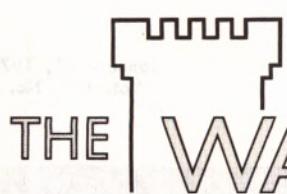


JANUARY 15, 1979



# THE WATCHTOWER

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom



## A DAY OF RECKONING AT HAND!

...but if you're not ready for that day, you'll be sorry. That's why we encourage you to let us help you get ready. To learn more about how you can prepare for the Day of Reckoning, call or write today.

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There is a government that excels in its educational program and its capacity for uniting the races of peoples of mankind in a lasting peace. Read herein how you and your family may benefit from that governmental rule

A WATCHTOWER enables a person to look far into the distance and announce to others what is seen. Likewise, this magazine, published by Jehovah's Witnesses, aids the reader to see what the future holds. Since it began publication in 1879, "The Watchtower" has held faithfully to God's Word as its authority. It stays clear of all political involvement. It points to the Bible prophecies showing that Jesus Christ is God's means for restoring peace and harmony to this globe. It shows that this Son of God, on the basis of his shed blood, will release mankind from sin and death to enjoy eternal life in happiness on a paradise earth. Because Jehovah God will accomplish all this soon through his kingdom by Jesus Christ, "The Watchtower" announces that kingdom as the real hope for mankind.

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# What Makes A Government Real To You?

HERE are now 150 countries that belong to the United Nations. Likely you live in one of these countries, since over 4,000,000,000 people do—practically the whole world population! Each of these countries has some form of government. Do you know what kind is the most common?

Republics are. The United States, Egypt, the Soviet Union and China are among the more than 100 nations of the United Nations that are republics. According to Webster's *Third New International Dictionary*, a republic is: "A government characterized by having a chief of state who is not a monarch and who in modern times is [usually] a president." Contrary to what some persons may think, no nation today is a true democracy, which is "a form of government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised by them directly."

Are these governments—these republics—real to you? 'Of course,' you may answer. But why are they? For one thing, is it not because the leaders of these nations are real persons? Such men as President Carter, President Sadat, and President Brezhnev have become household names. Also, the places from which such men govern are real—Washington, Cairo and Moscow. The effects of their decisions are felt, not only by their own citizens, but by people earth wide.

## KINGDOMS OF THE WORLD

Kingdoms are another common form of government. According to *The World*

*Almanac*, some 15 nations of the United Nations are kingdoms. A kingdom is a government in which a king is the ruler. Among the kingdoms in the United Nations are Lesotho, Nepal, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Jordan, Saudi Arabia and Morocco.

True, many kings or queens today are only figureheads, as, for example, in Denmark, Sweden and Norway. The monarchs in such places exercise little, if any, real power. But in some countries this is not the case. Consider Jordan, Morocco and Saudi Arabia. The rulers in these countries are King Hussein, King Hassan and King Khalid. They exercise real authority, although recently King Khalid's activities have been limited by a serious illness.

Are the kingdoms belonging to the United Nations real to you? 'Yes,' you may say. What makes them real? It is not only that the kings are real persons, but also that they have real subjects—Jordanians, Moroccans and Saudi Arabians. These subjects are governed by a set of laws, as the *World Book Encyclopedia* notes: "Every group of people—from a family to a nation—has rules of conduct to govern the lives of its members." These laws, as well as a nation's language, customs and culture, often make a people of one government distinctive from another.

## ANOTHER KINGDOM

The kingdoms belonging to the United Nations are not the only ones. The most

significant kingdom of all is no part of that world body of nations. What makes this kingdom so important?

It is not the number of its subjects, although they are quite numerous. In comparison with the 150 nations of the United Nations, this kingdom now has more people than 42 individual nations of that world organization. Yes, it has over 2,100,000 loyal subjects! However, in a recent year these subjects, along with their friends, totaling all together 5,095,831, assembled on one day in meetings world wide to review what their king has done for them. And that is a significant number! Only 77 nations of the United Nations—about half of them—have, individually, a greater population.

Many governments of the world have fine educational systems. But this kingdom has a superior one. Its principal textbook has a greater distribution in more languages than any other book in the world. And several of the books that it prints to help people to understand the Bible are among the world's top 10 most widely distributed books. Additionally, each year its subjects print and distribute *hundreds of millions* of such educational books, booklets and magazines. They hold five classes each week, in over 40,000 groups around the world, where they study the laws of this government and encourage one another in allegiance to it.

#### What kingdom government is this?

In an ancient prophecy concerning the one who would become its ruler, the Bible says: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end." —Isa. 9:6, 7, *American Standard Version*.

You may recognize the above as a prophecy about Jesus Christ. Prior to his

birth, the angel Gabriel told his mother Mary: "Jehovah God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule as king . . . and there will be no end of his kingdom." (Luke 1:32, 33) When Jesus grew to manhood he devoted his life to the interests of that government.

On one occasion Jesus explained: "To other cities I must declare the good news of the kingdom of God, because for this I was sent forth." (Luke 4:43) Jesus even taught his followers to pray regarding this government: "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."—Matt. 6:9, 10, *Authorized Version*.

Is this kingdom of God a real government to you?

Jesus Christ spoke of it as a government that was to have loyal subjects. When the Roman governor Pontius Pilate asked him if he was a king, Jesus answered: "My kingdom is no part of this world. If my kingdom were part of this world, *my attendants would have fought* that I should not be delivered up to the Jews. But, as it is, my kingdom is not from this source." —John 18:36.

Shortly before his death, Jesus told the Jewish religious leaders: "From henceforth you will see the Son of man sitting at the right hand of power and coming on the clouds of heaven." (Matt. 26:64) What did Jesus mean by this?

He was referring to the Bible prophecy of Daniel about the promised "son of man" who was brought before "the Ancient of Days," Jehovah God. "To him there were given rulership and dignity and kingdom," the prophecy says, "that the peoples, national groups and languages should all serve even him." (Dan. 7:13, 14) This shows that the resurrected Jesus Christ would rule in heaven, and that the whole earth will be the territory over which he exercises authority as king.

But since God's kingdom is heavenly—its ruler Jesus Christ now being invisible—many persons do not consider it to be a real government. Yet, as we have seen, there is sound reason to believe that it is.

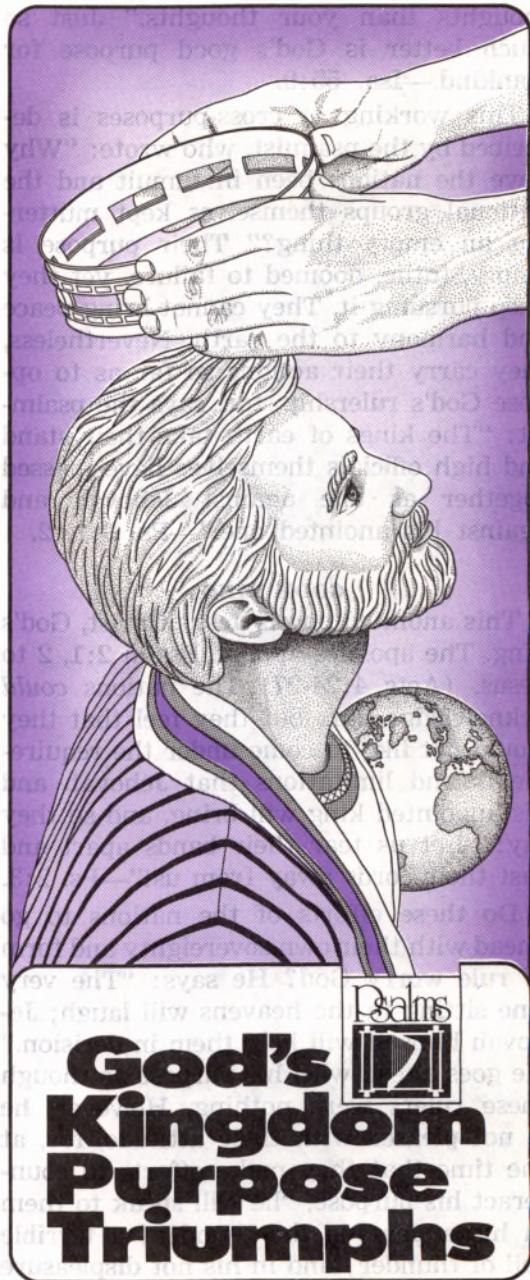
#### **EARMARKS OF A REAL GOVERNMENT**

As already mentioned, one outstanding evidence of a real government is that it has subjects. "In the multitude of people there is an adornment of a king," the Bible says. (Prov. 14:28) It also has laws that are enforced, as well as some kind of educational system. Does God's kingdom have such earmarks of a real government?

Yes, we have seen that it does. An entire society of more than two million people world wide have adopted the laws in the Bible as their constitution, as the rules to govern their lives. These people have taken the name of the Great Lawmaker, calling themselves Jehovah's Witnesses. (Isa. 33:22; 43:12) In the Christian congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses earth wide, the laws of God's kingdom are loyally obeyed.

Although living in many countries throughout the world, speaking different languages and having different cultural backgrounds, these Kingdom subjects are marvelously united. They speak the unifying "pure language" of Bible truth. (Zeph. 3:9) In obedience to their King's instructions, they take no part in the political affairs or conflicts of the nations of the world. (John 17:16; 18:36) In this, they also adhere to their King's commandment to "love one another," and are thus identified as his disciples.—John 13:34, 35; 1 John 4:20, 21.

When you consider the factors that make a real government, it becomes clear that God's kingdom has all the earmarks of such a government. It is vital that we not only recognize this fact but also become active supporters of that heavenly government.



## **Psalms**

# **God's Kingdom Purpose Triumphs**

**G**OD has a purpose. The nations have a purpose. These purposes differ greatly because, in God's words, "as the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways, and my

thoughts than your thoughts." Just so much better is God's good purpose for mankind.—Isa. 55:9.

This working at cross-purposes is described by the psalmist, who wrote: "Why have the nations been in tumult and the national groups themselves kept muttering an empty thing?" Their purpose is empty, futile, doomed to failure, yet they keep pursuing it. They cannot bring peace and harmony to the earth. Nevertheless, they carry their actions so far as to oppose God's rulership, for, says the psalmist: "The kings of earth take their stand and high officials themselves have massed together as one against Jehovah and against his anointed one."—Ps. 2:1, 2.

#### GOD'S KING

This anointed one is Jesus Christ, God's king. The apostles applied Psalm 2:1, 2 to Jesus. (Acts 4:24-27) The nations *could* acknowledge him, but they feel that they would not like to come under the requirements and limitations that Jehovah and his appointed king will bring, and so they say: "Let us tear their bands apart and cast their cords away from us!"—Ps. 2:3.

Do these efforts of the nations to go ahead with their own sovereignty and form of rule worry God? He says: "The very One sitting in the heavens will laugh; Jehovah himself will hold them in derision." He goes ahead with his purpose as though these rulers were nothing. However, he is not pleased with their attitude, for, at the time that they make efforts to counteract his purpose, "he will speak to them in his anger [as the sound of a terrible roll of thunder] and in his hot displeasure [as a great lightning stroke] he will disturb them." What he declares greatly upsets them: "I, even I, have installed my king upon Zion, my holy mountain." The throne over earth is already occupied by God's own appointed king, his choice. There is no room for another.—Ps. 2:4-6.

Then the King Jesus Christ himself speaks: "Let me refer to the decree of Jehovah [God had already made with his Son a covenant for the Kingdom]; he has said to me: 'You are my son; I, today, I have become your father.'" The King, then, is God's own Son, the one holding the position closest to Him, his tried and loyal, reliable One. The King then refers to his title to the kingship, for God has said to him: "Ask of me, that I may give nations as your inheritance and the ends of the earth as your own possession." He has the inheritance as the one whom God has made firstborn; all he has to do is request it, which he does because of his great desire to carry out God's will toward the earth.—Ps. 2:7, 8.

#### GOD'S DECREE AGAINST THE NATIONS

So, then, what is the position of the nations today, together with all their armaments of war? God's decree to the King will be carried out by him: "You will break them with an iron scepter, as though a potter's vessel you will dash them to pieces." The scepters of ancient kings were made of wood, ivory or other materials. Some were made of iron, as this one was. The imagery here shows the ease with which Christ the King will destroy the nations beyond recovery.—Ps. 2:9.

Do the national rulers necessarily *have* to experience a shattering to their destruction? No, for the psalmist appeals to them: "And now, O kings, exercise insight; let yourselves be corrected, O judges of the earth." They are called on to take heed, consider the emptiness of their plans, as contrasted with what God's kingdom will do for the benefit of the people, and correct their course.—Ps. 2:10.

The kings of earth are admonished to "serve Jehovah with fear and be joyful with trembling." If they would take this action, they could, instead of being in tumult, rejoice at the prospects that the

King sets before them. But they would need to abandon all haughtiness and pride, which they have in the past demonstrated in their rulership. And they would have to do it now, before it is too late. It would be necessary for them to exercise insight regarding the great superiority of God's sovereignty and the irresistibleness of Jehovah and his Messiah.—Ps. 2:11.

#### A MERCIFUL INVITATION

The rulers are therefore advised that, instead of massing together in opposition, they should "kiss the son, that He [God] may not become incensed and you may not perish from the way." (Ps. 2:12) Jehovah the great Sovereign should be heeded when he makes a decree. When he set his Son upon the throne, the rulers of the earth should have quit "muttering an empty thing." They should have acknowledged the King immediately, rendering him complete obedience.

Those who refuse to recognize the authority of the King that God has chosen actually insult the Most High. They deny his universal sovereignty and his ability and authority to choose the king that is the best ruler for mankind. Such ones will find that Jehovah's fury will overtake them suddenly, when they are pursuing the way to carry out their own devices, "for his anger flares up easily," or, is quick to blaze, irresistibly. Certainly this is a fair warning and one that they should accept gratefully, for it means life to them to heed it.—Ps. 2:12a.

There is still time, then, for those who have been going along tacitly with the plans of the nations—even for those who may have opposed the kingdom of God's appointed One—to find safety. In the danger that impends, these can flee to Jehovah, for he willingly provides refuge under the kingdom of his Son, before this kingdom smashes the opposing nations.

How can this place of refuge be reached,

and what does it mean for the one seeking shelter in it? The psalmist concludes: "Happy are all those taking refuge in him [Jehovah]." (Ps. 2:12b) This protection is not hard to find. But how is it to be found? A person must first see the need for something better than what the worldly nations have to offer. Then, he must sincerely look into the Bible to find out how his life can be conformed to God's way. This does not mean living an abnormal life in any way.

Those who study the Bible, where God's guidance is found, can live a more satisfying life. Following the Bible's counsel gives them happier family relations, freedom from many of the fears and worries that beset the world today, and a knowledge and confidence that they are pleasing the Creator. No one other than the universal Sovereign can give a guarantee of "the life now and that which is to come [after his anger clears the earth of those who oppose what is right by rejecting his rule]."(1 Tim. 4:8) As the Creator, who knows what is best for the people, he will accomplish his purpose to bless them with peace, lasting security and contentment under the kingdom of his Son. (Matt. 6:33) Truly, it is high time to "exercise insight," yes, to "kiss the Son," before Jehovah God, in his anger, consumes earth's rulers and *their* kingdoms.

## In Coming Issues

- **To Whom Shall We Go but Jesus Christ?**
- **World Conquerors by Faith**
- **Spiritistic Communication—Why Not?**



# Who will make the day of reckoning work good for us?

*"Then what can I do when God rises up? And when he calls for an accounting, what can I answer him?"*

**JOB 31:14**

**A** DAY of reckoning is a good thing. There are so many of us who long for things to be set straight with benefit to everybody. Yes, and we could welcome such a day. We are affected by the wrongs committed, the oppression, the defrauding, and we cannot help ourselves and get relief. We cannot call the wrongdoers to account. Our comfort lies in the fact that there is in operation such a thing as "the law of retribution." So eventually justice will be done. O that this would occur in our own lifetime! Yes, on a worldwide scale! Then everybody suffering injustice would benefit.

<sup>2</sup> Today our social environment is in a bad way. Even our natural environment is being polluted and ruined. There is bound to be a day of reckoning for this, shortly—so we are told by authorities on environment. Human society cannot keep on upsetting the balance of natural arrangements of the earth without at last reaping the consequences. Death to all human society is feared, in an earth unfit for life.

<sup>3</sup> We might also think of the day of reckoning that is approaching because of

the decline in good morals that is taking place in all lands. Likewise, because of the military arms race, with the United Nations organization being no inducement for slowing it down, but with all nations turning to reliance on military preparedness for safety. There is, however, still another sector of human affairs that is due for a reckoning, a sector that may seem to many of us to be an untouchable thing, like something sacrosanct. What is that? It is religion!

<sup>4</sup> More and more persons are dismissing religion from their lives as being something irrelevant, useless, even hurtful. Nevertheless, religion remains as one of the most potent forces in the life of mankind. Few, if any, are able to escape from its influence. It has proved to be responsible for so much badness in the conduct of men and of nations that it deserves to be overtaken by a day of reckoning. When this happens, it will surprise hundreds of millions, and the outcome will be most awesome.

<sup>5</sup> In human history, religion has proved to be the most divisive force on earth. It has separated races, nations, peoples, tribes

1. Why do we who are suffering helplessly from conditions long for a day of reckoning in our lifetime, and on what scale?
2. What may be said about our social and natural environment, with what fear being excited?
3. What may be said about a reckoning with regard to morals, to war preparations and to something considered untouchable, sacrosanct?

<sup>4</sup> Why does religion deserve to be overtaken by a day of reckoning, and what will be the effect when this happens?

<sup>5</sup> (a) How has religion proved to be the most divisive force on earth? (b) Why could not the many religions of Christendom and the rest of the world all be the truth and be right?

and even members of a family. Thus it has caused human disunity. Difference of religion has led to bitter hatreds and prejudices, and, sad to say, to violent conflicts, to feuds that have lasted for centuries down till now. No exception to this has been that part of the religious world known as Christendom. In fact, she has been



**Judgment of All Earth's Inhabitants in Righteousness Is Guaranteed by Christ's Death, Burial and Resurrection**

#### WHAT IS NEEDED

#### FOR AN ACCOUNTING TO BE IMPARTIAL

most outstanding in this respect. Because of hideous wars her realm has been drenched with seas of human blood. Responsible for this is her being split into many hundreds of religious sects and denominations. In itself, this disunity proves that she is not what she claims to be—Christian. Christendom's Babel of religions and the differing religions of the rest of the world could not all be right. Truth is one, absolute, for it is at unity with itself.

<sup>6</sup> Discordant religions, natural environment, standards of morality, management of human affairs—all nations have been involved with these consequential things. No nation has proved faultless. All have proved to be violators of right rules of conduct and of government. In line with the pattern of all past human history, the nations must all meet up with a day of reckoning. Only now, with all the rapid means of communication and transportation and with such interdependence between themselves, the nations will enter that day of reckoning together. But who or what will hold a reckoning with them? Their national god or set of gods? The so-called "sacred cow" of science? The United Nations, or some other international agency for regulating the relations between Communist nations and capitalist nations or between the laboring class and management? Not at all, for the failure of such things is what has brought mankind to its present predicament. Logically, then, it must be some intelligent entity that is more than equal to all the deep-rooted difficulties of peoples and that is impartial to the races and nations, an almighty Intelligence that can turn this day of reckoning into one of relief for all lovers of what is right.

6. (a) Why must all nations today meet up with a day of reckoning, and now all together? (b) What kind of entity must it be that will hold a reckoning with the nations?

We are here not talking about some imaginary "Day of Judgment" in a spirit world after death of the citizens of nations. We are talking about a day of reckoning for all nations while they are still going concerns and striving to perpetuate their rule in the styles of government that they prefer. Will the nations survive the coming day of inspection and of settling accounts with the superhuman Judicial Authority to whom all the nations are accountable? That is the question that concerns us individuals who are members of these guilt-bearing nations. So we desire for the day of reckoning a Judicial Authority that is superior to all the impotent gods of the nations, One that cannot be bribed by the wealthy, highly developed nations, One that does not stand in fear of the heavily militarized superpowers of the world, like the United States of America and Communist Russia.

<sup>8</sup> Ah yes, what our hearts instinctively want is for the Supreme Being of the universe to serve as the Final Judge and Administrator of justice. When we come to think about it, What would not merely our tiny earth but, rather, the whole universe do without such a Supreme Being, such a Universal Sovereign? Where would the harmony, the orderliness, the precision of the operation of our universe be without such a universal Lawgiver? Where would the beneficial cooperation of all the interdependent things that make up our natural environment be without such a Designer and Creator, the one Source of life for all animals, plants and human creatures? They would be nowhere. In no way could their existence be accounted

7. (a) In what state of affairs will the nations be on the day of reckoning of which we here speak? (b) What kind of Judicial Authority would be the proper one for holding the reckoning?

8. (a) So, whom do our hearts long for as the Final Judge and Administrator of justice? (b) Apart from such a Being, what things about heaven and earth could not be accounted for logically?

for apart from such a Supreme, Almighty Being!

<sup>9</sup> The acknowledged need for such a Being did not force him to come into existence out of nothing, but the existence of all these creations before the appearance of man on earth establishes and demonstrates His eternal existence and activity. Rightly he is called "the God of gods and the Lord of lords." That is what he was called by the most eminent law-giver and jurist of ancient times, Moses. Such a comparison Moses could make intelligently, for he was personally acquainted with the gods of ancient Egypt and was also schooled "in all the wisdom of the Egyptians." (Deut. 10:17; Acts 7:22) Centuries later this Supreme God was called to the attention of the highest judicial court in ancient Greece, the court that sat on Mars Hill in Athens. This occasion was when the Christian apostle Paul said to that court: "The God that made the world and all the things in it . . . made out of one man every nation of men, to dwell upon the entire surface of the earth." (Acts 17:24-26) Because of his superiority over all national groups he is called "*King of the nations.*"—Jer. 10:7.

<sup>10</sup> More about this supranational God we can read in the sacred Book written by Moses, Paul and other men who were, in many cases, eyewitnesses of events about which they wrote for our information today. No nations are able to hold their ground against this God. He was able to show his mastery over such world powers as ancient Egypt, Assyria and Babylon. It is foolish to think that he was merely another god of ancient history and that he passed out of existence with the writ-

9. (a) How is the eternal existence and activity of such a Being demonstrated? (b) What did Moses rightly call him, and what relation does he have with all national groups?

10. Why is this "King of the nations" able to take on as his antagonists all the military political superpowers of today?

ing of the last book of the Bible 19 centuries ago. This God is immortal, self-existent. Today he is able to take on as his antagonists all the mighty political superpowers of our modern world. As "King of the nations," he will call them all to account. Lasting good will result to all lovers of righteousness and goodness.

#### GOD'S AGENT WITH WHOM TO RECKON

<sup>11</sup> For that coming day of reckoning, God has appointed a personal representative, an associate judge. The Christian apostle Paul referred to this deputy when he further said to the Supreme Court on Mars Hill in Athens, Greece: "He [God] has set a day in which he purposes to judge the inhabited earth in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and he has furnished a guarantee to all men in that he has resurrected him from the dead."—Acts 17:31.

<sup>12</sup> What more remarkable "guarantee" could the Almighty God give of his set day for judgment for all the inhabitants of earth than the resurrecting of his associate judge from a martyr's death? Just because we may have a different religious view of matters, we ought not to look at God's "guarantee" as something to be shrugged off, as the majority of those Supreme Court justices on Mars Hill did. This "guarantee" is furnished by the "King of the nations." It is nothing to be scoffed at as something unscientific and ridiculous. In the first century C.E. there were more than 500 eyewitnesses to the existence of that "guarantee" from God, including the apostle Paul himself.

<sup>13</sup> The "man" whose resurrection from

11. According to Acts 17:31, what has God appointed for himself on the day of reckoning, and what guarantee has he given?

12. Why is the existence of this guarantee nothing to be shrugged off, as was the case with the Greek judges who heard Paul?

13, 14. (a) In proof of God's guarantee, why is the resurrected Jesus Christ not on earth today? (b) How is it that God has not remained alone like a hermit in his spiritual realm?

the dead is the "guarantee" of the coming "set" day of judgment is identified as Jesus Christ. (1 Cor. 15:3-8, 12-20) The reason why he is not on earth today is that he sacrificed his perfect human life and was resurrected, in order that dead humankind might also have a resurrection to an opportunity for endless life on a cleansed earth that will be converted into a global paradise. As a reward he has been elevated to heaven and is at the right hand of the Supreme Judge, the God with the power of resurrection. Jesus Christ spoke of himself as the "only-begotten Son" of God and as "the beginning of the creation by God." (John 3:16; Rev. 3:14) Why is this?

<sup>14</sup> It is because he was God's first creation in heaven and God then used him as His collaborer in making all other things, including our earth and its first inhabitants, Adam and Eve. (Col. 1:15-18) The creating of the invisible heavenly angels preceded the creating of mankind. By reason of the creating of his "only-begotten Son" and all the holy angels, God has not remained alone like a hermit in his own spiritual realm. According to the Bible's account, these superhuman angels number up into the hundreds of millions.—Ps. 104:4; Dan. 7:9, 10; Heb. 1:7; 12:22.

<sup>15</sup> Those myriads of angels will be at God's beck and call on the day of reckoning for all the earthly nations. They are also at the service of his associate Judge by means of whom he will judge the inhabited earth on his set day. (Matt. 25:31, 32) When God miraculously sent his only-begotten Son to become a perfect man on earth through birth from a virgin Jewess, this Son of God was made "a little lower than angels."—Heb. 2:9; Ps. 8:4, 5.

<sup>16</sup> What, though, is the status of this only-begotten Son of God today—now?

15. How was the only-begotten Son of God once made "a little lower than angels"?

16. To what station was Jesus Christ resurrected, and for what beneficial purpose?

He has been resurrected by God to a heavenly station even far higher than that of the angels due to his proving faithful to God down to a sacrificial death in innocence. That this lamblike Son of God might extend the benefits of his sacrifice to all mankind, God resurrected him on the third day, not, though, as a man, inasmuch as he had sacrificed his human nature forever. So God resurrected him to heavenly life, to immortality and to greater superiority over all angels. (1 Pet. 3:22) Thus he could serve as the "seed" for blessing all the nations of the earth.—Gen. 22:18; Gal. 3:8-16.

<sup>17</sup> So, then, ought we not to be glad over this glorification of Jesus Christ in the heavens? Yes, for now we have a brighter outlook on life in the future. The Christian apostle Paul, who miraculously saw the resurrected Jesus Christ, wrote about his glorification. In a letter to the Hebrews who accepted Jesus as the Messiah of Bible prophecy, Paul wrote: "After he had made a purification for our sins he sat down on the right-hand of the Majesty in lofty places. So he has become better than the angels, to the extent that he has inherited a name more excellent than theirs.

. . . Also, with reference to the angels he says: 'And he makes his angels spirits, and his public servants a flame of fire.' But with reference to the Son: 'God is your throne forever, and the scepter of your kingdom is the scepter of uprightness. You loved righteousness, and you hated lawlessness. That is why God, your God, anointed you with the oil of exultation more than your partners.' "—Heb. 1:3-9.

<sup>18</sup> By means of this super-angelic King as his Deputy Judge, God will make the coming day of reckoning for all the nations work out for our lasting good.

17. In Hebrews 1:3-9, what did Paul write about the glorification of Jesus Christ as the Son of God?

18. By means of this Son, what will God do respecting the coming day of reckoning?



# Jesus Christ - victorious king with whom nations must reckon

BEFORE Jerusalem was destroyed by the Romans in 70 C.E., the Christians in that city needed to have it proved to them from the inspired Hebrew Scriptures that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, was made higher than the heavenly angels. So, in writing to those first-century Christians, the apostle Paul called their attention to these prophetic words that applied to the glorified Jesus Christ: "God is your throne forever, and the scepter of your kingdom is the scepter of uprightness. You loved righteousness, and you hated lawlessness. That is why God, your God, anointed you with the oil of exultation more than your partners."—Heb. 1: 8, 9.

<sup>2</sup> The kingdom of such a lover of righteousness and hater of lawlessness would surely be most beneficial for all of us on earth. Hence, the scepter that he wields is "the scepter of uprightness." No wonder that God serves as a "throne" for him, God being the only Source of his kingdom and the One upholding his kingship. All the nations of this world could no more overthrow his kingdom than they could overthrow God as Universal Sovereign and as "King of the nations." With his enthroned Son all nations must now reckon.

<sup>3</sup> The words that the writer to the Christianized Hebrews applied to the glorified Son of God were quoted from the Bible

book of Psalms, or from Psalm 45:6, 7. This proves that the whole psalm was prophetic. By studying it we shall gain information as to what God's anointed king will do for God's glory and man's lasting happiness.

<sup>4</sup> The sponsors of the psalm were official Levites who served in God's temple at Jerusalem. The psalm fairly radiates enthusiasm. The enthusiasm is that felt over the coming in of a good government in the hands of an incorruptible righteous ruler. The occasion is something heart-stirring, for the psalmist bursts forth with the words: "My heart has become astir with a goodly matter. I am saying: 'My works are concerning a king.' May my tongue be the stylus of a skilled copyist."

—Ps. 45:1 and the superscription.

<sup>5</sup> The "goodly matter" that stirred the heart of the inspired psalmist has proved to be an outstanding feature of what Jesus Christ called "this good news of the kingdom." So "goodly" was the Kingdom message that it deserved to "be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations," in view of the fact that the "end" of these nations has to come. (Matt. 24:14) Today, are our hearts stirred with the "goodly" theme of God's kingdom by Christ?

<sup>6</sup> Are we joining in with the psalmist and saying for everybody to hear: "My works

1. In Hebrews 1:8, 9, what did Paul write to the Christians in Jerusalem in order to prove God's Son far superior to angels?

2.

Why

did

God

become

the

"throne"

of

his

Son,

and

in

what

way?

3.

From

what

did

Paul

quote

the

words

of

Hebrews

1:8,

9,

and

what

does

this

prove?

4. The enthusiasm radiated by Psalm 45 is over what?

5. The "goodly matter" of Psalm 45 was the outstanding theme of whose preaching, and was worthy of what publicity?

6. (a) Our "works" are principally in behalf of what?

(b) How does our "tongue" become like the stylus of a skilled copyist?

are concerning a king"? We have no reason to be ashamed of this king, God's own anointed one. So our principal "works" should be our speaking, teaching and preaching about this royal Messiah. We are working mainly in behalf of his Kingdom interests, not in behalf of any of the worldly kingdoms that are nearing their disastrous end. We are stirred to use our tongues in advertising God's kingdom and his anointed King. What our tongues utter flows forth like the writing made by the pen or stylus of a scribe who is skilled in making manuscript copies of the Holy Scriptures. What flows forth from our tongues we also want to write down for others to read with joy. Better still, we are able today to put it in print, rolling it off high-speed printing presses by the millions of identical copies in scores of languages for distribution among the reading public world wide.

#### **AN INSPIRED ADDRESS TO THE KING**

<sup>7</sup> Is God's anointed king according to our liking? He should be, if we like the description given of him as the psalmist addresses him and compares him with earlier kings in the royal line of descent from King David of Jerusalem, saying: "You are indeed more handsome than the sons of men. Charm has been poured out upon your lips. That is why God has blessed you to time indefinite."—Ps. 45:2.

<sup>8</sup> Jesus Christ was a perfect man, as perfect as the first man Adam in the garden of Eden. The pictures that the artists of Christendom have painted of him doubtless fall far short of his real looks when he was on earth. The psalmist's description of him differs altogether from that given in Isaiah, chapter 53, where he is pictured as God's suffering servant. But when we view him in the light of what

he really is and does, he takes on a beauty that does not depend on facial features but that still surpasses the handsomeness of all other men, even that of Adam.

<sup>9</sup> The king's lips were well-formed. But it was what poured forth through those lips that added charm to them, and this charm was from God. Evil-minded enemies accused his lips of speaking blasphemy against God. Yet, even police officers who were sent out to arrest him and bring him into court were obliged to say to critics: "Never has another man spoken like this." (John 7:46) The message of God's kingdom that he spoke imparted charm to his lips. We who recognize him as our Teacher are charmed by what he says. As his disciples we add charm to our lips by repeating what he said.

<sup>10</sup> This handsome, charming King has God's indefinitely lasting blessing. The reason why is that he spoke what God taught him to speak. He preached and taught God's truth about the theocratic government that is to bless all mankind. When Jesus Christ was standing trial for his life and the Roman governor Pontius Pilate asked him whether he was a king, he fearlessly answered: "You yourself are saying that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone that is on the side of the truth listens to my voice." (John 18:37) For his faithfully telling the truth about the Kingdom, God blessed him with a resurrection from the dead. Moreover, God gave him a heavenly kingship, not only over the Israelite subjects of King David, but also over all mankind. God's indefinitely lasting blessing upon him portends good for all of us.

7. What question arises about the description given in Psalm 45:2?

8. What is it that contributes to the beauty or handsomeness of Jesus Christ?

9. What imparted charm to the lips of Jesus Christ, and what adds charm to our own lips?

10. Why did God bestow upon Jesus Christ his indefinitely lasting blessing, and how was this blessing expressed?

## THE APPOINTED ONE WITH WHOM NATIONS MUST RECKON

<sup>11</sup> When Jesus Christ was on earth as a perfect man, he had his enemies. It is not strange, then, that he still has enemies on earth after his enthronement as king in heaven since "the appointed times of the nations" ended in 1914. (Luke 21:24) Some hours before his martyr's death he said to his disciples: "If the world hates you, you know that it has hated me before it hated you." (John 15:18) Today the world has not turned to loving Jesus Christ. Not even Christendom has done so. Her persecution of the true Christlike disciples proves that. The worldly nations would like to block the enthroned Jesus Christ from ruling over mankind. They would like to limit his rulership to heaven and to keep rulership of the earth for themselves perpetually. So the cause of truth, humility and righteousness is implicated. Because the worldly nations have taken such an unyielding stand since the Gentile Times ended in 1914, they will have to reckon with Jesus Christ in a violent war.

<sup>12</sup> What would confront the newly enthroned Messianic king was foreseen by the psalmist under inspiration. Hence, he went on to write as with the "stylus of a skilled copyist": "Gird your sword upon your thigh, O mighty one, with your dignity and your splendor. And in your splendor go on to success; ride in the cause of truth and humility and righteousness, and your right hand will instruct you in fear-inspiring things. Your arrows are sharp—under you peoples keep falling—in the heart of the enemies of the king."—Ps. 45:3-5.

<sup>13</sup> Arrows require a bow for propulsion.

Hence, the psalmist's description helps us to identify who is pictured in Revelation 6:1, 2, where the Christian apostle John speaks of a vision and says: "I saw when the Lamb [Jesus Christ] opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures say with a voice as of thunder: 'Come!' And I saw, and, look! a white horse; and the one seated upon it had a bow; and a crown was given him, and he went forth conquering and to complete his conquest." That crowned Bowman astride the white horse pictured the glorified Jesus Christ proceeding to war against his enemies. Victory to a completion is what he aims for. His conquest must be earth wide.

<sup>14</sup> In his dignity and splendor, as of an officially inaugurated king, Jesus Christ girds himself with the sword of war in order to lift it up against the opposing nations on earth. Being no longer a man of flesh and blood, but clothed with heavenly powers, he is now indeed a "mighty one." The prophecy of Isaiah 9:6 says that one of his titles was to be "Mighty God." The heavily armed nations of today must yet learn to know him as such a mighty one.

<sup>15</sup> Once, like King Solomon at his coronation, Jesus Christ rode a peaceful ass when he made his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, offering himself to her as the king of David's line. (Matt. 21:1-14; Zech. 9:9) But when, shortly, he rides forth in the cause of truth, humility and righteousness, he will, figuratively speaking, ride a war steed. Properly so, for he has a reckoning to carry out with those who violate truth, humility and righteousness.

<sup>16</sup> A few days after Jesus rode the ass into Jerusalem, he told Governor Pilate

11. What did Jesus, shortly before his death, tell his disciples about world hatred, and why will the nations have to reckon with him in a violent war?

12. Because of what would confront the newly enthroned King, what did Psalm 45:3-5 tell him to do?

13. How does the psalmist's description help us to identify the one seen in vision in Revelation 6:1, 2, and who is the one identified?

14. Why is the newly inaugurated King a "mighty one," even as foretold in Isaiah 9:6?

15. In contrast with his triumphal ride into Jerusalem, why will Jesus Christ ride a horse when reckoning with the nations?

16. What truth have national governments trampled underfoot despite notification by Jehovah's Witnesses?



that he had come into the world to bear witness to the truth. That was primarily the truth about God's kingdom, about which he had just borne witness to Pilate. (1 Tim. 6:13) Today the governments of nations trample that truth underfoot, even though Jehovah by His witnesses has notified them that the Gentile Times of world domination by them ran out in 1914.

<sup>17</sup> Worldly rulers show no humility before God. They do not yield peacefully to earth's rightful King, Jesus Christ, who showed the greatest humility before God and who championed all the helpless humble ones on earth, especially his persecuted

17. The cause of what class has Jesus Christ championed, and why must he fight for a new order of righteousness?

disciples. Now in these "last days" man's unrighteousness has "gone to seed," with more and more lawlessness spreading alarmingly. Mankind needs to be given a new start in righteousness. Hence, the Warrior King Jesus Christ must ride in the cause of righteousness and fight for the establishment of a new order over all the earth.—Isa. 26:9.

<sup>18</sup> In modern times, warfare has gone far beyond the use of swords and arrows. Military superpowers now count on using nuclear and neutron bombs and intercontinental ballistic missiles. But they should not think that the glorified Jesus Christ cannot surprise them with scientific weapons of war even superior to theirs. Psalm 45:4 sounds the warning to the nations that Christ's right hand will instruct him in "fear-inspiring things." His superhuman missiles will not be less accurate than man-made missiles in striking their human targets. With deadly aim, they will hit "the heart of the enemies of the king." The wholesale slaughter resulting is indicated by the wartime news release that under him "peoples keep falling" in his fight for truth, humility and righteousness.

—Ps. 45:5.

<sup>19</sup> People of Christendom today may say that such a prospect pictures Jesus Christ as a spiller of blood and his heavenly Father as a cruel, bloodthirsty God. Such persons may claim to be shocked at the presenting of God and Jesus Christ in such a way. But how do they feel about the nations of Christendom of which such persons are patriotic citizens? Are the hands of such nations clean from the stain of blood, shed, not in theocratic warfare, but in unchristian warfare? Let such blood-guilty nations recall that, after the deluge

18. What warning is given to the nations by the words to the King, "your right hand will instruct you in fear-inspiring things," and how is the wholesale slaughter indicated in Psalm 45:5?

19. What should persons "shocked" by such a picture of Christ and his heavenly Father ask about their own nations, and how will the earth polluted with innocent blood be cleansed?

that wiped out all of earth's population except Noah and his family inside the ark, God said to them: "Anyone shedding man's blood, by man will his own blood be shed, for in God's image he made man." (Gen. 9:6) Christendom has led the nations in shedding blood by political wars, religious crusades and persecuting conscientious Christians who stuck to the Bible. In what way, then, will the ground polluted by human blood be cleansed? Only by the shedding of the blood of the bloodguilty to balance the scales of justice.

<sup>20</sup> This harmonizes with God's law concerning the cities of refuge that he set up in Israel for unintentional manslayers. By means of the prophet Moses, he said: "You must not pollute the land in which you are; because it is blood that pollutes the land, and for the land there may be no atonement respecting the blood that has been spilled upon it except by the blood of the one spilling it. And you must not defile the land in which you are dwelling, in the midst of which I am residing; for I Jehovah am residing in the midst of the sons of Israel." (Num. 35:33, 34) If ever our blood-polluted earth is to be made fit in order that Paradise may be established here for man's everlasting home, it must be cleansed. The innocent blood spilled upon it must be atoned for by the blood of the nations who today threaten us with a third world war.

<sup>21</sup> For this just reason all the nations must shortly reckon with Jesus Christ. He must gain the victory over them. Otherwise the claims of justice would not be satisfied. Jehovah God will give him the victory over them. The combining of their forces in the United Nations organization will not spare them utter defeat. They

20. How does this harmonize with God's law concerning cities of refuge for unintentional manslayers, and how will our earth be made fit for Paradise to be established upon it?

21. Why with respect to justice must God give Christ the victory, and what good will the nations' combining forces in the United Nations do them?

will fight against the Kingdom interests of the once-sacrificed Lamb of God, and concerning this the last book of the Bible says: "These have one thought, and so they give their power and authority to the wild beast [the United Nations]. These will battle with the Lamb, but, because he is Lord of lords and King of kings, the Lamb will conquer them." (Rev. 17:13, 14) About that fight we further read:

<sup>22</sup> "Look! a white horse. And the one seated upon it is called Faithful and True, and he judges and carries on war in righteousness. . . . Upon his head are many diadems. . . . He is arrayed with an outer garment sprinkled with blood, and the name he is called is The Word of God. Also, the armies that were in heaven were following him on white horses, and they were clothed in white, clean, fine linen. . . . And upon his outer garment, even upon his thigh, he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.

<sup>23</sup> "And I saw the wild beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to wage the war with the

<sup>22, 23. (a)</sup> What does Revelation 19:11-16, 19 further tell us about that fight? (b) Where is the war fought, and how is the innocent blood shed on earth atoned for, in cleansing the earth?

one seated on the horse and with his army." (Rev. 19:11-16, 19) Because the gathered nations insist on their national sovereignty and perpetual man-rule of all the earth, they force the fight that ensues. The world situation to which they bring matters to a climax is likened to the battlefield that, in Hebrew, is called Har-Magedon. (Rev. 16:14-16) There "the war of the great day of God the Almighty" is fought. There the blood of all the nations must atone for all the innocent blood with which they polluted the earth. Thus the whole earth will be cleansed for Paradise to be established here earth wide.

<sup>24</sup> What a day of reckoning that will be for all the nations of the earth, whether inside or outside Christendom! Will any of those nations survive that day? That was the vital question that we raised earlier in this discussion. And now the answer definitely is, No! Not one! That is why we, who are citizens of these doomed nations, should be seriously concerned. We should like to learn how we as individuals can survive guilt-free.

<sup>24.</sup> Will any of the nations survive that day of reckoning, and about what should we as individuals be concerned?



## How the day of reckoning is worked out for our good

THE "war of the great day of God the Almighty" at Har-Magedon is inexorably ahead for all earthly nations.

<sup>1.</sup> Why will the nations not gain the victory at Har-Magedon, and how will their accounts on the day of reckoning be settled?

Although heavily armed as never before for global warfare, they could never be expected to gain the victory over the Almighty God. As Commander in Chief of all the heavenly armies, he will give the

victory to his grand Field Marshal, Jesus Christ, because this one is "King of kings and Lord of lords." He will hold the final day of reckoning with all the opposed nations. Weighed in the scales of divine justice, they will be found wanting. Their accounts will be settled by their everlasting destruction.—Rev. 19:11-21; 17:14.

<sup>2</sup> The victory at Har-Magedon will vindicate the universal sovereignty of God the Almighty. Because he successfully uses Jesus Christ to gain this victory, God will count him worthy to retain his heavenly throne. As long as God lasts, the throne of his anointed King Jesus Christ will last. This important fact is emphasized by the words of Psalm 45:6, 7, which the psalmist addresses to the King, saying: "God is your throne to time indefinite, even forever; the scepter of your kingship is a scepter of uprightness. You have loved righteousness and you hate wickedness. That is why God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of exultation more than your partners." These words we recognize to be the ones quoted by the apostle Paul to prove Christ's superiority over the angels. (Heb. 1:7-9) Because he loved righteousness and hated wickedness or lawlessness, Christ's scepter was bound to be wielded in behalf of uprightness. This betokens good for mankind.

<sup>3</sup> As a man on earth, Jesus had kings as forefathers. The psalmist mentions that he would have earthly forefathers. Many of these, from King Jehoiachin back to King David, had been his "partners" in sharing the kingdom set up by God and in sitting on "Jehovah's throne." (1 Chron. 29:23; 2 Chron. 13:5, 8; Matt. 1:6-12) Those royal forefathers doubtless exulted in their kingship over God's chosen people. But none of those royal "partners" could

feel exultation to the extent that the glorified Jesus Christ feels it. His kingship is far superior to theirs, it being heavenly, yes, superangelic. Jehovah, the God of Jesus Christ, anointed him more abundantly with the "oil of exultation" because of his perfect, incorruptible devotion to God's righteousness.

#### MARRIAGE AND CHILDREN

<sup>4</sup> After Jesus Christ has waged a victorious war against his enemies on earth, he can turn his attention to peaceful pursuits. The inspired psalmist pictures him as getting married and raising a family. This might seem surprising, because the Son of God did not become a man on earth in order to marry one of the daughters of men. He did not follow the course of certain angelic "sons of God" in the days of Noah. (Gen. 6:1-4) So a person might wonder how the further words of Psalm 45 could be true:

<sup>5</sup> "All your garments are myrrh and aloeswood and cassia; out from the grand ivory palace stringed instruments themselves have made you rejoice. The daughters of kings are among your precious women. The queenly consort has taken her stand at your right hand in gold of Ophir. Listen, O daughter, and see, and incline your ear; and forget your people and your father's house. And the king will long for your prettiness, for he is your lord, so bow down to him. The daughter of Tyre also with a gift—the rich ones of the people will soften your own face. The king's daughter is all glorious within the house; her clothing is with settings of gold. In woven apparel she will be brought to the king."—Ps. 45:8-14a.

<sup>6</sup> Who, now, is the "king's daughter," who is brought to the longing king for

2. Why were the words of Psalm 45:6, 7 addressed to the King after the fight, and what does his wielding of the scepter betoken for mankind?

3. Who were the "partners" of Jesus Christ, and why was the "oil of exultation" with which he was anointed more than theirs?

4, 5. What does the psalmist, in Psalm 45:8-14a, show the victorious King as doing next, and why might this be surprising to us?

6. Who is this "king's daughter" that is brought to the King, and what did John the Baptizer have to do with her?



marriage as formal instrumental music gladdens the occasion? She is indeed the daughter of a King, namely, Jehovah God, the "King of eternity." (Rev. 15:3) Thus she is a princess. She is the glorified Christian congregation of 144,000 members,

these being viewed as a unit, as a composite body. John the Baptist had the honorable privilege of introducing the first members of this bridal company to Jesus Christ on earth. John said: "He that has the bride is the bridegroom. However, the

friend of the bridegroom, when he stands and hears him, has a great deal of joy on account of the voice of the bridegroom. Therefore this joy of mine has been made full.”—John 3:29; 1:35-42; Rev. 14:1-5.

<sup>7</sup> Likewise, by making disciples of Christ, the apostle Paul and the other apostles espoused them like a “chaste virgin” to Jesus Christ as the “one husband.” (2 Cor. 11:2) Like an engaged girl who leaves her parents’ home to join her husband and live with him, the disciples who are promised in marriage to the heavenly Bridegroom must forget their own earthly people and earthly father’s house and set their affections on their heavenly Fiancé, Jesus Christ. After finishing their earthly course faithfully in virgin chastity, they must await their Bridegroom’s voice as he calls them forth in a resurrection from the dead. (1 Thess. 4:16, 17; John 6:54) In heaven, all the 144,000 together constitute the “daughter” of Jehovah the King, for by means of His spirit he begot them as their adoptive Father. Unitedly they form the New Jerusalem, which is called “the bride, the Lamb’s wife.” On that occasion she is “prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.”—Rev. 21:2, 9.

<sup>8</sup> It is a royal event, this marriage of a King’s son to a King’s daughter. This makes it fitting that royalty should attend, a “queenly consort” and princesses. All of God’s heavenly organization, like a queenly “wife” of this “King of eternity,” rejoices like a mother, the angelic members of that organization rejoicing together as if they were princesses. All these heavenly creatures bear in mind that Jehovah God made all of this possible, and so they say: “Let us rejoice and be overjoyed, and let us give him the glory, because the marriage of the Lamb has arrived and his

wife has prepared herself.”—Rev. 19:7.

<sup>9</sup> However, will anyone on earth rejoice with the holy heavens over this brilliant event of universal importance? Yes! Psalm 45:14b, 15 indicates this, as it goes on to say: “The virgins in her [the bride’s] train as her companions are being brought in to you [the King Bridegroom]. They will be brought with rejoicing and joyfulness; they will enter into the palace of the king.” Where, now, does the rejoicing of these virgin companions of the Bride take place? It is true that they are said to enter into the palace of the king, who is heavenly, but do they marry the king? No! Of course not, for they do not get as far as even being espoused to him. So they do not get begotten by God’s spirit to heavenly life.—John 3:3, 5.

<sup>10</sup> The members of the “king’s daughter” class are espoused to Christ down here on earth, hence, while they are still human. Therefore, the bridesmaids who are merely “in her train” and are not in line for marriage to the Bridegroom King would be an earthly class. They make their appearance on earth when the heavenly marriage is about to be consummated. Those virgin companions therefore picture the “great crowd” who began appearing in this “time of the end” and who join themselves to the remnant of the bride class before these leave the earthly scene to join the Bridegroom Jesus Christ in heaven. Quite in keeping with this, the “great crowd,” as foretold in Revelation 7:9-17, began forming in 1935 and associating themselves with the last members of the spirit-begotten bride class. By being preserved through the coming “great tribulation,” they will be alive here on earth when the heavenly marriage takes place. At that event they will greatly rejoice.—Ps. 45:15.

7. To whom did the apostles, by making disciples, espouse these, and in heaven what do these all together constitute?

8. Because of the nature of the event, who properly attend according to Psalm 45, and who are those who attend in fulfillment of the psalm?

9. Where does the rejoicing of the “virgins in her train as her companions” occur, and why there?

10. Whom do the “virgins in her train as her companions” picture today, and how is it that they are on earth when the marriage takes place in heaven?

### "PRINCES IN ALL THE EARTH"

<sup>11</sup> When on earth, Jesus Christ had illustrious forefathers. But his present and future glory does not depend upon any luster imparted by such forefathers. With him, the royal dynasty of King David remains fixed, for he is the Permanent Heir of King David and his kingdom will never be passed on to a successor. (Luke 1:31-33) However, Psalm 45:16 pictures his marriage to the congregation of 144,000 glorified disciples as being fruitful, just as marriage was meant to be. Hence, this verse, addressed to the Bridegroom King, says: "In place of your forefathers there will come to be your sons, whom you will appoint as princes in all the earth."

<sup>12</sup> None of these "sons" will become the successor to the heavenly King. A princely station on earth is the highest station to which any of these "sons" could attain. For the appointment of "princes in all the earth" there will have to be many of them. The King will have sufficient "sons" for this purpose, for, in addition to his title "Mighty God," another of his titles will be "Eternal Father." (Isa. 9:6) His perfect human sacrifice for all mankind enabled him to become such. By that ransom sacrifice he bought them all.

<sup>13</sup> Consequently the King can become the life-giver to the "great crowd" of bridesmaids who survive the "great tribulation" and come under his 1,000-year kingdom. He can also become the father to all the dead of mankind, including his earthly forefathers. How? By resurrecting them from the dead back to life here on earth. (John 5:28, 29) The worthy God-fearing males among all such earthly chil-

11. Does Christ's present and future glory depend on any fame of his earthly forefathers, and how does Psalm 45:16 show his marriage to the congregation in heaven to be fruitful?

12. What is the highest station to which these "sons" on earth can attain, and why will the King have enough of them for appointments "In all the earth"?

13. How will the King become the life-giving Father to all the ransomed dead, and how will the "great crowd" be able to furnish the King with his first "princes"?

dren he can make "princes in all the earth." In this way he will exercise his rulership around the whole globe. Logically, the "great crowd" that survive the "great tribulation" and become the first earthly subjects of his kingdom will furnish the King with his first "princes" to serve as earthly representatives of him.

<sup>14</sup> What a grand privilege that will be! These "princes" from among the "great crowd" will be joined by others in official service, for the forefathers of Jesus Christ and other faithful men from Abel to John the Baptizer will be resurrected and be made his princely representatives. What a grand, incorruptible government such an arrangement will guarantee for all mankind! This is the greatly needed government that Jehovah God purposed to establish to replace today's national governments that must shortly reckon with his victorious King, Jesus Christ.

<sup>15</sup> Like the heart of the inspired psalmist of old, are not our hearts stirred with such "goodly" prospects for the near future? Yes, and in gladsome response our tongues take up the closing words of the psalmist that he addressed to the charming King whose government is backed by God's own throne: "I will make mention of your name throughout all generations to come. That is why peoples themselves will laud you to time indefinite, even forever."

—Ps. 45:17.

<sup>16</sup> The psalmist wanted to live long—"throughout all generations to come"—just to make mention of the king's name. He did not say the king's name. Really he did not, in fact, know the name of the king of whom he prophetically wrote under inspiration. But we today can identify the King of whom the psalmist propheti-

14. How will these "princes" from the "great crowd" be joined by others in official service on earth, and what will this governmental arrangement guarantee for all mankind?

15, 16. (a) Why, according to Psalm 45:17, did the psalmist want to live a long time? (b) Who knows the actual name of the King, and is it worthy of being mentioned and lauded for so long?

cally wrote, and we know his name. It is Jesus Christ, the Son of Jehovah God. Is his name worthy of being mentioned "throughout all generations to come"? The psalmist foretold that there would be "peoples" who would think so and who would therefore "laud" the bearer of this name "to time indefinite, even forever."

17 Today there is set before us the opportunity of being preserved alive through the coming day of reckoning for all the nations and of entering into the blessings of God's kingdom that will supplant them all. Even now by faith we can exult with

17. So now is the time favorable for our doing what, and our doing so will signify what for us?

His anointed King, for this King's victory at Har-Magedon is certain and his reign over a cleansed earth for 1,000 years is sure. Ah, then, now—today—is the time favorable for us to put ourselves among those "peoples" who will laud the victorious King "to time indefinite, even forever." This will redound to the glory of Jehovah God, his heavenly Father, who himself is the supreme "King of eternity" as well as the "King of the nations." Our doing this will mean for us a life of lauding and of praising His anointed King "even forever." This will impart real significance to life. It will set before us a lofty purpose for our living to all eternity.

## Why keep free from murmuring?

"SOME people never seem to be satisfied." How often have you heard that statement? It is true that in these critical times many have a murmuring attitude. They have doubts and questionings about nearly everything. But is it wise for a Christian to allow such an attitude to develop? The apostle Paul evidently did not think so, for in writing to the Philippians congregation he said: "Keep doing all things free from murmurings and arguments, that you may come to be blameless and innocent, children of God without a blemish."—Phil. 2:14, 15.

These words of Paul bring questions to mind. Just how serious can murmuring become? Can it affect my relationship with others? With the congregation? What does Jehovah think of me if I have a murmuring attitude? What can I do to avoid this spirit?

### ANCIENT EXAMPLES

That murmuring is to be taken seriously can be understood from what Paul had to say about it in his first letter to fellow believers at Corinth. The apostle said: "Neither be murmurers, just as some of them [the Israelites] murmured, only to perish by the destroyer." (1 Cor. 10:10) Consider, for example, the time when Moses sent 12 men, one from each tribe of Israel, to spy out the land that Jehovah had promised to them for an inheritance. This was shortly after the Israelites had left Egypt and were in the wilderness. When these 12 spies returned to the Israelite camp, only two of them, Joshua and Caleb, gave a favorable report, urging the people to act courageously and enter the land. The other 10 painted a discouraging picture. They referred to the region as a "land that eats up its inhabitants," and said: "All the people whom we saw in the midst of it are men of extraordinary size."—Num. 13:32.

At this, the faithless Israelites "began to murmur against Moses and Aaron, and all the assembly began to say against them: 'If only we had died in the land

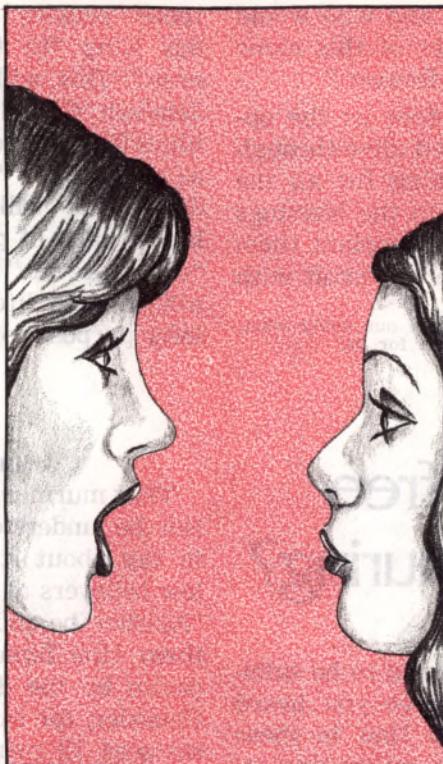
of Egypt, or if only we had died in this wilderness! And why is Jehovah bringing us to this land to fall by the sword?" "Yes, they were murmuring against Jehovah! Because of this all of those men 20 years of age and over, with the exception of Joshua, Caleb and the Levites, perished in the wilderness. They never were allowed to enter the Promised Land. (Num. 14:2, 3, 26-30) What a price to pay for their murmuring!

This illustrates what can happen to an entire complaining nation. Other examples show that it is just as serious for *individuals* to murmur against Jehovah. Consider the case of Miriam, the sister of Moses. On one occasion she, along with her brother Aaron, murmured, asking: "Is it just by Moses alone that Jehovah has spoken? Is it not by us also that he has spoken?" Significantly, the account adds: "And Jehovah was listening." (Num. 12:1, 2) What was the result? Miriam, who evidently took the lead in this complaint, was humiliated by God. How? By being afflicted with leprosy and having to remain outside the camp for seven days until she was cleansed.—Num. 12:9-15.

#### WHERE DOES MURMURING LEAD?

We can learn much from these examples. But you may wonder why murmuring is so serious. Well, murmuring is not simply a just complaint about some wrongdoing. It is an expression of dissatisfaction or discontent and often is caused by

placing too much emphasis on oneself. A person who complains in this manner attaches too much importance to his own feelings or position, drawing attention to himself rather than to God. This causes dissension among spiritual brothers and, if not checked, leads to divisions in the congregation.—1 Cor. 1:10-13.



This is so because a murmurer never keeps his complaints to himself. He invariably involves others. Why? Doubtless because he hopes that they, too, will become dissatisfied and will sympathize with him.

It is so easy for this to happen. Suppose, for instance, that a Christian starts to complain to you about a certain appointed elder in the congregation. He criticizes the way the elder, or overseer, handles his

parts on the platform, or the way he cares for certain congregation duties. If you listen to the complainer, you can begin to think as he does. Then, as you observe the elder, you could be saying to yourself: 'Now that I think of it, what my friend says about this elder is true. I never thought of it that way before.' That is just what the murmurer wants you to think. Until the seed of discontent was planted in your mind, the elder's activities did not bother you. But now they do bother you. Why, eventually nothing that he does is right in your sight! So you, too, begin to develop a spirit of complaint. Obviously, this is not fitting in a congregation of Jehovah's people.

But there is something more to consider. Continuous murmuring often leads to other undesirable traits, such as slander and reviling, which can seriously affect our relationship with Jehovah. (1 Cor. 6:10) When the Israelites murmured against Moses, how did God view this? Jehovah pointedly asked: "How long will this evil assembly have this murmuring that they are carrying on *against me?*" (Num. 14:27) To Jehovah this was a rebellious complaint against his divine leadership! That was serious!

The disciple Jude wrote about murmurers who had made their way into the early Christian congregation. They were individuals who were "disregarding lordship and speaking abusively of glorious ones," or responsible men in the congregation. Certainly, these murmurers did not have divine approval and the faithful Christian of today wisely shuns their wicked course.—Jude 8, 16.

#### **ARE COMPLAINTS ALWAYS OBJECTIONABLE?**

Certainly, then, a murmuring spirit and the constant voicing of unfounded complaints must be avoided by a person desiring to please Jehovah. But does this mean that all complaints are unwarranted, objectionable and displeasing to God?

No. According to the Scriptures, "Jehovah said: 'The cry of complaint about Sodom and Gomorrah, yes, it is loud, and their sin, yes, it is very heavy.' " God did not ignore that "cry of complaint." Rather, he looked into the matter, saying: "I am quite determined to go down that I may see whether they act altogether according to the outcry over it that has come to me, and, if not, I can get to know it." (Gen. 18:20, 21) Jehovah found that the loud "cry of complaint" was warranted, and he therefore destroyed the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.—Gen. 19:24, 25.

Yes, complaints can be proper at times. Hence, appointed Christian elders should

not view all complaints as being unwarranted and objectionable. Jesus' apostles did not take that position. In Jerusalem, shortly after Pentecost of 33 C.E., "a murmuring arose on the part of the Greek-speaking Jews against the Hebrew-speaking Jews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution." Consequently, "the twelve" looked into the matter and corrected the situation by appointing "seven certified men" over the "necessary business" of food distribution.—Acts 6:1-6.

Christian elders today need to realize that injustices or other wrongs may give rise to some legitimate complaint. They cannot properly take the view that everything done is bound to be right and that nothing should ever be subject to any criticism whatsoever. Proverbs 21:13 fittingly says: "As for anyone stopping up his ear from the complaining cry of the lowly one, he himself also will call and not be answered."

Appointed elders themselves must avoid having a complaining spirit toward their fellow believers. Rather than criticizing and never being satisfied with what is done by their Christian brothers and sisters, overseers need to be encouraging, upbuilding. (1 Cor. 8:1) This will go a long way in combating any possible spirit of complaint within the congregation.—Compare 2 Timothy 4:22.

#### **SHOW LOVE IN IMITATION OF CHRIST**

It is important that we dispel any spirit of complaint, for such an attitude can lead only to disaster. Rather than allowing ourselves to become murmurers, how much better it is to display the quality of love! Murmurers and complainers cannot at the same time be following the commandment to love their neighbors. (Matt. 22:39) Murmuring does harm to the murmurer as well as to the one spoken against. Love does good to all. (1 Cor. 8:1; 13:4-8) So

why not follow the 'kingly law of love'?—Jas. 2:8.

Rather than listening to those who grumble and complain, we would do well to keep in mind the humble attitude of Christ Jesus. "Although he was existing in God's form, [Jesus] gave no consideration to a seizure, namely, that he should be equal to God." Instead, "he humbled himself and became obedient as far as death, yes, death on a torture stake." What a fine example for us to follow! No rebelling there at the way things were done!—Phil. 2:5-8.

To the contrary, Jesus displayed deep loyalty to his heavenly Father. He also showed great concern when others were stumbled. On one occasion, Jesus said to his disciples: "It is unavoidable that causes for stumbling should come. Nevertheless, woe to the one through whom they come! It would be of more advantage to him if a millstone were suspended from his neck and he were thrown into the sea than for him to stumble one of these little ones." (Luke 17:1, 2) Can you imagine Jesus showing such compassion for others and at the same time being a murmur?

Jesus was greatly rewarded for his loyal service. "He who serves me must follow me, and where I go, there will I make my servant go also." (John 12:26) "If any man come after me, let him not look back, for there are many who will turn back because of the cost of the way." (Luke 14:34)

## A Wise Proverb

"For a foolish one true wisdom is too high; in the gate he will not open his mouth," said Solomon in Proverbs 24:7.

How perceptive an instruction this brief proverb is! For the foolish man, true wisdom is too high, as if beyond his reach. He is unwilling to put forth the effort to attain it. An alternative rendering of the original Hebrew is that "wisdom is as corals." Among the ancients attractive, ornamental coral was costly. It could be said that for the foolish one true wisdom is too expensive. He is not willing to pay the price

of obedience to his Father as well as his loving concern for others. By means of Christ's resurrection and ascension to heaven he was exalted above every other created thing. (Phil. 2:9-11) While on earth, he was able to understand the frailties and problems of fallen man. Now, in his exalted position, Jesus is able to "sympathize with our weaknesses" and come to our aid. (Heb. 2:18; 4:15) We, too, can be assured of many blessings by continuing to show loving concern for others, not complaining against them.

What, then, must we conclude? That a murmuring and complaining spirit results in dissatisfaction and discontent. This can even lead to rebellion against God. Do you want that to happen to you? Or, is it your desire to live a life that is rich and satisfying, knowing that you have the blessing and approval of the heavenly Creator? Surely, you desire his favor. So, "keep doing all things free from murmurings and arguments, that you may come to be blameless and innocent, children of God without a blemish in among a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you are shining as illuminators in the world."—Phil. 2:14, 15.

of the exertion or to make the sacrifices needed to acquire it.

In ancient Israel the older men of wisdom gathered at the city gate to render judgments over disputes and to offer counsel. That was no place for the foolish one to speak up. He would not even be found there seeking wise advice. Rather than opening his mouth in the gate, he would be elsewhere spouting his foolish chatter.

By graphically stating the facts about the "foolish one," Solomon helps us to appreciate the true value of wisdom.

# INSIGHT ON THE NEWS

● "Frenzied dancing on a carpet of burning coals in the center of the village" is the way a recent Associated Press dispatch described the scene. Pagan rites in some Asiatic land? No, they are Greek "firewalkers" celebrating the Greek Orthodox holiday of Saints Helen and Constantine. After embracing images of the two "saints," the fire walkers are said to go into a "trance-like state." This custom began in the 13th century when fire burned through a Bulgarian village, including a church dedicated to the two "saints." When some men allegedly heard the images "groan," they braved the fire to rescue them and supposedly came out unburned.

Greek Orthodox authorities brand the custom as "idolatrous" and "pagan." Yet, is the Church guiltless when it encourages the use of images in the first place? Clearly, God knew the mind of men when he commanded his people not to make any graven images, saying: "You must not bow down to them nor be induced to serve them."—Ex. 20:4, 5.

● Often people base their opinions of other persons or groups on what they have heard or read, without ever having made real contact. A United Methodist minister recently admitted this to be the case for him regarding Jehovah's Witnesses.

**Firsthand Experience Surprises**  
"I even taught a short course comparing the teachings of the Witnesses and those of our United Methodist Church," he wrote in the Methodist periodical "The Circuit Rider." "But until this year I had never been inside one of their halls." So he and his wife attended a meeting at a Kingdom Hall to see for themselves.

"We were not prepared for what we sensed as a genuine caring on the part of these people. At no time, however, did we feel under any pressure from them. . . . we felt a more true welcome from them than in any of the 20 other congregations we had visited during our sabbatical. . . .

"My primal picture of the Witness has been of a compulsive automaton, reciting his list

of prooftexts. That picture was shattered by this congregation of warmly-smiling, relaxed people who obviously cared deeply about each other and the stranger, even as they cared intensely to understand God's Word.

"There was a third surprise. My impression had been that the Jehovah's Witnesses were so preoccupied with their dates and prophecies of last things that they gave little attention to other biblical teachings and to the spirit of our Lord himself. The discussion they held on the morning of our first visit showed that my surmise was not based on fact; indeed more emphasis was being placed on having the mind of Jesus than is often evident in our classes. . . . Our experience suggests there may be more to the appeal of the Jehovah's Witnesses than their neatly packaged doctrines."—September 1978, p. 9.

● New details have come to light about the long-exposed hoax of evolution's so-called Piltdown Man. Blame for perpetrating the hoax, which misled many scientists for decades, had been attributed solely to a lawyer, Arthur Dawson. However, new information indicates that a decidedly unscientific clash between two scientists was also involved.

A professor who worked closely at Oxford University with Professor William Sollas recently revealed that the latter harbored hatred for Sir Arthur Smith Woodward, Keeper of Geology at the British Museum. Woodward had lightly dismissed an invention of Sollas, who apparently decided on retaliating with "a trap set by one eminent geologist to make a monkey out of another," as the New York "Times" describes it.

Sollas is said to have made the forgery, which Dawson later "found." Woodward was deceived and backed the find with all his Museum authority. Thousands of evolutionists accepted Piltdown Man as evolutionary fact from 1912 until the mid-1950's, when it was finally exposed. If scientists can so gullibly accept such "evidence" to support their pet theories, should we be so gullible as to accept everything science says in contradiction of the Bible?

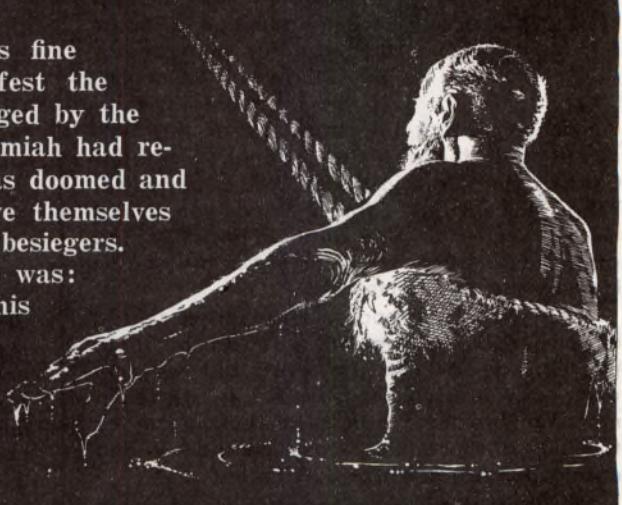


# EBED-MELECH MAN OF COURAGE

**E**BED-MELECH was not an Israelite but an Ethiopian eunuch. He served at the court of Zedekiah, the last Judean king to reign at Jerusalem. Though surrounded by corrupt, godless officials, Ebed-melech distinguished himself as a courageous, compassionate man who had high regard for what is right.

At the time that Ebed-melech's fine qualities became especially manifest the city of Jerusalem was being besieged by the Chaldeans. Jehovah's prophet Jeremiah had repeatedly declared that the city was doomed and had encouraged the people to save themselves by surrendering themselves to the besiegers. His message from the Most High was: "The one continuing to dwell in this city is the one that will die by the sword, by the famine and by the pestilence. But the one going out to the Chaldeans is the one that will keep living and that will certainly come

to have his soul as a spoil and alive." This enraged certain princes who acted as King Zedekiah's advisers. They were bent on defending the city at all costs, never capitulating. Refusing to recognize Jeremiah's words as inspired of God, they regarded the prophet as an obstacle in carrying out a successful defense of Jerusalem.—Jer. 38:1-3.



These princes, therefore, went to King Zedekiah and accused Jeremiah of breaking down the morale of the fighting men and that of the remaining populace. They requested that the prophet be put to death as a seditious who had no interest in the people's peace or welfare. (Jer. 38:4) Weak monarch that he was, Zedekiah gave in to their demand, saying: "Look! He is in your hands. For there is nothing at all in which the king himself can prevail against you." (Jer. 38:5) Zedekiah had followed their counsel in the prosecution of the fight against the Chaldeans, and so he felt obliged to yield to them in removing a man whom they considered an undermining influence to the furtherance of their war aims. While not specifically authorizing Jeremiah's execution, Zedekiah virtually signed the prophet's death warrant by giving the princes full control over his life.

These princes, however, may have felt a certain fear that restrained them from becoming directly involved in bloodshed. Nevertheless, they determined to kill the prophet without violence. They lowered him into a miry cistern, there to die. —Jer. 38:6.

While under custody in the Courtyard of the Guard, Jeremiah, by royal order, had received a loaf of bread as his daily ration. (Jer. 37:21) But now that he was in the miry cistern that royal command was no longer in force. With the food supply being virtually exhausted in Jerusalem, there was certainly no hope of Jeremiah's receiving food from anyone. His death was just a matter of time.

When Ebed-melech heard about what the princes had done to the prophet, he acted without delay. He did not cautiously wait for an opportunity to get a private audience with King Zedekiah. To the Ethiopian eunuch, personal safety was not the prime consideration. An innocent man's life was in danger, and so Ebed-melech

willingly put his own welfare in a secondary position. He approached the monarch publicly in the open area adjoining the gate of Benjamin. This gate was likely in the northern part of the city, the direction from which the greatest pressure would have been coming from the besieging Chaldeans.—Jer. 38:7.

Courageously, the Ethiopian eunuch pleaded for Jeremiah's life. He did not fear to condemn the action of the princes, even though he knew that the one to whom he was appealing had yielded to their demands. In a few words, Ebed-melech stated the facts: "O my lord the king, these men have done bad in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet, whom they have thrown into the cistern, so that he will die where he is because of the famine. For there is no bread anymore in the city." —Jer. 38:9.

Surprisingly, Zedekiah reversed his decision respecting Jeremiah, authorizing Ebed-melech to effect the rescue of the prophet. The king said: "Take in your charge from this place thirty men, and you must get Jeremiah the prophet up out of the cistern before he dies." (Jer. 38:10) It is not likely that 30 men were needed to pull Jeremiah out of the cistern. But, in view of the intense hatred for the prophet and his message, there was a strong possibility of interference from those who wanted Jeremiah dead. While a few men might be overpowered, 30 men would have been sufficient to cope with any problems that might have arisen in connection with the planned rescue.

Ebed-melech immediately followed through on Zedekiah's command. The manner in which he did it further testifies to his compassion and concern for the prophet. Since the cistern was deep and Jeremiah had sunk into the mire, considerable force would have been needed to pull him out. Hence, bare ropes could have cut into the prophet's flesh. Also, it may well have

been that when Jeremiah was lowered into the cistern originally, this was done roughly. So, there may have been sores in his armpits. Ebed-melech evidently gave careful consideration to the situation. He got worn-out rags and worn-out pieces of cloth and, by means of ropes, let these down to Jeremiah, to be placed under the prophet's armpits and over the ropes. Thus, the rags and cloth served to cushion the pressure from the ropes that were used to pull up Jeremiah from the cistern.—Jer. 38:11-13.

Why was Ebed-melech so courageous? Though a foreigner living among a people that brought great reproach upon Jehovah God, he came to trust in the Most High. Yes, trust in Jehovah was the basis for Ebed-melech's courageously coming to the aid of a hated prophet. For this, the Ethiopian eunuch did not lose his reward. Through Jeremiah, he was given Jehovah's assurance: "Here I am bringing true my words upon this city for calamity and not for good, and they will certainly happen before you in that day. And I will deliver you in that day, . . . and you will not be given into the hand of the men of whom

you yourself are scared. For I shall without fail furnish you an escape, and by the sword you will not fall; and you will certainly come to have your soul as a spoil, because you have trusted in me." (Jer. 39:16-18) According to these words, Ebed-melech would witness the destruction of Jerusalem that Jeremiah had foretold. Yet, he would not need to fear it. As Ebed-melech had viewed the life of Jeremiah as precious, so Jehovah God would regard Ebed-melech's life as precious and would preserve him alive.

What a fine example Ebed-melech set for us in not yielding to the fear of men but courageously taking his stand for Jehovah's prophet! The Most High did not forget Ebed-melech's righteous deed. Neither will he forget our faithful service, including our coming to the aid of our brothers in time of dire need. The Bible tells us: "God is not unrighteous so as to forget your work and the love you showed for his name, in that you have ministered to the holy ones and continue ministering." (Heb. 6:10) So, may we strive to be courageous persons as was Ebed-melech.

## QUESTIONS from READERS

- Are Christians obliged to report and pay income tax on 'side jobs' or tips?

The basic answer today is the same as when Jesus answered a tax question: "Pay back, therefore, Caesar's things to Caesar, but God's things to God." (Matt. 22:17-21) If the law of the land is that a worker or employee must pay income tax on his earnings, Christians pay it.

In many places the government receives from the employer a statement of what a person earns, and the required taxes are with-

held from the individual's pay. In such a case, settling with the government is usually straightforward. If in figuring and reporting his yearly income a Christian sees that he must pay money in addition to what was withheld, he ought to do so. Or if, perhaps because of his having certain legal deductions, too much has been withheld, he can apply for a refund.

However, in some instances a person is required to report his own income and then *he* must pay all the tax, such as when he is self-employed or in business for himself. Or the tax may have been deducted by an employer on his regular job, but not on some temporary or side job done for which *he* is responsible to pay the tax. Not all persons pay such taxes, judging by a headline in the New York Times of January 15, 1978, which reads: "Unreported Work May Cost U.S. Billions in Taxes and Impair Plans."

Just what items are considered income on which taxes are legally required are multitudinous and vary a great deal from place to place. In some lands income taxes are not expected on a small amount of earnings below a set total.\* But if they are 'side earnings' and one has a regular job, usually the law requires that it all be reported and the income tax paid on the whole amount. Also, in some places, even tips, such as a waiter in a restaurant might get, are viewed by the government as taxable income.

Where does this leave the individual Christian worker or employee? It leaves him with personal responsibility to acquaint himself with the tax laws of the country, and then to be honest and pay the income tax required of him. The apostle Paul wrote: 'Let every soul be in subjection to the superior authorities. . . . Keep doing good, and you will have praise from [the superior authority]. . . . But if you are doing what is bad, be in fear: for it is not without purpose that it bears the sword; for it is God's minister, an avenger to express wrath upon the one practicing what is bad. There is therefore compelling reason for you people to be in subjection, not only on account of that wrath but also on account of your conscience. . . . Render to all their dues, to him who calls for the tax, the tax.'—Rom. 13:1, 3-5, 7.

Christian workers can see the wisdom in this. For example, they thus avoid being prosecuted. Also, there is the matter of their clear conscience, certainly a valuable thing. The newspaper article quoted above reported that a government official said about the extent of unreported income tax: "How much of it exists, God only knows." That official may have been merely using a colloquialism. But true Christians are sure that God, who sees all, does know when a worker intentionally cheats, such as by doing work "off the books" so as to avoid paying income tax. To have a clean conscience, Christian employees strive to be honest in all respects, including the paying of their taxes.—Heb. 13:18.

Also, what Paul said about receiving praise proves true. Jesus' followers have often been praised by officials for their honesty, their trustworthiness as to paying taxes. This can be seen in the case of an African country that

persecuted Jehovah's Witnesses for not joining the ruling political party. When the government used as a public pretext the charge that the Witnesses would not pay their taxes, thinking people earth wide knew better for they were aware of the Witnesses' record. Regarding this persecution, Dr. K. Jubber recently wrote: "In obedience to their Christian beliefs, Jehovah's witnesses pay their taxes, obey the law, are conscientious workers, . . . The Watch Tower Society does not encourage its members to refrain from paying taxes: on the contrary, the Society seems to encourage conformity in this regard."—*Social Compass*, XXIV/1 1977, pp. 128, 130.

Yes, the counsel that Jesus gave on the matter of tax is what Christians should strive to follow. This does not mean that others should pry into a person's affairs on the suspicion that he may not be honest in this matter; we believe that Christians will be conscientious in complying with Caesar's requirements. With honesty and a desire for a good conscience, they render to Caesar the income tax he demands.

● At 1 Corinthians 2:9, was Paul quoting from an apocryphal book?

No, there is no reason to believe so.

This text reads: "But just as it is written: 'Eye has not seen and ear has not heard, neither have there been conceived in the heart of man the things that God has prepared for those who love him.'"

It appears that Paul was quoting from Isaiah 64:4. But his words do not exactly match those of Isaiah 64:4 in the Hebrew text or the Greek *Septuagint* translation. Hence, some commentators have suggested that Paul was quoting from apocryphal (noncanonical) books entitled "The Apocalypse of Elias" and "The Ascension and Vision of Isaiah," for they both have the same statement as is found at 1 Corinthians 2:9. However, a number of points weigh against that idea.

None of the writers of the Christian Greek Scriptures (New Testament) ever quoted from such works saying, "It is written . . ." Also, it cannot be determined when these two apocryphal books were penned. Even if they were written quite early, they could have been altered later to include Paul's words, as other apocryphal works were later edited and changed.

\* The law still may require that the income be reported, and, perhaps, other taxes be paid, such as Social Security tax in the United States.

# Like Physicians Who Fail to Do Their Job

**I**N THE time of the prophet Jeremiah there was a moral breakdown among the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the land of Judah. The priests and the false prophets only added to the problem. The word of Jehovah through Jeremiah was: "From the least one of them even to the greatest one of them, every one is making for himself unjust gain; and from the prophet even to the priest, each one is acting falsely. And they try to heal the breakdown of my people lightly, saying, 'There is peace! There is peace!' when there is no peace."—Jer. 6:13, 14.

Corruption existed among all—from the least to the greatest. The people were concerned about their own interests, not those of others. They did whatever might bring the greatest profit to them. Those who should have been teaching the people were

dishonest. Like physicians who fail to make a thorough examination and who then prescribe the wrong medicine, the priests and false prophets dismissed the breakdown among the Israelites as amounting to nothing. They claimed that all was well or at peace when, in reality, the nation was in a very sickly condition morally. Thus they tried to 'heal the breakdown of the Israelites lightly.'

## "WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

- February 18: Who Will Make the Day of Reckoning Work Good for Us? Page 8.  
Songs to Be Used: 1, 3.
- February 25: Jesus Christ—Victorious King with Whom Nations Must Reckon. Page 13.  
Songs to Be Used: 46, 84.
- March 4: How the Day of Reckoning Is Worked Out for Our Good. Page 18.  
Songs to Be Used: 86, 114.