enough to create the world but, nevertheless, a creature. In theology this relationship of the Son to the Father is called *subordinationism*. The Son is subordinate, that is, secondary to, dependent upon, and caused by the Father. The Apologists were subordinationists."<sup>1</sup>

In the book *The Formation of Christian Dogma*, Dr. Martin Werner says of the earliest understanding of the relationship of the Son to God:

"That relationship was understood unequivocally as being one of 'subordination',

i.e. in the sense of the subordination of Christ to God. Wherever in the New Testament the relationship of Jesus to God, the Father, is brought into consideration, . . . it is conceived of and represented categorically as subordination. And the most decisive Subordinationist of the New Testament, according to the Synoptic record, was Jesus himself . . . This original position, firm and manifest as it was, was able to maintain itself for a long time. ‘All the great pre-Nicene theologians represented the subordination of the Logos to God.’<sup>2</sup>

In agreement with this, R. P. C. Hanson, in *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God*, states:

“There is no theologian in the Eastern or the Western Church before the outbreak of the Arian Controversy [in the fourth century], who does not in some sense regard the Son as subordinate to the Father.”<sup>3</sup>

Dr. Alvan Lamson, in *The Church of the First Three Centuries*, adds this testimony regarding the teaching of church authorities before the Council of Nicaea (325 C.E.):

“The inferiority of the Son was generally, if not uniformly, asserted by the ante-Nicene Fathers . . . That they viewed the Son as distinct from the Father is evident from the circumstance that they plainly assert his inferiority. . . . They considered him distinct and subordinate.”<sup>4</sup>

Similarly, in the book *Gods and the One God*, Robert M. Grant says the following about the Apologists:

“The Christology of the apologetics, like that of the New Testament, is essentially subordinationist. The Son is always subordinate to the Father, who is the one God of the Old Testament. . . . What we find in these early authors, then, is not a doctrine of the Trinity . . . Before Nicaea, Christian theology was almost universally subordinationist.”<sup>5</sup>

Christendom’s Trinity teaches that the Son is equal to God the Father in eternity, power, position, and wisdom. But the Apologists said that the Son was not equal to God the Father. They viewed the Son as subordinate. That is not the Trinity teaching.

### Reflecting First-Century Teaching

The Apologists and other early Church Fathers reflected to a great degree what first-century Christians taught about the relationship of the Father and the Son. Note how this is expressed in the book *The Formation of Christian Dogma*:

“In the Primitive Christian era there was no sign of any kind of Trinitarian problem or controversy, such as later produced violent conflicts in the Church. The reason for this undoubtedly lay in the fact that, for Primitive Christianity, Christ was . . . a being of the high celestial angel-world, who was created and chosen by God for the task of bringing in, at the end of the ages, . . . the Kingdom of God.”<sup>6</sup>

Further regarding the teaching of the earlier Church Fathers, *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* admits:

“In the earliest thinking of the Church the tendency when speaking of God the Father is to conceive of Him first, not as the Father of Jesus Christ, but as the source of all being. Hence God the Father is, as it were, God par excellence. To Him belong such descriptions as unoriginate, immortal, immutable, ineffable, invisible, and ingenerate. It is He who has made all things, including the very stuff of creation, out of nothing. . . .”

“This might seem to suggest that the Father alone is properly God and the Son and Spirit are only secondarily so. Many early statements appear to support this.”<sup>7</sup>

While this encyclopedia goes on to downplay these truths and to claim that the

Trinity doctrine was accepted in that early period, the facts belie the claim. Consider the words of famed Catholic theologian John Henry Cardinal Newman:

"Let us allow that the whole circle of doctrines, of which our Lord is the subject, was consistently and uniformly confessed by the Primitive Church . . . But it surely is otherwise with the Catholic doctrine of the Trinity. I do not see in what sense it can be said that there is a *consensus* of primitive [church authorities] in its favour . . ."

"The Creeds of that early day make no mention . . . of the [Trinity] at all. They make mention indeed of a Three; but that there is any mystery in the doctrine, that the Three are One, that They are coequal, coeternal, all increase, all omnipotent, all incomprehensible, is not stated, and never could be gathered from them."<sup>8</sup>

### What Justin Martyr Taught

One of the earliest Apologists was Justin Martyr, who lived from about 110 to 165 C.E. None of his extant writings mention three coequal persons in one God.

For example, according to the Catholic *Jerusalem Bible*, Proverbs 8:22-30 says of the prehuman Jesus: "Yahweh created me when his purpose first unfolded, before the oldest of his works. . . . The deep was not, when I was born . . . Before the hills, I came to birth . . . I was by his [God's] side, a master craftsman." Discussing these verses, Justin says in his *Dialogue With Trypho*:

"The Scripture has declared that this Offspring was begotten by the Father before all things created; and that that which is begotten is numerically distinct from that which begets, any one will admit."<sup>9</sup>

Since the Son was born from God, Justin does use the expression "God" in connection with the Son. He states in his *First Apology*:

"The Father of the universe has a Son; who also, being the first-begotten Word of God, is even God."<sup>10</sup> The Bible also refers to the Son of God by the title "God." At Isaiah 9:6 he is called "Mighty God." But in the Bible, angels, humans, false gods, and Satan are also called "gods." (Angels: Psalm 8:5; compare Hebrews 2:6, 7. Humans: Psalm 82:6. False gods: Exodus 12:12; 1 Corinthians 8:5. Satan: 2 Corinthians 4:4.) In the Hebrew Scriptures, the word for "God," 'El, simply means "Mighty One" or "Strong One." The equivalent in the Greek Scriptures is *theos*.

Moreover, the Hebrew term used at Isaiah 9:6 shows a definite distinction between the Son and God. There the Son is called "Mighty God," 'El Gib-bohr', not "Almighty God." That term in Hebrew is 'El Shad-dai' and applies uniquely to Jehovah God.

Note, however, that while Justin calls the Son "God," he never says that the Son is one of three equal persons, each of whom is God but the three forming only one God. Instead, he says in his *Dialogue With Trypho*:

"There is . . . another God and Lord [the prehuman Jesus] subject to the Maker of all things [Almighty God]; who [the Son] is also called an Angel, because He [the Son] announces to men whatsoever the Maker of all things—above whom there is no other God—wishes to announce to them. . . ."

"[The Son] is distinct from Him who made all things,—numerically, I mean, not [distinct] in will."<sup>11</sup>

An interesting passage occurs in Justin's *First Apology*, chapter 6, where he defends against the pagan charge that Christians are atheists. He writes:

"Both Him [God], and the Son (who came forth from Him and taught us these things, and the host of other good angels who follow and are made like to Him), and the prophetic Spirit, we worship and adore."<sup>12</sup>

## Clement

Historical Pictures Service

A translator of this passage, Bernhard Lohse, comments: "As if it were not enough that in this enumeration angels are mentioned as beings which are honored and worshiped by Christians, Justin does not hesitate to mention angels before naming the Holy Spirit."<sup>13</sup>

—See also *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*.<sup>14</sup>

Thus, while Justin Martyr appears to have departed from pure Bible doctrine in the matter of who should be the object of a Christian's worship, he clearly did not view the Son as equal to the Father, any more than the angels were considered to be His equal. Regarding Justin, we quote again from Lamson's *Church of the First Three Centuries*:

"Justin regarded the Son as distinct from God, and inferior to him: distinct, not, in the modern sense, as forming one of three hypostases, or persons, . . . but distinct in essence and nature; having a real, substantial, individual subsistence, separate from God, from whom he derived all his powers and titles; being constituted under him, and subject in all things to his will. The Father is supreme; the Son is subordinate: the Father is the source of power; the Son the recipient: the Father originates; the Son, as his minister or instrument, executes. They are two in number, but agree, or are one, in will; the Father's will always prevailing with the Son."<sup>15</sup>

In addition, nowhere does Justin say that



the holy spirit is a person equal to the Father and to the Son. So in no sense can it honestly be said that Justin taught modern Christendom's Trinity.

### What Clement Taught

Clement of Alexandria (c. 150 to 215 C.E.) also calls the Son "God." He even calls him "Creator," a term never used in the Bible with reference to Jesus. Did he mean that the Son was equal in all ways to the almighty Creator? No. Clement was evidently referring to John

1:3, where it says of the Son: "All things came into existence through him."<sup>16</sup> God used the Son as an agent in His creative works.—Colossians 1:15-17.

Clement calls the Supreme God "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus"<sup>17</sup> and says that "the Lord is the Son of the Creator."<sup>18</sup> He also says: "The God of all is only one good, just Creator, and the Son [is] in the Father."<sup>19</sup> So he wrote that the Son has a God above him.

Clement speaks of God as the "first and only dispenser of eternal life, which the Son, who received it of Him [God], gives to us."<sup>20</sup> The original Giver of eternal life is clearly

## In Our Next Issue

Does God Listen When You Pray?

Citizen or Foreigner—God Welcomes You!

Jehovah Cared for Us Under Ban  
—Part 1

## Tertullian

Historical Pictures Service

superior to the one who, as it were, passes it along. Thus, Clement says that God "is first, and highest."<sup>21</sup> Further, he says that the Son "is nearest to Him who is alone the Almighty One" and that the Son "orders all things in accordance with the Father's will."<sup>22</sup> Time and again Clement shows Almighty God's supremacy over the Son.

Regarding Clement of Alexandria, we read in *The Church of the First Three Centuries*:

"We might quote numerous passages from Clement in which the inferiority of the Son is distinctly asserted. . . .

"We are astonished that any one can read Clement with ordinary attention, and imagine for a single moment that he regarded the Son as numerically identical—one—with the Father. His dependent and inferior nature, as it seems to us, is everywhere recognized. Clement believed God and the Son to be numerically distinct; in other words, two beings,—the one supreme, the other subordinate."<sup>23</sup>

Further, it may again be said: Even if Clement sometimes appears to go beyond what the Bible says about Jesus, nowhere does he speak of a Trinity composed of three equal persons in one God. Apologists such as Tatian, Theophilus, and Athenagoras, who lived between the time of Justin and that of Clement, had similar views. Lamson says that they "were no better Trinitarians than Justin himself; that is, they believed in no undivided, coequal Three, but taught a doctrine wholly irreconcilable with this belief."<sup>24</sup>



## Tertullian's Theology

Tertullian (c. 160 to 230 C.E.) was the first to use the Latin word *trinitas*. As noted by Henry Chadwick, Tertullian proposed that God is 'one substance consisting in three persons.'<sup>25</sup> This does not mean, however, that he had in mind three *coequal* and *co-eternal* persons. However, his ideas were built upon by later writers who were working toward the Trinity doctrine.

Tertullian's concept of Father, Son, and holy spirit was a far cry from Christendom's Trinity, for he was a subordinationist. He viewed the Son as subordinate to the Father. In *Against Hermogenes* he wrote:

"We should not suppose that there is any other being than God alone who is unbegotten and uncreated. . . . How can it be that anything, except the Father, should be older, and on this account indeed nobler, than the Son of God, the only-begotten and first-begotten Word? . . . That [God] which did not require a Maker to give it existence, will be much more elevated in rank than that [the Son] which had an author to bring it into being."<sup>26</sup>

Also, in *Against Praxeas*, he shows that the Son is different from and subordinate to Almighty God by saying:

"The Father is the entire substance, but the Son is a derivation and portion of the whole, as He Himself acknowledges: 'My Father is greater than I.' . . . Thus the Father is distinct from the Son, being greater than the Son, inasmuch as He who begets is one, and He who is begotten is another; He, too, who sends is one, and He who is sent is another; and He, again, who makes is one,

and He through whom the thing is made is another.”<sup>27</sup>

Tertullian, in *Against Hermogenes*, states further that there was a time when the Son did not exist as a person, showing that he did not regard the Son as an eternal being in the same sense that God was.<sup>28</sup> Cardinal Newman said: “Tertullian must be considered heterodox [believing unorthodox doctrines] on the doctrine of our Lord’s eternal generation.”<sup>29</sup> Regarding Tertullian, Lamson declares:

“This reason, or Logos, as it was called by the Greeks, was afterwards, as Tertullian believed, converted into the Word, or Son, that is, a real being, having existed from eternity only as an attribute of the Father. Tertullian assigned to him, however, a rank subordinate to the Father . . .”

“Judged according to any received explanation of the Trinity at the present day, the attempt to save Tertullian from condemna-

tion [as a heretic] would be hopeless. He could not stand the test a moment.”<sup>30</sup>

### No Trinity

If you were to read all the words of the Apologists, you would find that while they deviated in some respects from the teachings of the Bible, none of them taught that the Father, the Son, and the holy spirit were coequal in eternity, power, position, and wisdom.

This is also true of other writers of the second and third centuries, such as Irenaeus, Hippolytus, Origen, Cyprian, and Novatian. While some came to equate the Father and the Son in certain respects, in other ways they viewed the Son as subordinate to God the Father. And none of them even speculated that the holy spirit was equal to the Father and the Son. For example, Origen (c. 185 to 254 C.E.) states that the Son of God is “the First-born of all creation” and

#### References:

1. *A Short History of the Early Church*, by Harry R. Boer, 1976, page 110.
2. *The Formation of Christian Dogma*, by Martin Werner, 1957, page 125.
3. *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God*, by R. P. C. Hanson, 1988, page 64.
4. *The Church of the First Three Centuries*, by Alvan Lamson, 1869, pages 70-1.
5. *Gods and the One God*, by Robert M. Grant, 1986, pages 109, 156, 160.
6. *The Formation of Christian Dogma*, pages 122, 125.
7. *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, 1982, Volume 2, page 513.
8. *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, by John Henry Cardinal Newman, Sixth Edition, 1989, pages 14-18.
9. *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, edited by Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, American Reprint of the Edinburgh Edition, 1885, Volume I, page 264.
10. *Ibid.*, page 184.
11. *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Volume 1, page 223.
12. *Ibid.*, page 164.
13. *A Short History of Christian Doctrine*, by Bernhard Lohse, translated from the German by F. Ernest Stoefler, 1963, second paperback printing, 1980, page 43.
14. *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, page 20.
15. *The Church of the First Three Centuries*, pages 73-4, 76.
16. *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Volume II, page 234.
17. *Ibid.*, page 227.
18. *Ibid.*, page 228.
19. *Ibid.*.
20. *Ibid.*, page 593.
21. *Ibid.*.
22. *Ibid.*, page 524.
23. *The Church of the First Three Centuries*, pages 124-5.
24. *Ibid.*, page 95.
25. *The Early Church*, by Henry Chadwick, 1980 printing, page 89.
26. *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Volume III, page 487.
27. *Ibid.*, pages 603-4.
28. *Ibid.*, page 478.
29. *An Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine*, pages 19, 20.
30. *The Church of the First Three Centuries*, pages 108-9.
31. *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Volume IV, page 560.
32. *The Church of the First Three Centuries*, pages 75-6.

that the Scriptures "know Him to be the most ancient of all the works of creation."<sup>31</sup>

Any objective reading of these early church authorities will show that Christendom's Trinity doctrine was not in existence in their time. As *The Church of the First Three Centuries* says:

"The modern popular doctrine of the Trinity . . . derives no support from the language of Justin: and this observation may be extended to all the ante-Nicene Fathers; that is, to all Christian writers for three centuries after the birth of Christ. It is true, they speak of the Father, Son, and prophetic or holy Spirit, but not as co-equal, not as one numer-

ical essence, not as Three in One, in any sense now admitted by Trinitarians. The very reverse is the fact. The doctrine of the Trinity, as explained by these Fathers, was essentially different from the modern doctrine. This we state as a fact as susceptible of proof as any fact in the history of human opinions."<sup>32</sup>

Actually, before Tertullian's time the Trinity was not even mentioned. And Tertullian's "heterodox" Trinity was much different from that believed today. How, then, did the Trinity doctrine, as understood today, develop? Was it at the Council of Nicaea in 325 C.E.? We will examine these questions in Part 4 of this series in a future issue of *The Watchtower*.

## Religion of 'Flexible Faith'

"Mormonism's ability to gain footholds both in liberal democracies and in totalitarian societies is a marvel." So observed *The Wall Street Journal* when the Hungarian government granted full recognition to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. How does the church achieve this? "The key," according to the *Journal*, "is not simply the Mormons' high birth rates or aggressive spreading of their gospel. Rather, it is the flexibility built into the faith." How so?

Speaking of the period before the recent political changes in Eastern Europe, the *Journal* said: "Using musical and folk-dance groups from Brigham Young University, the Mormons have managed to bypass the repression and noncooperation normally faced by missionaries in most Communist countries." Their troupes have gone to Romania, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, Russia, and China, as well as to Saudi Arabia, Libya,

Egypt, Jordan, Somalia, and Israel. Furthermore, "the wealth of the Mormon Church has been used as a lever to gain entry into Marxist and Third World countries." Dam-building and well-drilling are among the projects supported by Mormon donations.

In today's pleasure-loving and money-hungry world, it is not surprising that such song-and-dance and open-purse tactics have strong appeal. (2 Timothy 3:2, 4) But truly sheeplike ones are attracted by the voice of the Fine Shepherd, Jesus Christ. (John 10:27) That is why, when he commanded his followers to "make disciples of people of all the nations," he did not say to do so by *any* means or at *any* cost but by 'teaching them to observe all the things he had commanded.' (Matthew 28:19, 20) In carrying out this commission, there is no room for compromising Bible standards.

## QUESTIONS FROM READERS

**Was Zechariah, the father of John the Baptizer, made deaf as well as mute, as Luke 1:62 seems to indicate?**

Some have concluded that Zechariah also became deaf. We read in the Bible account: "They were going to call [the child] by the name of its father, Zechariah. But its mother answered and said: 'No, indeed! but he shall be called John.' At this they said to her: 'There is no one among your relatives that is called by this name.' Then they went asking its father by signs what he wanted it to be called. And he asked for a tablet and wrote: 'John is its name.'"—Luke 1:59-63.

Nothing, though, in this account specifically says that Zechariah was unable to hear for a period of time.

Earlier the angel Gabriel had announced to Zechariah the coming birth of a son who was to be called John. Aged Zechariah found that hard to believe. The angel responded: "Look! you will be silent and not able to speak until the day that these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their appointed time." (Luke 1:13, 18-20) The angel said that Zechariah's speech, not his hearing, would be affected.

The account further says: "When he came out [of the sanctuary] he was not able to speak to [the people waiting], and they perceived that he had just seen a supernatural sight in the sanctuary; and he kept making signs to them, but remained dumb." (Luke 1:22) The Greek word here rendered "dumb" conveys the thought of being blunted, in speech, hearing, or both. (Luke 7:22) What about Zechariah? Well, consider what occurred when he was healed. "Instantly his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed and he began to speak, blessing God." (Luke 1:64) That reasonably leads to the view that only Zechariah's ability to speak was impaired.

Why, then, did others ask Zechariah "by signs what he wanted [the child] to be called"? Some translators even render this "in the language of signs" or "using sign language."



Zechariah, who had been mute since the angel's announcement, was often compelled to use gestures, a sort of sign language, to express himself. For example, he "kept making signs" to those at the temple. (Luke 1:21, 22) When he later asked for a tablet, he must have used signs or gestures. (Luke 1:63) It is possible, therefore, that those around him during his period of muteness were also inclined to use gestures.

There is, however, a more likely explanation for the signs mentioned at Luke 1:62. Elizabeth had just expressed herself about her son's name. So, without contradicting her, they may simply have taken the next and proper step of getting her husband's decision. They could do that with a mere nod or gesturing sign. The fact that they did not write their question for Zechariah to read might even be evidence that he had heard his wife's words. Thus, a mere nod or comparable sign to him could have the force of, 'Well, all of us (including you, Zechariah) heard her recommendation, but what is your final decision about the child's name?'

And immediately afterward another miracle occurred, reversing the situation. "Instantly his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed and he began to speak." (Luke 1:64) No mention needed to be made of his hearing if that had not been affected.



## *A Day to Remember*

*The evening before he died, Jesus shared a loaf of unleavened bread and a cup of wine with his apostles and said: "Keep doing this in remembrance of me."—Luke 22:19.*

*This year the anniversary of his request falls on April 17, after sunset.*

"Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own in the world, he loved them to the end. He got up from the meal, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around his waist. Then he took some water and washed the feet of his apostles, one by one. After washing their feet, he dried them with a towel he was holding. Then he came back to the table and sat down again. He said to them, 'I have given you an example to follow. You must love each other as I have loved you. You are my friends if you do what I command.'