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THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



Rejoicing in Our Grand Creator

THE WATCHTOWER®

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

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Our Grand Creator and His Works

HOW GRAND! The thundering falls of Iguaçú or Niagara, the mighty canyons of Arizona or Hawaii, the magnificent fjords of Norway or New Zealand—what cries of admiration these natural wonders call forth! But are they merely chance products of a so-called Mother Nature? No, they are much more than that! They are the breathtaking works of a Grand Creator, a loving heavenly Father of whom wise King Solomon wrote: “Everything he has made pretty in its time. Even time indefinite he has put in their heart, that mankind may never find out the work that the true God has made from the start to the finish.” (Ecclesiastes 3:11) Truly, it would take an eternity of time for humans to search out all the glorious works with which our Creator has filled the universe.

What a Grand Creator we have! And how glad we are that this all-powerful God “has at the end of these days spoken to us by means of a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the systems of things.” (Hebrews 1:2) This Son, Jesus Christ, appreciated the lovely things of his Father’s creation. He referred frequently to them in illustrating his Father’s purposes and in speaking words of encouragement to his listeners. (Matthew 6:28-30; John 4:35, 36) “By faith” many have perceived that the marvels of creation were “put in order by God’s word.” (Hebrews 11:3) Our daily lives should reflect such faith.—James 2:14, 26.

Grand, indeed, are the creations of our God. They reflect wonderfully his wisdom, his power, his righteousness, and his love. For example, he tilted our earth and set it in rotation around the sun so that his future creation, man, could enjoy the delightful procession of the seasons. God stated: “All the days the earth continues, seed sowing and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, will never cease.” (Genesis 8:22) Further, God bountifully stocked our earth with valuable minerals. Especially, he provided an

abundance of water, later to become an essential component and support of all terrestrial life.

In an orderly sequence of six 'creative days,' each thousands of years in length, "God's active force" proceeded to prepare earth for man's habitation. The light by which we see, the air that we breathe, the dry land on which we live, the vegetation, the sequence of day and night, the fish, the birds, the animals—all were brought forth in order by our Grand Creator for man's service and enjoyment. (Genesis 1:2-25) Surely, we can join the psalmist in exclaiming: "How many your works are, O Jehovah! All of them in wisdom you have made. The earth is full of your productions."—Psalm 104:24.

God's Masterpiece of Creation

As the sixth creative "day" drew to a close, God made man and then his helpmate, woman. What a masterly climax to the earthly creation, far more wonderful than all the physical creations that had gone before! Psalm 115:16 informs us: "As regards the heavens, to Jehovah the heavens belong, but the earth he has given to the sons of men." Accordingly, Jehovah designed us human souls so that we could both delight in and make use of his earlier creations on earth. How thankful we should be for our eyes—more intricate than the finest camera—that can take in the colorful world around us! We have our ears—finer than any man-made sound system—to help us enjoy conversation, music, and the melodious song of the birds. We have a built-in speaking mechanism, including the versatile tongue. The tongue's taste buds, combined with our sense of smell, provide also for delight in savoring an endless variety of foods. And how we appreciate the touch of a loving hand! Surely we can thank our Cre-

ator, as did the psalmist who said: "I shall laud you because in a fear-inspiring way I am wonderfully made. Your works are wonderful, as my soul is very well aware." —Psalm 139:14.

Our Creator's Loving-Kindness

The psalmist wrote: "Give thanks to Jehovah, O you people, for he is good . . . ; to the Doer of wonderful, great things by himself: for his loving-kindness is to time indefinite." (Psalm 136:1-4) That loving-kindness is now moving him to do wonderful things far grander than all the creations we have just described. Yes, even while resting from creating material things, he is creating on a spiritual plane. This he is doing in answer to a wicked challenge that was thrown in his face. How so?

The first man and woman were placed in a glorious paradise, Eden. However, a renegade angel, Satan, set himself up as a god and led that human pair into rebellion against Jehovah. Justly, God sentenced them to death, with the result that their children, the entire human race, have been brought forth in a sinful, dying state. (Psalm 51:5) The Bible account concerning Job indicates that Satan challenged God, claiming that no man can keep integrity to Him under test. But Job proved Satan to be a gross liar, as have many other faithful servants of God in Bible times and down to our day. (Job 1:7-12; 2:2-5, 9, 10; 27:5) Jesus, as a perfect man, exemplified peerless integrity keeping.—1 Peter 2:21-23.

Thus, Jesus could say, "The ruler of the world [Satan] has no hold on me." (John 14:30) Yet, to this day "the whole world is lying in the power of the wicked one." (1 John 5:19) Having disputed the rightfulness of Jehovah's sovereignty, Satan has been given some 6,000 years to show whether his own rulership of mankind can suc-

ceed. How miserably he has failed, as deteriorating world conditions continue to testify! Our loving God, Jehovah, will soon remove this corrupt world society, asserting his rightful sovereignty over the earth. What happy relief that will bring to humans yearning for peaceful, righteous rule!

—Psalm 37:9-11; 83:17, 18.

However, that is not all! God's loving-kindness will be further demonstrated on

the basis of Jesus' words at John 3:16: "God loved the world [of mankind] so much that he gave his only-begotten Son, in order that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life." This restoration to mankind of the prospect of everlasting life on earth involves the creating of new things. What are these? How do they benefit groaning humanity? Our next article will tell.

New Creations Brought Forth!

WISE King Solomon once said: "There is nothing new under the sun." (Ecclesiastes 1:9) That is true of the physical world in which we live, but what of the vast realm of Jehovah's spiritual creation? In that realm, one who is greater than Solomon, indeed, who was the greatest man who ever lived, became an outstanding new creation. How did this come about?

In the year 29 of our Common Era, the perfect man, Jesus, presented himself to be baptized by John at the Jordan River. "After being baptized Jesus immediately came up from the water; and, look! the heavens were opened up, and he saw descending like a dove God's spirit coming upon him. Look! Also, there was a voice from the heavens that said: 'This is my Son, the beloved, whom I have approved.'" (Matthew 3:16, 17) Thus, the man Christ Jesus was the first of a new creation, anointed to do God's will. Later, on the basis of his sacrificial death, Jesus became the Mediator of a new covenant between God and a select group of men. Each of these has become "a new cre-

ation," begotten by God's spirit to a heavenly hope, with the prospect of ruling with Jesus in his heavenly Kingdom.—2 Corinthians 5:17; 1 Timothy 2:5, 6; Hebrews 9:15.

Over the centuries, these anointed, spirit-begotten Christians have been gathered into union with Christ as the true Christian congregation, in itself a new creation. God called it out of this world for a purpose, as the apostle Peter states: "You are 'a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for special possession, that you should declare abroad the excellencies' of the one that called you out of darkness into his wonderful light." (1 Peter 2:9) Like Christ Jesus, God's initial new creation, this subsequent new creation has a primary obligation to preach the good news. (Luke 4:18, 19) Individually, its members, ultimately numbering 144,000, must "put on the new personality which was created according to God's will in true righteousness and loyalty." (Ephesians 4:24; Revelation 14:1, 3) This requires that they cultivate "the fruitage of the spirit," described at Galatians 5:22, 23,

and faithfully care for their stewardship.—1 Corinthians 4:2; 9:16.

What of this new creation in modern times? In the year 1914, as the Bible time-table shows, the words of Revelation 11:15 were fulfilled: “The kingdom of the world did become the kingdom of our Lord [Jehovah] and of his Christ, and he will rule as king forever and ever.” The first act of Christ as newly installed King was to hurl Satan and his demonic angels out of heaven down to earth’s vicinity. This brought “woe for the earth,” in the form of the first world war and its attendant distresses.—Revelation 12:9, 12, 17.

This also served as notice to the remaining ones of the new creation on earth that they must share in fulfilling Jesus’ prophecy: “This good news of the [established] kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come.” What is that “end”? Jesus goes on to explain: “Then there will be great tribulation such as has not occurred since the world’s beginning until now, no, nor will occur again. In fact, unless those days were cut short, no flesh would be saved; but on account of the chosen ones those days will be cut short.”—Matthew 24:3-14, 21, 22.

Jehovah’s spirit moved those anointed ones of his new creation to get busy in the most extensive preaching campaign ever to take place on this earth. From a few thousand in 1919, the number of these zealous Kingdom proclaimers increased to some 50,000 by the mid-1930’s. As prophesied, “into all the earth their sound went out, and to the extremities of the inhabited earth their utterances.”—Romans 10:18.

Would the remaining ones of the new creation be the only ones gathered for salvation? No, for prophecy had stated that God’s

angels would hold back the winds of the great tribulation until the gathering was completed not only of these heaven-bound spiritual Israelites but also of others, “a great crowd, which no man was able to number, out of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues.” What would their destiny be? Why, they would come unscathed “out of the great tribulation” to enjoy everlasting life in a paradise earth!—Revelation 7:1-4, 9, 14.

Happily, this great crowd, gathered from some 229 lands, has mushroomed to almost 4,500,000 active Witnesses. Many more are coming, as indicated by the attendance of 11,431,171 at the Memorial of Jesus’ death on April 17 last year. Of all these millions, only 8,683, who profess to be the remaining ones on earth of the new creation, partook of the Memorial emblems. Those in this small group could never, on their own, have accomplished the vast preaching work of today. The millions who make up the great crowd now work shoulder to shoulder with them in getting the work done. (Zephaniah 3:9) Moreover, well-trained members of the great crowd are now doing administrative and other responsible work alongside the anointed Governing Body of spiritual Israel, just as non-Israelite Nethinim worked with the priests repairing Jerusalem’s walls.—Nehemiah 3:22-26.

Creation of “New Heavens and a New Earth”

What joy accompanies this ingathering! It is just as Jehovah said it would be: “Here I am creating new heavens and a new earth; and the former things will not be called to mind, neither will they come up into the heart. But exult, you people, and be joyful forever in what I am creating. For here I am creating Jerusalem a cause for joyfulness



and her people a cause for exultation. And I will be joyful in Jerusalem and exult in my people; and no more will there be heard in her the sound of weeping or the sound of a plaintive cry.” (Isaiah 65:17-19) The new heavens of Jehovah’s creation will be made up finally of Christ Jesus and the 144,000 resurrected members of the new creation who have been bought from among mankind over the past 19 centuries. It is far, far more glorious than any earthly government that ruled in literal Jerusalem, even that of Solomon’s day. It incorporates New Jerusalem, a heavenly city, described in all its scintillating beauty in Revelation chapter 21.

New Jerusalem is the spiritual bride of Christ, his 144,000 anointed followers, who join their Bridegroom in heaven after their death and spiritual resurrection. They are pictured at Revelation 21:1-4 as “coming down out of heaven from God,” that is, being used by him in directing blessings to mankind here on earth. In this way the prophecy is fulfilled: “Look! The tent of God is with mankind, and he will reside with them, and they will be his peoples. And God himself will be with them. And he will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor



outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away."

How thankful we can be for God's creation of that new heavens! Unlike the transitory, corrupt rulerships that have for so long plagued mankind, this governmental arrangement of God will be permanent. The new creation and their spiritual offspring, the great crowd, exult at God's further promise: "For just as the new heavens and the new earth that I am making are standing before me," is the utterance of Jehovah, "so the offspring of you people and the name of you people will keep standing."—Isaiah 66:22.

"The new earth" gets started with this offspring of the anointed ones of the new creation. It is the new, God-fearing society of mankind on earth. The hatred, crime, violence, corruption, and immorality in human society today certainly underline the need for a complete change to a new earth society, operating under the direction of the benevolent new heavens. That is what Jehovah purposes. Just as he has created new heavens, so he is creating the new earth by assembling the great crowd as the nucleus of a peaceful new world society. This society alone will be saved alive "out of the great tribulation."—Revelation 7:14.

What can we expect following the great tribulation? Speaking to his apostles, the initial ones of those to make up the new heavens that will govern the new earth, Jesus promised: "Truly I say to you, In the re-creation, when the Son of man sits down upon his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also yourselves sit upon twelve thrones." (Matthew 19:28) All 144,000 of this New Jerusalem will share with Jesus in judging mankind. Love will then replace selfishness and hatred as the basis on which human society is built. Tribal, racial, and nationalistic problems will be eradicated. The resurrection will progressively bring loved ones back. Faithful mankind in its billions will become one large, united family, uplifted to everlasting life on an earth transformed into a paradise.

This will be much more than a Utopia or a Shangri-la. It will be a permanent creation—"new heavens and a new earth that we are awaiting according to his promise, and in these righteousness is to dwell"! (2 Peter 3:13) Surely, this is a marvelous prospect, a magnificent promise by him who said, "Look! I am making all things new," and who added the faith-inspiring statement: "These words are faithful and true." —Revelation 21:5.



REJOICING IN OUR GRAND CREATOR

"Let Israel rejoice in its grand Maker, the sons of Zion—let them be joyful in their King." —PSALM 149:2.

TO DAY'S world is plagued by "pangs of distress." That is the expression Jesus used in his prophecy concerning "the conclusion of the system of things," the catastrophic era that began with the first world war in 1914. (Matthew 24:3-8) Many politicians see nothing but gloom for the future. Despite cries of "freedom at last" in Eastern Europe, a onetime president in that area summed up the situation when he said: "The population explosion and the greenhouse effect, holes in the ozone and AIDS, the threat of nuclear terrorism and the dramatically widening gap between the rich north and the poor south, the danger of famine, the depletion of the biosphere and the mineral resources of the planet, the expansion of commercial television culture and the growing threat of regional wars—all these, combined with thousands of other factors, represent a general threat to mankind." There is no human power that can remove this threat of terminal disaster.—Jeremiah 10:23.

2 We can rejoice, however, that our Grand Creator has the permanent solution. In Jesus' prophecy "the conclusion of the system of things" is linked with his invisible "presence."

1. Despite cries of "freedom at last," what is the real situation of mankind?
2. Who has the permanent solution to mankind's problems, and what step has he already taken?

(Matthew 24:3, 37-39) To create the "new heavens," Jehovah placed Jesus on his throne as Messianic King, the prophetic evidence showing that this historic event took place in the heavens in the year 1914.* (2 Peter 3:13) As associate ruler with the Sovereign Lord Jehovah, Jesus is now commissioned to judge the nations and to separate the meek, sheeplike people of earth from obstinate goatlike ones. The ungodly "goats" are marked for "everlasting cutting-off" and "the sheep" for everlasting life in the earthly realm of the Kingdom.—Matthew 25:31-34, 46.

³ The remnant of spiritual Israel on earth, joined now by a great crowd of these obedient sheep, has every reason to be joyful in Jehovah, the King of eternity, as he brings his grand purposes to a climax through the Kingdom of his Son. They can say: "Without fail I shall exult in Jehovah. My soul will be joyful in my God. For he has clothed me with the garments of salvation . . . As the earth itself brings forth its sprout, and as the garden itself makes the things that are sown in it sprout, in like manner the Sovereign Lord Jehovah will cause the

* See "Let Your Kingdom Come," published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., pages 105-16, 186-9.

3. What cause do true Christians have for exulting?



The hundreds of thousands of baptismal candidates last year demonstrate Jehovah's blessing on the preaching and teaching work

sprouting of righteousness and of praise in front of all the nations." (Isaiah 61:10, 11) This "sprouting" is evidenced in the millions who are now being gathered out of the nations to sing Jehovah's praise.

'Speeding It Up'

⁴ The ingathering accelerates as the end of Satan's system approaches. Our Grand Creator declares: "As for your people, all of them will be righteous . . . , the sprout of my planting, the work of my hands, for me to be beautified. The little one himself will become a thousand, and the small one a mighty nation. I myself, Jehovah, shall speed it up in its own time." (Isaiah 60: 21, 22) This speeding up is reflected marvelously in the 1992 Service Year Report of Jehovah's Witnesses Worldwide, published on pages 12 to 15 of this magazine.

⁵ Outstanding in this report is the new peak of 4,472,787 Kingdom proclaimers, an increase of 193,967—4.5 percent more than last year. The peak of 301,002 baptized during 1992 also reflects the fact that multi-

4, 5. (a) How was the ingathering of God's people foretold? (b) What outstanding increase was seen during the 1992 service year?

tudes are accepting Bible truth. How we rejoice that in this "day of darkness and gloominess, . . . there is a people numerous and mighty," who, like a swarm of locusts, are expanding the Kingdom witness "to the most distant part of the earth"! (Joel 2: 2, 25; Acts 1:8) From icy Alaska—where the Watch Tower Society's airplane has made over 50 visits to snowbound territories—to the scorched deserts of Mali and Burkina Faso and the scattered islands of Micronesia, Jehovah's servants are shining forth as "a light of the nations, that [his] salvation may come to be to the extremity of the earth."—Isaiah 49:6.

⁶ Jehovah has been like a fortress and a strong tower in protecting and sustaining his people. In many parts of the earth, Jehovah's Witnesses have had to endure decades of cruel oppression and persecution. (Psalm 37:39, 40; 61:3, 4) But recently, as if by a miracle, restrictions and barriers have been removed in some 21 lands, so that now God's people can freely proclaim that our Grand Creator has installed Christ as King over the earth.—Psalm 2: 6-12.

⁷ Are Jehovah's people making good use of their newfound freedom? Note in the chart the increases for Bulgaria, Romania, and the former Soviet Union in Eastern Europe and for Angola, Benin, and Mozambique in Africa. In Zaire, too, the expansion is phenomenal. With joy in their hearts, our liberated brothers answer the call: "Give thanks to Jehovah, O you people, for he is good . . . , to the Doer of wonderful, great

6, 7. What unexpected turn of events was witnessed in recent years, and how have Jehovah's servants reacted to it?

things by himself: for his loving-kindness is to time indefinite." (Psalm 136:1, 4) These thanks are expressed by zealous service in gathering other sheeplike people to the side of the Kingdom.

⁸ During the past European summer, conventions of Jehovah's people held in formerly Communist lands have had astounding attendances. Even more amazing are the numbers being baptized in those lands. Similarly, in Togo, Africa, the ban was removed on December 10, 1991. The following month a national convention was held. Compared with the monthly average of 6,443 publishers in the field, attendance at this convention soared to 25,467, with 556 being baptized—8.6 percent of the number of publishers. As Isaiah 60:8 portrays, new praisers of Jehovah "come flying just like a cloud, and like doves to their birdhouse holes" in the congregations of Jehovah's people.

⁹ The hunger for spiritual food in Eastern Europe and Africa is also being assuaged. The Watch Tower Society's factories in Germany, Italy, and South Africa have sent truckload after truckload of literature, in a number of languages, to spiritually starved countries. Previously, many of the Witnesses had to pass well-worn magazines to one another, but now they are receiving an abundance of spiritual food. They rejoice to share in the fulfillment of the prophecy: "You will certainly eat, eating and becoming satisfied, and you will be bound to praise the name of Jehovah your God, who has done with you so wonderfully."—Joel 2:26.

8. How have new praisers of Jehovah "come flying just like a cloud" in Eastern Europe? in Africa?

9. What provisions have been made so that Christians in recently liberated countries can 'eat and become satisfied'?

Caring for Further Expansion

¹⁰ Amazing indeed is the worldwide attendance figure for the Memorial of Jesus' death, 11,431,171, an increase of 781,013, or 7.3 percent more than last year. Welcome, all you newcomers! How wonderful it would be if all such newly interested persons enjoyed the benefit of a home Bible study with one of Jehovah's Witnesses! (See Isaiah 48:17.) The Service Year Report shows 4,278-127 of these studies being conducted each month, a fine 8.4-percent increase. However, many more could avail themselves of this service. Jehovah's Witnesses are glad to call regularly on interested ones to conduct a free Bible study in the home, thus helping these to set their feet firmly on the road to everlasting life. (John 3:16, 36) Why not request such a study? And remember, a warm welcome always awaits you at the Kingdom Hall!—Psalm 122:1; Romans 15:7.

¹¹ Those congregations that have fine Kingdom Halls are richly blessed. The situation is different in lands where loyal Witnesses have endured many years under ban, meeting secretly in small groups. In a number of such places, they are now free but have few Kingdom Halls. In an African country, for example, with 93 congregations, there are just three Kingdom Halls. So meetings are usually held on large vacant plots of ground. A congregation of 150 may have up to 450 regularly attending these meetings.

¹² In Eastern Europe it is often difficult to buy property or to build, but some progress is being made. Dedication of a fine new

10. In view of the high attendance at the Memorial, what invitation is offered to all interested ones?

11, 12. (a) What problems are being encountered in some lands? (b) In what way is "an equalizing" taking place between wealthier and poorer lands?

1992 SERVICE YEAR REPORT OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES WORLDWIDE

Country or Territory	Population	1992 Peak Pubs.	Ratio, One Publisher to: 992 Av. Pubs.	% Inc. Over 1991	1991 Av. Pubs.	1992 No. Bptzd.	Av. Pio. Pubs.	No. of Congs.	Total Hours	Av. Bible Studies	Memorial Attendance
Alaska	602,651	2,182	276	2,056 4	1,985	86	213	28	368,653	1,129	4,614
Albania	3,262,000	75	43,493	36 1,100	3	8	1	1	8,334	14	325
Algeria	26,000,000	69	376,812	58 35	43	7	3	3	8,702	88	164
American Samoa	46,773	199	235	191 -1*	192	7	32	2	50,944	227	538
Andorra	59,048	166	356	157 -3*	162	5	13	2	27,621	74	342
Angola	9,400,000	18,911	497	17,703 31	13,506	2,084	2,225	221	5,752,675	52,975	71,351
Anguilla	7,000	24	292	22 -4*	23	1	1	1	4,221	24	90
Antigua	65,952	303	218	283 3	274	26	48	4	76,038	325	783
Argentina	32,403,168	96,780	335	90,880 6	85,405	6,907	12,218	1,459	21,307,979	93,935	231,133
Aruba	67,891	474	143	459 2	450	29	28	6	72,075	356	1,460
Australia	17,486,300	57,272	305	55,039 3	53,484	2,698	5,793	679	11,526,329	29,504	105,581
Austria	7,812,000	19,984	391	19,607 3	19,107	832	1,791	271	3,994,483	11,903	34,382
Azores	236,049	513	460	474 7	445	25	52	16	96,341	473	1,200
Bahamas	254,685	1,278	199	1,223 2	1,201	88	175	19	309,237	1,594	3,296
Bangladesh	117,448,675	42	2,796,397	36 16	31	1	8	1	11,564	52	124
Barbados	257,000	1,934	133	1,892 4	1,811	89	206	18	384,309	2,058	5,683
Belau	16,126	63	256	56 -2*	57	3	14	1	22,154	133	250
Belgium	9,956,997	26,554	375	25,432 3	24,810	1,214	2,135	347	4,879,083	12,492	50,617
Belize	199,740	1,004	199	935 5	888	58	169	22	262,627	1,401	4,876
Benin	4,840,000	2,904	1,667	2,627 16	2,263	183	389	81	754,206	4,239	11,794
Bermuda	57,000	403	141	370 6	348	17	47	4	83,595	295	818
Bolivia	6,344,396	8,868	715	8,438 8	7,804	1,012	1,665	125	2,708,851	13,990	38,749
Bonaire	11,131	53	210	50 -11*	56	3	1	1	7,519	46	171
Bosnia & Herzegovina	4,516,000	452	9,991	292 New	28	56	9	9	90,337	248	786
Botswana	1,457,485	777	1,876	627 16	540	56	67	19	145,476	889	1,871
Brazil	146,154,502	335,039	436	324,627 7	302,367	27,296	35,392	5,382	66,966,059	427,436	985,252
Britain	56,033,899	126,173	444	120,648 2	118,100	5,162	13,322	1,354	24,418,753	60,920	224,654
Brunei	270,000	11	24,545	8 14	7	1	1	1	340	5	24
Bulgaria	9,011,000	265	34,004	215 107	104	76	45	3	79,285	541	976
Burkina Faso	9,634,000	523	18,421	507 9	467	51	97	17	169,598	996	1,628
Cameroon	12,700,000	17,624	721	16,569 9	15,205	1,197	712	420	3,004,355	24,567	58,801
Canada	27,306,500	106,052	257	103,412 2	100,991	4,320	11,229	1,312	21,084,086	51,658	187,089
Cape Verde	397,305	642	619	571 20	475	82	95	16	172,916	1,223	3,284
Cayman Islands	24,000	99	242	91 12	81	5	10	1	21,295	95	271
Central Afr. Rep.	2,900,000	1,520	1,908	1,471 12	1,309	165	264	44	440,983	2,393	7,386
Chad	5,500,000	329	16,717	300 6	282	24	66	12	116,444	510	1,582
Chile	13,231,803	44,067	300	41,270 6	38,946	3,284	5,844	429	10,394,637	59,775	130,821
Chuuk	62,352	51	1,223	49 -2*	50	6	17	3	24,201	162	402
Colombia	33,391,536	55,215	605	51,528 8	47,494	5,891	7,882	719	13,773,401	88,905	236,036
Comoros	450,000	4	112,500	2 -60*	5	1	1	1	320	5	13
Congo	2,350,000	2,250	1,044	2,074 15	1,806	280	282	55	644,237	5,675	7,992
Cook Islands	18,552	137	135	136 12	121	15	15	3	26,217	115	349
Costa Rica	3,063,608	14,018	219	13,285 5	12,705	837	1,262	229	2,739,378	16,437	37,974
Côte d'Ivoire	12,555,000	4,018	3,125	3,897 7	3,631	312	751	109	1,308,216	8,227	16,919

Croatia	4,784,265	3,609	1,326	3,413	New	180	253	386	69	775,807	2,038	6,830
Curaçao	143,618	1,458	99	1,439	0	1,446	28	122	17	268,026	1,499	3,763
Cyprus	581,300	1,433	406	1,384	5	1,315	44	166	14	294,653	765	2,904
Czechoslovakia	15,567,555	25,435	612	24,884	8	23,035	2,585	1,524	430	4,624,248	20,724	54,082
Denmark	5,162,126	16,407	315	15,951	0	15,876	444	1,315	225	2,684,427	5,755	24,960
Dominica	71,794	272	264	259	3	251	12	37	6	69,676	337	961
Dominican Rep.	8,000,000	15,418	519	14,326	11	12,864	1,452	3,231	225	4,608,277	31,510	54,495
Ecuador	10,850,000	22,763	477	21,493	11	19,295	2,203	4,027	345	6,332,273	40,327	100,188
El Salvador	6,069,219	20,374	298	19,358	4	18,611	1,486	2,222	349	4,624,574	26,994	64,137
Equatorial Guinea	356,100	193	1,845	175	9	160	12	21	4	48,100	451	1,180
Ethiopia	51,000,000	3,887	13,121	3,533	29	2,730	665	770	54	1,269,513	4,778	10,980
Faeroe Islands	47,449	116	409	108	0	108	1	26	4	31,174	66	170
Falkland Islands	2,050	10	205	9	0	9	1	1	1	1,051	3	14
Fiji	735,985	1,480	497	1,329	-9*	1,465	83	262	40	405,499	1,619	5,664
Finland	5,036,900	18,316	275	17,871	2	17,504	646	2,298	282	3,595,310	9,350	28,107
France	56,900,000	119,674	475	117,668	2	115,243	5,648	9,553	1,565	22,870,181	62,838	230,068
French Guiana	114,600	922	124	846	17	726	72	126	14	239,131	1,514	3,381
Gabon	1,100,000	1,233	892	1,157	14	1,015	134	153	17	336,118	3,579	6,080
Gambia	950,000	34	27,941	28	17	24	1	8	1	13,099	71	108
Germany	80,136,903	163,095	491	158,461	3	154,496	6,345	10,829	1,938	28,178,904	87,769	284,180
Ghana	14,989,173	37,676	398	34,855	10	31,815	1,644	3,584	642	6,927,355	58,590	139,351
Gibraltar	29,155	132	221	125	-4*	130	5	16	2	27,853	43	201
Greece	10,256,464	25,031	410	24,559	1	24,370	781	2,841	333	4,817,030	8,984	42,904
Greenland	55,385	133	416	127	8	118	3	32	7	40,583	133	312
Grenada	92,000	493	187	469	4	450	12	73	7	117,266	579	1,467
Guadeloupe	387,000	6,830	57	6,697	3	6,482	439	421	75	1,210,643	8,488	17,056
Guam	150,000	437	343	409	7	381	28	90	7	133,996	644	1,396
Guatemala	9,500,000	13,479	705	13,085	5	12,464	988	1,508	202	2,964,851	15,402	45,232
Guinea	7,828,000	345	22,690	328	50	218	34	50	11	95,971	481	1,231
Guinea-Bissau	1,050,000	17	61,765	11	57	7	4	1	6,447	29	38	
Guyana	756,000	1,731	437	1,668	2	1,628	121	224	31	355,401	1,826	6,302
Haiti	6,000,000	8,041	746	7,460	12	6,666	901	1,211	136	2,197,980	15,320	51,913
Hawaii	1,134,800	6,934	164	6,498	5	6,170	368	1,132	80	1,759,679	5,035	16,248
Honduras	5,011,107	6,583	761	6,347	6	6,005	537	939	108	1,731,174	10,468	30,427
Hong Kong	6,000,000	2,604	2,304	2,494	12	2,223	270	593	28	893,816	3,824	5,760
Hungary	10,437,000	12,722	820	12,053	9	11,082	1,251	2055	204	2,316,944	8,279	27,844
Iceland	259,727	260	999	255	8	237	16	30	6	55,969	173	541
India	877,941,274	12,168	72,152	11,597	8	10,709	928	1,501	373	2,692,535	9,594	30,643
Ireland	5,094,000	4,023	1,266	3,930	9	3,611	183	809	100	1,264,736	2,371	7,276
Israel	6,714,500	427	15,725	418	9	384	30	50	7	100,701	427	815
Italy	57,576,429	194,013	297	188,970	3	182,739	9,542	29,274	2,462	49,450,465	105,047	362,167
Jamaica	2,300,000	9,477	243	8,952	1	8,841	438	1,014	171	1,750,187	9,935	25,885
Japan	123,587,297	171,438	721	165,823	8	153,823	12,364	75,956	2,875	85,383,755	222,012	364,980
Kenya	24,000,000	7,047	3,406	6,468	10	5,884	642	1,421	151	2,320,215	11,219	22,682
Kiribati	73,580	57	1,291	44	13	39	8	6	1	14,493	98	166
Korea, Republic of	43,663,000	71,428	611	68,955	7	64,172	5,605	28,846	1,268	32,196,254	71,728	131,859
Kosrae	7,950	21	379	17	21	14	6	1	7,934	43	78	
Lebanon	3,340,000	2,937	1,137	2,849	6	2,677	140	285	59	627,145	2,366	6,511
Lesotho	1,834,123	1,649	1,112	1,596	10	1,454	219	298	45	484,232	2,377	6,005
Liberia	2,500,000	1,541	1,622	1,465	61	909	158	345	37	564,318	3,404	7,769
Libya	4,280,000	19	225,263	8	0	8	5	1	1,495	6	19	
Liechtenstein	29,386	65	452	61	13	54	5	1	12,777	48	116	

Country or Territory	Population	1992 Peak Pubs.	Ratio, One Publisher to:	1992 Av. Pubs.	% Inc. Over 1991	1991 Av. Pubs.	1992 No. Bptzd.	Av. Pio. Pubs.	No. of Congs.	Total Hours	Av. Bible Studies	Memorial Attendance
Luxembourg	452,324	1,657	273	1,626	3	1,573	103	158	27	350,522	1,203	3,525
Macao	400,000	51	7,843	43	34	32	2	9	2	14,287	60	142
Madagascar	13,024,599	4,542	2,868	4,377	21	3,609	416	583	74	1,181,988	13,106	22,200
Madeira	253,065	756	335	714	6	676	43	55	10	121,779	570	1,680
Malaysia	18,687,000	1,391	13,434	1,331	9	1,226	150	211	23	387,734	2,132	3,787
Mali	9,800,000	113	86,726	106	8	98	7	47	2	72,467	389	564
Malta	400,000	471	849	448	5	425	17	58	6	97,401	253	828
Marquesas Islands	7,358	34	216	30	25	24	6	7	3	11,796	55	72
Marshall Islands	46,035	170	271	155	1	154	3	22	2	43,601	371	908
Martinique	359,570	3,263	110	3,205	6	3,034	213	308	34	707,428	3,485	8,201
Mauritius	1,043,294	1,017	1,026	994	7	932	74	123	12	255,388	1,129	2,445
Mayotte	94,587	33	2,866	29	-3*	30	8	1	1	16,129	57	114
Mexico	84,662,130	354,023	239	343,708	8	319,634	27,923	50,095	9,129	84,251,153	502,017	1,283,203
Montserrat	11,888	39	305	37	9	34	6	6	1	11,130	42	170
Morocco	26,200,000	47	557,447	34	6	32	4	3	3	7,280	37	134
Mozambique	13,411,860	6,091	2,202	5,933	32	4,497	969	700	153	1,438,444	10,168	18,832
Myanmar	44,000,000	2,092	21,033	1,937	9	1,784	106	294	88	511,033	1,872	4,473
Namibia	1,500,000	684	2,193	598	3	579	33	66	16	137,035	630	1,942
Nauru	6,120	7	874	6	100	3	1			405	4	54
Nepal	20,146,306	98	205,575	93	24	75	11	27	1	39,902	265	367
Netherlands	15,129,150	31,661	478	30,749	1	30,472	938	2,230	352	4,960,678	11,334	54,318
Nevis	10,080	42	240	37	12	33	1	7	1	11,542	44	127
New Caledonia	164,173	1,366	120	1,309	11	1,174	121	140	17	293,112	1,362	3,541
New Zealand	3,434,950	12,553	274	11,948	3	11,549	691	1,539	152	2,654,920	8,213	24,766
Nicaragua	4,000,000	9,755	410	9,291	12	8,274	1,011	1,528	172	2,907,900	22,695	48,616
Niger	7,691,000	165	46,612	151	15	131	19	36	8	64,210	298	655
Nigeria	88,514,501	161,543	548	154,004	6	145,583	8,425	18,566	3,038	33,697,764	221,260	460,919
Niue	2,400	29	83	27	13	24	3	4	1	6,406	45	72
Norfolk Island	1,977	10	198	10	25	8	1	1	1	1,313	7	21
Norway	4,278,446	9,732	440	9,511	1	9,430	319	597	176	1,365,515	3,843	16,405
Pakistan	119,000,000	331	359,517	301	7	282	14	43	7	76,731	402	1,365
Panama	2,514,586	7,732	325	6,897	7	6,463	517	1,066	145	1,815,704	10,697	25,998
Papua New Guinea	3,010,727	2,929	1,028	2,689	9	2,473	281	374	99	707,465	4,030	12,708
Paraguay	4,519,327	4,115	1,098	3,766	6	3,548	304	585	59	992,063	5,380	10,930
Peru	22,800,000	43,429	525	40,419	9	36,990	4,341	9,954	925	14,342,938	67,735	164,575
Philippines	62,000,000	114,335	542	111,007	5	106,036	8,295	22,205	3,215	27,719,017	91,155	360,297
Pohnpei	35,237	73	483	71	1	70	20	1	1	26,278	143	317
Poland	38,245,000	107,876	355	105,495	6	99,602	8,376	7,106	1,348	16,822,434	74,134	214,218
Portugal	9,364,000	40,510	231	39,476	4	37,998	2,279	3,039	622	6,914,710	25,945	85,826
Puerto Rico	3,552,000	25,315	139	24,657	1	24,302	1,046	2,396	302	4,756,174	20,211	63,862
Réunion	617,000	2,074	297	2,010	7	1,873	158	213	23	463,650	1,756	4,890
Rodrigues	34,379	33	1,042	32	3	31	8	1	1	14,771	49	103
Romania	23,211,395	24,752	938	23,035	13	20,405	2,959	971	286	3,295,176	8,083	66,395
Rota	2,341	14	167	11	-42*	19	3	1	1	3,636	18	87
Rwanda	7,600,000	1,665	4,565	1,459	28	1,138	360	473	34	748,948	5,143	6,228
Saba	1,000	3	333	3	-40*	5	2			1,158	4	11
St. Eustatius	1,500	12	125	12	50	8	4	1	1	5,901	21	37
St. Helena	6,000	143	42	137	15	119	12	3	2	15,151	80	304
St. Kitts	31,880	155	206	135	-2*	138	5	14	2	30,685	180	353
St. Lucia	142,000	527	269	504	10	460	32	70	7	122,200	659	1,622

St. Maarten	24,000	184	130	168	2	165	36	23	3	39,902	240	700
St. Pierre & Miquelon	6,300	10	630	9	29	7	1	1	1	1,422	7	25
St. Vincent	107,500	237	454	230	10	210	16	52	4	80,137	436	826
Saipan	45,744	162	282	135	32	102	5	33	2	47,011	189	426
San Marino	23,000	140	164	138	5	132	6	19	2	36,420	47	239
São Tomé	124,206	83	1,496	70	27	55	2	10	1	20,864	336	332
Senegal	7,700,000	592	13,007	576	0	575	22	129	15	224,795	1,139	1,676
Seychelles	70,438	107	658	95	7	89	9	9	2	19,280	138	327
Sierra Leone	4,769,000	620	7,692	570	-13*	656	36	137	22	226,579	1,175	3,360
Slovenia	1,996,837	1,496	1,335	1,462	New	80	108	29	274,801	641	2,692	
Solomon Islands	334,584	870	385	848	5	810	78	92	37	172,976	936	4,239
South Africa	37,433,192	54,939	681	51,933	5	49,419	3,331	6,303	1,116	11,944,979	53,352	142,138
Spain	39,433,942	92,282	427	88,942	4	85,303	4,994	12,782	1,154	22,360,464	54,392	170,214
Sri Lanka	17,200,000	1,432	12,011	1,424	6	1,338	137	259	35	436,653	2,128	5,615
Suriname	400,000	1,726	232	1,644	5	1,560	107	305	24	447,770	2,325	5,794
Swaziland	876,852	1,506	582	1,400	8	1,292	88	205	51	394,415	1,928	5,125
Sweden	8,673,587	23,652	367	23,015	2	22,618	903	2,706	348	4,375,546	11,274	39,509
Switzerland	6,833,800	17,674	387	17,410	2	17,001	823	1,426	313	3,382,100	10,974	30,613
Tahiti	182,122	1,512	120	1,420	14	1,246	158	131	21	320,334	1,734	4,050
Taiwan	20,000,000	2,104	9,506	2,014	11	1,815	217	603	28	834,578	3,321	6,054
Tanzania	26,500,000	4,425	5,989	4,065	6	3,853	317	851	105	1,333,920	4,851	12,808
Thailand	56,961,030	1,310	43,482	1,244	5	1,182	72	208	37	330,899	1,235	2,920
Togo	3,665,487	7,100	516	6,443	16	5,568	728	1,005	93	1,914,335	18,316	25,621
Tokelau	1,700	4	425	2	-33*	3	299	2	2	2	4	4
Tonga	94,649	64	1,479	59	0	59	2	10	1	18,649	80	240
Trinidad	1,235,400	6,271	197	6,148	4	5,900	372	1,127	64	1,628,155	9,027	19,510
Tunisia	8,400,000	45	186,667	31	-3*	32	4	1	6,711	23	65	
Turkey	55,000,000	1,013	54,294	977	5	928	77	103	14	228,434	794	1,848
Turks & Caicos Isls.	12,500	65	192	57	12	51	7	13	1	23,212	139	517
Tuvalu	9,043	67	135	54	10	49	7	6	2	8,348	62	177
U.S. of America	250,472,000	904,963	277	866,362	2	846,028	40,716	106,031	9,782	181,113,528	585,441	1,939,220
Uganda	18,000,000	999	18,018	905	12	809	111	171	19	301,066	2,107	3,851
Uruguay	3,030,000	8,683	349	8,440	6	7,979	751	934	117	1,694,416	10,095	22,086
Vanuatu	142,630	190	751	169	6	160	25	23	2	50,736	372	1,327
Venezuela	21,000,000	60,444	347	56,500	6	53,253	4,866	10,407	770	16,204,278	91,889	206,859
Virgin Isls. (Brit.)	17,000	150	113	138	11	124	3	25	4	37,500	202	539
Virgin Isls. (U.S.)	101,800	608	167	576	11	521	22	68	9	125,873	667	1,908
Wallis & Futuna Isls.	15,000	6	2,500	3	50	2				534	10	51
Western Samoa	157,158	288	546	261	12	233	10	42	6	72,177	277	824
Yap	9,841	38	259	26	13	23	2	7	1	11,905	64	141
Yugoslavia, F. R.	10,407,802	2,081	5,001	1,887	New	7,176**	250	315	40	546,408	1,827	5,608
Zaire	40,000,000	67,917	589	65,121	12	58,347	5,362	10,296	1,327	20,274,711	141,859	290,498
Zambia	8,550,600	80,460	106	77,368	4	74,673	5,698	10,800	1,974	17,833,662	105,081	365,828
Zimbabwe	9,840,837	20,686	476	18,848	5	18,034	1,312	2,454	586	4,610,019	25,782	59,385
190 Countries		4,313,871		4,145,632	5.0	3,947,440	266,585	591,344	67,227	990,638,168	4,128,754	11,078,893
*15 Countries of Former U.S.S.R.	294,218,600	66,211	4,444	58,823	28.2	45,887	26,986	2,352	663	11,229,028	38,484	173,473
**24 Other Countries		92,705		85,282	8.5	78,627	7,431	11,914	1,668	23,043,238	110,889	178,805
GRAND TOTAL (229 countries)		4,472,787		4,289,737	5.3	4,071,954	301,002	605,610	69,558	1,024,910,434	4,278,127	11,431,171

During the 1992 service year the Watch Tower Society spent \$45,218,257.56 in caring for special pioneers, missionaries, and traveling overseers in their field service assignments.

MEMORIAL PARTAKERS WORLDWIDE: 8,683

* Percentage of decrease " Work banned and reports are incomplete

△ Reports combined for comparison with 1991 service year

** Croatia, Slovenia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina included



**Large numbers of young people are
'remembering their Grand Creator'**

that hours can be spent—praising our Grand Creator, “teaching . . . publicly and from house to house.” (Acts 20:20) On the average, 4,289,737 Witnesses were reporting each month. They come from all walks of life. Some are limited in the time they can contribute to the Kingdom work. These include family heads, who must provide for the household; older folk; and many with health problems; as well as children still in school. Yet, the report made by each one is a valued reflection of love for Jehovah.—Compare Luke 21:2-4.

¹⁴ A younger generation is growing up in Jehovah's service, and happily the majority of these are making application of Solomon's words at Ecclesiastes 12:1: “Remember, now, your Grand Creator in the days of your young manhood.” They are applying themselves in their schoolwork, as well as being trained in spiritual matters by devoted parents. It has been a joy to see a goodly number of teenage youngsters stand up at recent conventions, offering themselves for baptism. It is also a joy to know that many, by learning some trade or skill, are making practical preparation for pioneering when they graduate from school. Thus, they will be able to support themselves, as did the apostle Paul from time to time by tent making.—Acts 18:1-4.

One Billion Hours!

¹³ What would you do with a billion hours? All who attain to everlasting life will be able to spend that many hours, and even more, in productive, satisfying service to Jehovah. But imagine packing that many hours into one year! That is what Jehovah's people accomplished during 1992. Adding together the individual reports of all Kingdom publishers, we find a new peak of 1,024,910,434 hours spent in the best way

13. How many hours were spent in preaching and teaching in 1992, and whose efforts are reflected in this figure?

¹⁵ What a tremendous contribution the pioneers and other full-time servants are making to the progress of the Kingdom work! The ranks of the pioneers increased

14. How are young ones ‘remembering their Grand Creator’?

15, 16. How have pioneers and other full-time servants contributed to the progress of the Kingdom work, and what blessing have some of them enjoyed?

to a peak of 931,521 this past year. As these preach daily from house to house and conduct Bible studies in the homes of the people, they become very effective in expressing themselves on the Scriptures. Moreover, many have qualified to attend the two-week Pioneer Service School, which helps them to cultivate greater ability and joy in doing God's work.

¹⁶ Each of these faithful pioneers can subscribe to the words at Isaiah 50:4: "The Sovereign Lord Jehovah himself has given me the tongue of the taught ones, that I may know how to answer the tired one with a word." There are numerous individuals today who are tired of the corrupt world around them but who are finding refreshment through the word spoken by our faithful pioneers.—Compare Proverbs 15:23; Ezekiel 9:4.

A Mighty Building Program

¹⁷ The worldwide spiritual prosperity of Jehovah's Witnesses calls also for material growth. Expansion of printing facilities, offices, and Bethel homes and construction of Kingdom Halls and Assembly Halls become necessary. So Jehovah's Witnesses are required to become builders in a physical way. Similar building took place in King Solomon's day. Solomon built the temple for Jehovah's worship according to "the architectural plan . . . that had come to be with him by inspiration," Jehovah having provided this to his father, King David. (1 Chronicles 28:11, 12) Thus, Solomon not only built up his listeners with priceless words of wisdom but also directed material building of

17. In addition to spiritual building, what material building has been witnessed in recent years?

**Last year more than
a billion hours
were spent in the
preaching and
teaching work**

an excellence never attained by the secular world.—1 Kings 6:1; 9:15, 17-19.

¹⁸ Today, Jehovah's Witnesses do not build by divinely inspired architectural plans, but they do have God's spirit. As in the days of Israel, this motivates them to build in a way that astonishes people of the world. (Zechariah 4:6) The time is short. Kingdom Halls and other buildings are needed without delay. In some countries quickly built Kingdom Halls are the order of the day. In the past 10 years, for example, Canada reports the building

of 306 halls, each in less than two days. Because of the rapid expansion of Jehovah's work worldwide, a total of 43 new branch buildings or branch extensions are at present being constructed or planned. Moreover, a 30-story residence building, with accommodations for about a thousand Bethel volunteers, is nearing completion in Brooklyn. Also in New York State, at Patterson, the construction of a Bible educational center, the largest project the Watch Tower Society has ever tackled, is moving forward far ahead of schedule.

¹⁹ These projects are advancing with efficiency and a quality of work that amazes knowledgeable construction companies of the world. Why? Because of the tremendous contribution made by dedicated Witnesses of Jehovah. His spirit moves them not only to provide material support but also to give wholeheartedly of their time and energy. Construction sites swarm with well-trained, devoted workers. There are no labor strikes,

18, 19. (a) What rapidly progressing building projects are being carried on by Jehovah's organization? (b) How has Jehovah's spirit been manifest in material as well as spiritual building?

and there is no loafing on the job. Jehovah's spirit provides the motivation, just as it motivated the builders of the tabernacle in Moses' time and those who constructed the temple in the days of Solomon. Spirituality is the outstanding quality required of these workers.—Compare Exodus 35:30-35; 36:1-8; 39:42, 43; 1 Kings 6:11-14.

²⁰ Solomon continued his building program after completing the temple. (2 Chronicles 8:1-6) To what extent the modern-day witness will yet expand—with the parallel need for construction of halls and other facilities—we do not know. We do know, however, that when this good news of the Kingdom has been preached to the extent that Jehovah decrees, then the end, the "great tribulation," will come. (Matthew 24:14, 21) In an earth no longer ruined by greedy men, Jehovah's arrangement of "new heav-

20. (a) To what extent will the good news yet be preached? (b) What blessed prospect awaits Jehovah's people?

ens and a new earth" will then bring untold blessings to mankind. May we therefore 'exult and be joyful forever in what God is creating,' giving all praise to our Grand Creator!—Isaiah 65:17-19, 21, 25.

Can You Explain?

- What reasons do we have to rejoice in our Grand Creator?
- What increases were reported during the 1992 service year?
- In countries where witnessing was formerly banned, what rich blessings have been reported?
- How have youths and pioneers contributed to the increase in Jehovah's organization?
- How have Jehovah's people been busy in material as well as spiritual building works?

SHEPHERDING WITH OUR GRAND CREATOR

"Jehovah is my Shepherd. I shall lack nothing. My soul he refreshes. He leads me in the tracks of righteousness for his name's sake."—PSALM 23:1, 3.

THE 23rd Psalm, "a melody of David," has brought refreshment to many tired souls. It has encouraged them to have the confidence expressed in verse 6:

1. What loving refreshment does Jehovah provide?

"Surely goodness and loving-kindness themselves will pursue me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of Jehovah to the length of days." Is that your desire, to dwell for all time in Jehovah's house of worship, united with his people who are now

being gathered out of all nations of earth? "The shepherd and overseer of your souls," our Grand Creator, Jehovah God, will help you to achieve that goal.—1 Peter 2:25.

² The Creator of "new heavens and a new earth" is also the Organizer and Supreme Overseer of the Christian congregation, "God's household." (2 Peter 3:13; 1 Timothy 3:15) He is deeply interested in shepherding his people, as Isaiah 40:10, 11 clearly states: "Look! The Sovereign Lord Jehovah himself will come even as a strong one, and his arm will be ruling for him. Look! His reward is with him, and the wage he pays is before him. Like a shepherd he will shepherd his own drove. With his arm he will collect together the lambs; and in his bosom he will carry them. Those giving suck he will conduct with care."

³ In an extended sense, this "drove" includes those who have long walked in Christian truth and "lambs" who have been gathered in very recent times—such as the great numbers now being baptized in Africa and Eastern Europe. Jehovah's strong, protective arm gathers them to his bosom. Though they had been like stray sheep, they have now come into an intimate relationship with their beloved God and Shepherd.

Jehovah's Associate Shepherd

⁴ Serving at the right hand of his Father in heaven, "the fine shepherd," Jesus Christ, also gives compassionate attention to the "sheep." He surrendered his life to benefit first the "little flock" of anointed ones and then, today, the great crowd of his "other sheep." (Luke 12:32; John 10:14, 16)

2, 3. (a) How does Jehovah lovingly shepherd his people? (b) How has Jehovah's "drove" dramatically increased?

4, 5. (a) Who is "the fine shepherd," and how did prophecy point to him? (b) What separating work is Jesus overseeing, with what outstanding result?

The Great Shepherd, Jehovah God, addresses all these sheep, saying: "Here I am, I myself, and I shall certainly judge . . . between a sheep and a sheep. And I will raise up over them one shepherd, and he must feed them, even my servant David. He himself will feed them, and he himself will become their shepherd. And I myself, Jehovah, will become their God, and my servant David a chieftain in the midst of them. I myself, Jehovah, have spoken."—Ezekiel 34:20-24.

⁵ The designation "my servant David" points prophetically to Christ Jesus, the "seed" who inherits David's throne. (Psalm 89:35, 36) In this day of judgment of the nations, Jehovah's associate Shepherd and King, Christ Jesus, the Son of David, continues to separate the "sheep" of mankind from those who may claim to be "sheep" but are actually "goats." (Matthew 25:31-33) This "one shepherd" is raised up also to feed the sheep. What a glorious fulfillment of this prophecy we see today! While politicians talk of uniting mankind through a new world order, the one Shepherd is actually uniting the sheep of all nations through a multilanguage witnessing campaign such as only God's organization on earth could ever begin to undertake.

⁶ As the Kingdom message constantly spreads into new territories, "the faithful and discreet slave" of anointed Christians, as commissioned by the one Shepherd, sees to it that every provision is made to send forth "food at the proper time." (Matthew 24:45) Many of the 33 printing branches of the Watch Tower Society throughout the earth are stepping up production to meet the accelerating demand for more and better Bible textbooks and magazines.

6, 7. How has "the faithful and discreet slave" seen to it that "food at the proper time" is made available to the sheep?

**Like a devoted shepherd,
Jehovah cares for his flock**

⁷ The Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses is sparing no effort to improve the quality of translation in some 200 languages and to initiate translation in additional languages as needed to cover the entire world field. This is in support of the commission that Jesus gave his disciples at Acts 1:8: "You will receive power when the holy spirit arrives upon you, and you will be witnesses of me . . . to the most distant part of the earth." Moreover, the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*, already printed in whole or in part in 14 languages, is now being translated into 16 other languages of Europe, Africa, and the Orient.

Enjoying "the Peace of God"

⁸ Through his one Shepherd, Christ Jesus, Jehovah concludes with His well-fed sheep a "covenant of peace." (Isaiah 54:10) Exercising faith in Jesus' shed blood, the sheep are enabled to walk in the light. (1 John 1:7) They enjoy 'the peace of God that excels all thought and that guards their hearts and mental powers by means of Christ Jesus.' (Philippians 4:7) As Ezekiel 34:25-28 goes on to describe, Jehovah shepherds his sheep into a spiritual paradise, a delightful condition of security, refreshing prosperity, and fruitfulness. This loving Shepherd says of his sheep: "They will have to know that I am Jehovah when I break the bars of their yoke and I have delivered them out of the hand of those who had been using them as slaves. And they will no longer become something to plunder for the nations; . . . and they will actually dwell in security, with no one to make them tremble."

8. How have the sheep been richly blessed by the covenant of peace that Jehovah has concluded with them?



⁹ Already, in recent years, Jehovah's Witnesses in many countries have experienced the breaking of "the bars of their yoke." They are free to preach as never before. And may all of us, in every land, make good use of the security that Jehovah provides as we press on to get the work accomplished. What reassurance Jehovah gives as we approach the time of the greatest tribulation mankind will ever see!—Daniel 12:1; Matthew 24:21, 22.

¹⁰ In preparation for that day of his vengeance against the wicked, Jehovah has provided undershepherds to assist the Fine Shepherd, Christ Jesus, in caring for the flock. These are described at Revelation 1:16 as a complete number of "seven stars" in Jesus' right hand. In the first century, the apostle Paul addressed a representative body of these undershepherds, saying: "Pay

9. What opportunities have been opened to God's people by the 'breaking of the bars'?

10. Whom has Jehovah provided to assist the Fine Shepherd, Christ Jesus, and how were some of these addressed by the apostle Paul?

attention to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the holy spirit has appointed you overseers, to shepherd the congregation of God, which he purchased with the blood of his own Son." (Acts 20:28) Today, there are tens of thousands of undershepherds serving in the 69,558 congregations throughout the earth.

Undershepherds to the Fore!

¹¹ In many places these shepherds must take the lead in territories that have been repeatedly covered during these last days. How can they keep the enthusiasm of the flock at a high level? The shepherds have been doing most commendably, and one of the ways in which they have been successful is by stimulating the auxiliary and regular pioneer work. Many shepherds themselves have shared in this service, and even those publishers unable to do so have displayed the pioneer spirit, serving with a joy that helps in overcoming apathy in the territory. (Psalm 100:2; 104:33, 34; Philippians 4: 4, 5) Thus, as wickedness and near anarchy engulf the world, many sheeplike people are being awakened to the Kingdom hope.

—Matthew 12:18, 21; Romans 15:12.

¹² Another problem is that often there are not enough qualified shepherds to care for the flock. Where there is rapid growth, as in Eastern Europe, there are many new congregations with no appointed elders at all. Willing sheep are shouldering the burden, but they are very inexperienced, and help is needed to train the sheep that are flocking into the congregations. In lands such as Brazil, Mexico, and Zaire, where growth is very rapid, comparatively young Wit-

11. How have some shepherds successfully taken the lead in territories that are frequently covered?

12. What serious problem exists in rapidly growing fields, and how is this sometimes handled?

nesses have to be used in organizing the service and training other new ones. Pioneers are giving splendid help, and here is a field in which sisters can train new sisters. Jehovah by his spirit blesses the results. The increase keeps on coming.—Isaiah 54:2, 3.

¹³ In lands where the preaching work is well established, in lands where restrictions have recently been lifted, and in newly opened territories, Jesus' words at Matthew 9:37, 38 still apply: "Yes, the harvest is great, but the workers are few. Therefore, beg the Master of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest." We need to pray, also, that Jehovah will raise up more shepherds. He has demonstrated that he can do this. Before and during World War II, cruel Assyrianlike dictators tried to stamp out Jehovah's Witnesses. But in answer to their prayers, Jehovah refined their organization, making it truly theocratic, and provided the *needed* "shepherds."^{*} This was in line with the prophecy: "As for the Assyrian, when he comes into our land and when he treads upon our dwelling towers, we shall also have to raise up against him seven shepherds, yes, eight dukes of mankind"—even more than a sufficiency of dedicated elders to take the lead.—Micah 5:5.

¹⁴ There is an outstanding need for all baptized male Witnesses to reach out for further privileges. (1 Timothy 3:1) The situation is urgent. The end of this system approaches fast. Habakkuk 2:3 states: "The

* See the *Watchtower* articles entitled "Organization," in the issues of June 1 and 15, 1938.

13. (a) Since the harvest is so great, for what should all Witnesses pray? (b) How were the prayers of God's people answered before and during the second world war?

14. What outstanding need exists in the organization, and what encouragement is given to brothers?

vision is yet for the appointed time, and it keeps panting on to the end, and it will not tell a lie. . . . It will without fail come true. It will not be late." Brothers, can you reach out in order to qualify for further privileges in this shepherding work—before the end comes?—*Titus 1:6-9.*

Theocratic Shepherding

¹⁵ In order to share fully in the expansion of Jehovah's organization, his people need to be theocratic in their outlook. How can they accomplish this? Well, what is meant by the term "theocratic"? *Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary* defines "theocracy" as "the rule of a state by God." It is in this sense that the "holy nation" of Jehovah's people is a theocracy. (1 Peter 2:9; Isaiah 33:22) As members or associates of that theocratic nation, true Christians must live and serve in obedience to God's Word and its principles.

¹⁶ The apostle Paul clearly explains how

15. In what way are Jehovah's people a theocracy?
16. How, basically, can we show ourselves to be theocratic?

Can You Explain?

- What is Jehovah's "drove," and whom does it include?
- How did Jesus act as "the fine shepherd" in the first century, and today?
- What key role do undershepherds play in caring for the flock?
- What is the underlying meaning of the word "theocracy"?
- How should a Christian—particularly an undershepherd—act in order to be theocratic?

Christians should be theocratic. First, he says that they "should put on the new personality which was created according to God's will in true righteousness and loyalty." The Christian's personality must be molded according to God's righteous principles set forth in his Word. He must be loyal to Jehovah and to His laws. After illustrating how this may be done, Paul urges: "Become imitators of God, as beloved children." (*Ephesians 4:24-5:1*) Like obedient children, we must imitate God. That is true theocracy in action, showing that we are really governed by God!—See also *Colossians 3:10, 12-14.*

¹⁷ What is the principal quality of God that we should imitate? The apostle John answers at *1 John 4:8* when he says: "God is love." Eight verses later, in verse 16, he repeats this vital principle: "God is love, and he that remains in love remains in union with God and God remains in union with him." The Great Shepherd, Jehovah, is the personification of love. Theocratic shepherds imitate him by showing deep love for Jehovah's sheep.—Compare *1 John 3:16, 18; 4:7-11.*

¹⁸ The Great Theocrat revealed himself to Moses as "Jehovah, Jehovah, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abundant in loving-kindness and truth, preserving loving-kindness for thousands, pardoning error and transgression and sin, but by no means will he give exemption from punishment, bringing punishment for the error of fathers upon sons and upon grandsons, upon the third generation and upon the fourth generation." (*Exodus 34:6, 7*) Jehovah thus emphasizes various facets of his outstanding theocratic quality, love, while

^{17, 18. (a)} What outstanding quality of God do theocratic Christians imitate? (b) In his words to Moses, how did Jehovah stress His primary quality, but what caution did He add?



firmly cautioning that he will punish for error when deserved.

¹⁹ For those who have positions of responsibility in the organization, what does it mean to be theocratic? Jesus said of the scribes and the Pharisees of his day: "They bind up heavy loads and put them upon the shoulders of men, but they themselves are not willing to budge them with their finger." (Matthew 23:4) How oppressive and unloving! True theocracy, or God-rule, calls for shepherding the flock by applying the Bible's loving principles, not by burdening the sheep with endless man-made rules. (Compare Matthew 15:1-9.) At the same time, theocratic shepherds must imitate God by adding to their love a firmness for maintaining the purity of the congregation.—Compare Romans 2:11; 1 Peter 1:17.

²⁰ True shepherds recognize that during

19. In contrast with the Pharisees, how should Christian shepherds act in a theocratic way?
20. What organizational arrangements do theocratic shepherds recognize?

Imitating Jehovah God's quality of love is theocracy in action

these last days, Jesus has appointed his faithful and discreet slave over all his belongings and that holy spirit has directed this slave in appointing elders for the shepherding of the sheep. (Matthew 24:3, 47; Acts 20:28) Hence, being theocratic involves having a deep respect for this slave, for the organizational arrangements that the slave has instituted, and for the elder arrangement within the congregation.—Hebrews 13:7, 17.

²¹ Jesus himself set a fine example, looking constantly to Jehovah and His Word for guidance. He said: "I cannot do a single thing of my own initiative; just as I hear, I judge; and the judgment that I render is righteous, because I seek, not my own will, but the will of him that sent me." (John 5:30) Undershepherds of the Lord Jesus Christ should cultivate a like humble attitude. If an elder always appeals to God's Word for direction, as Jesus did, then he is truly theocratic.—Matthew 4:1-11; John 6:38.

²² Baptized males, reach out to qualify for privileges in the congregation! All you dear sheep, aim to be theocratic, imitating God and Christ in showing love! May shepherds and flock alike rejoice because they have answered Jesus' invitation: "Come to me, all you who are toiling and loaded down, and I will refresh you. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am mild-tempered and lowly in heart, and you will find refreshment for your souls. For my yoke is kindly and my load is light."—Matthew 11:28-30.

21. What fine example did Jesus set for undershepherds?

22. (a) In what way should all strive to be theocratic? (b) What kindly invitation does Jesus give to the sheep?

Scenes From the Promised Land

GERIZIM

'On This Mountain We Worshiped'



Pictorial Archive (Near Eastern History) Est.

THE Samaritan woman at the well. Does not that phrase bring to your mind the touching account of Jesus' witnessing informally to a woman at "Jacob's fountain" in Sychar, a Samaritan city? Would you like to sharpen your view of that meaningful event?—John 4: 5-14.

Note the two mountains above, which are about 30 miles north of Jerusalem.* On the left (south) is tree-covered Gerizim; abundant springs contribute to its fertility and beauty. To the right (north) is Ebal, slightly higher but rocky and barren.

Between them runs the fertile valley of Shechem. Recall that when God's friend Abram (later named Abraham) traveled down through the Promised Land, he paused at Shechem. Here he built an altar to Jehovah, who had just

* You can examine this photograph in larger size in the 1993 Calendar of Jehovah's Witnesses.

appeared to him and promised this land to his seed. (Genesis 12:5-7) What an appropriate place to make such a promise, in the heart of the land! From the summit of either Gerizim or Ebal, the patriarch could view large portions of the Promised Land. The city of Shechem (modern Nablus) was a vital hub, being on the north-south mountain road close to an east-west road between the coast and the Jordan Valley.

Abraham's altar was only one notable religious development here. Later, Jacob purchased land in this area and carried on true worship. He also dug or paid for the digging of a deep well, near the base of



Gerizim. Centuries later the Samaritan woman told Jesus: "Our forefather Jacob, who gave us the well . . . , drank out of it." It may have been spring fed, which could explain why the apostle John termed it "Jacob's fountain."

The mention of true worship in connection with Gerizim and Ebal

may also call to your mind that Joshua brought Israel here, as Moses had directed. Joshua built an altar on Ebal. Imagine half of the people in front of Gerizim and the rest before Ebal as Joshua read "the law, the blessing and the malediction." (Joshua 8:30-35; Deuteronomy 11:29) Years later, Joshua returned and in final admonition said: "As for me and my household, we shall serve Jehovah." The people covenanted to do the same. (Joshua 24:1, 15-18, 25) But would they, really?

The answer may help you to understand Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman. You see, the true worship followed by Abraham, Jacob, and Joshua did not continue here in Samaria.

After the northern ten tribes broke away, they turned to calf worship. So Jehovah permitted the Assyrians to conquer this area in 740 B.C.E. They carried away much of the population, bringing in as replacements foreigners from elsewhere in the Assyrian Empire, worshipers of strange gods. Some of those pagans likely intermarried with Israelites and learned some teachings of true worship, such as circumcision. But the resulting form of Samaritan worship certainly was not fully pleasing to God.—2 Kings 17:7-33.



Garo Nalbandian



Garo Nalbandian

In their mixed worship, the Samaritans accepted as Scripture only the first five books of Moses, the Pentateuch. About the fourth century B.C.E., they put up a temple on Mount Gerizim, in competition with God's temple in Jerusalem. In time the Gerizim temple was dedicated to Zeus (or, Jupiter) and was eventually destroyed. Still, Samaritan worship continued to be centered on Gerizim.

To this day, Samaritans hold an annual Passover celebration on Gerizim. A number of lambs are slaughtered. Their carcasses are dipped in barrels of boiling water so that the wool can be plucked off, and then the meat is cooked in pits for hours. At midnight hundreds of Samaritans, many from Jerusalem, have their paschal meal. On the left, you can see the Samaritan high priest, his head covered, officiating at a Passover celebration on Mount Gerizim.

Remember what the Samaritan woman told Jesus: "Our forefathers worshiped in this mountain." Jesus set her, and us too, straight: "The hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you people worship the Father. . . . Nevertheless, the hour is coming, and it is now, when the true worshipers will worship the Father with spirit and truth, for, indeed, the Father is looking for suchlike ones to worship him. God is a Spirit, and those worshiping him must worship with spirit and truth." —John 4:20-24.



God Does Not Forget “the Love You Showed for His Name”

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.” (Hebrews 6:10) These words of the apostle Paul ring true for Jehovah’s Witnesses in Eastern Europe. Faithfully serving in the interests of God’s name, for decades they have labored long and hard under restrictions imposed by the former Soviet-controlled governments. Jehovah remembers their good deeds and showers them with Kingdom blessings. For example, let us look at the past service year report from just three of those areas.

Territories of the Former Soviet Union

Territories of the former Soviet Union report that during the 1992 service year, the

peak number of Kingdom publishers increased by 35 percent—from 49,171 to 66,211! But that is not all, since those publishers have been very active, as seen by the fine increases in placements of Bible literature, including magazines. They have made good use of brochures and booklets too, placing 1,654,559. That is more than triple last year’s figure of 477,235! What has been the response to all these placements? A doubling of the number of home Bible studies. Now 38,484 Bible studies are being conducted.

Also, participation in the auxiliary pioneer service rose by 94 percent. This obviously contributed to the outstanding tally of newly baptized disciples, 26,986, as compared to last year’s number of 6,570, an amazing 311-percent increase!

How did some of the newly baptized ones first become interested in the good news? At times the deep concern of the Witness conducting the study was a factor. A presiding overseer from Moldova relates:

"My wife and I visited a woman who had previously shown interest in Bible truth. A Bible study was started with her. However, her husband did not show any interest at all. One day when we were on our way to visit her to continue the study, the weather was bitter cold and snowy. Hardly anyone was on the streets, but we made it to her house right at the appointed time. She told her husband: 'You see how much these people care about us? They are punctual despite the snow.' This incident caused her husband to think. He changed his mind and joined the study, and now he and his wife are baptized Witnesses."

At other times the politeness of the Witness may stir up interest in the good news. An elder, also from Moldova, had this experience:

"A man I visited in my preaching territory was not interested in Jehovah's Witnesses. He said he was Orthodox, the same as his father and grandfather. So he asked me to leave the premises. However, before I left, he gave me the opportunity to tell him the reason for my visit. I pointed to Matthew 28:19, which states: 'Go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit.' I then gave him the address of our meeting place and left. To my surprise, one week later this man came to our meeting! He stayed until the program was over. He explained that throughout the week, he had felt remorse because of having been so unfriendly to me. A Bible study was started right on the spot, and now he is one of our brothers."

Another outstanding feature of the service year has been the overwhelming response to the needs of our brothers in that area. In the course of the winter of 1991/92, some 400 tons of foodstuffs and a large amount of clothing for men, women, and children were sent to those in need. These provisions were distributed to practically all parts of the former Soviet Union's territory, even as far as Irkutsk in Siberia and Khabarovsk, near Japan. Truly an impressive indication that Jehovah has not forgotten the love our brothers have shown for his name! This evidence of brotherly love stirred up by Jehovah's spirit has also had the result of uniting them with their worldwide family. For example, one sister in Ukraine wrote the branch office:

"The help you gave us touched us to the bottom of our hearts. We were moved to tears and thanked Jehovah God for not forgetting us. True, we have material hardships right now, but thanks to the help that arrived from our brothers in the West, we got back on our feet in a material way. Now, because of your help, our family will be able to devote more time to Jehovah's service. If Jehovah wills, my daughter and I will auxiliary pioneer in the summer months."

In addition, the relief effort provided a witness to outsiders because onlookers could see that the Witnesses display love by their actions. A family from another congregation wrote: "We received the material help consisting of food and clothing. It is so much! Your support and encouragement are a lesson for us that we too should do good to others. This act of love did not go unnoticed by unbelievers, as well as interested persons and their families; it has been a great witness about the true brotherhood."

The five district conventions and one international convention held this past June

and July, with the theme "Light Bearers," were another evidence of Jehovah's blessing on the hard work of his Witnesses and the love they have shown for making his name known. The conventions were attended by 91,673 persons, and 8,562 were baptized. The largest attendance was at St. Petersburg, the site of the international convention, where 46,214—including delegates from about 30 countries around the world—gathered at Kirov Stadium.

In Siberia one man about 60 years of age came to the convention grounds in Irkutsk just to have a look. He said: "All attenders are well dressed, with smiling faces, and are kind to one another. These people are like one united family. One can feel that they are friends not only at the stadium but also in life. I received excellent Bible literature and learned much better what kind of organization this is. I want to keep in touch with Jehovah's Witnesses and to study the Bible with them."

At the same convention in Irkutsk, where 5,051 attended, an interested woman from the Yakut Republic, Siberia, commented: "I look at the people, and I want to cry out for joy. I am very thankful to Jehovah that he helped me to know such people. Here at the convention, I have received literature, and I want to talk with others about it. I very much want to be a worshiper of Jehovah."

The director of the Central Stadium in Alma Ata, Kazakhstan, where 6,605 attended the convention, said the following: "I am thrilled with your attitude. Now I am convinced that all of you, the young and the old, are respectable people. I cannot say that I believe in God, but I do believe in the sacred things conveyed by your brotherhood, in your attitude toward spiritual and material values."

One police officer at the Alma Ata convention observed: "I have come in contact with

you people twice, each time at a convention. It is extremely pleasant to work with Jehovah's Witnesses."

Romania

Jehovah has not forgotten the love that the brothers in Romania have shown for his name either. This past service year saw many happy events for the Witnesses. First, a branch office was once again established in Bucharest. The last legal activity ceased in 1949. The office has about 20 brothers and sisters working in the new facilities. The branch office serves 24,752 publishers—an all-time peak that represents a 21-percent increase over last year's average.

After years of preaching secretly, the publishers are getting better adjusted to the public door-to-door witnessing work. An experience from Mureş County shows how some Witnesses make good use of any opportunity to preach to others, even when they are traveling. The branch office writes:

"A publisher decided to preach from one railway compartment to the other. The reaction of the people was generally favorable, but in the last compartment, some difficulties arose. None of the travelers wanted to accept a copy of our magazines. Finally, one man, quite upset, stood up and shouted: 'I am going to throw all your magazines out the window! Why are you bothering us so much with your religion?' The publisher kindly replied that even if he did throw out the magazines, someone else could benefit from his action—those who would pick up the magazines. Noticing the calmness of the publisher, the man was so impressed that he took the magazines and started distributing them himself to the other travelers in the compartment. Surprisingly, all of them took a magazine. After distributing them, the man had no copies for himself. There-

fore, the publisher asked him: 'Sir, do you not want any copies for yourself?' At that the man grabbed one of the magazines from a traveler who had two copies and said: 'Now one copy has also reached me!'

In many countries the preaching work of Jehovah's Witnesses has at times stirred up the opposition of Christendom's clergy. In Romania, the priests of the Orthodox Church often become furious with the Witnesses. But this cannot stop Jehovah from blessing his people for the love they have shown for his name. One circuit overseer writes:

"Together with the local congregation, we went out for service in the rurals. There were a hundred brothers. We rented a bus that took us about 35 miles into the countryside, to a small town. We invited many to the public talk that was to be held in the Cultural Home. As soon as the meeting began, the Orthodox priest arrived to disturb our meeting. The police officials tried to stop the priest. Nevertheless, he refused to calm down. He succeeded in stopping the meeting when he broke the glass in the main entrance door. However, many of the local inhabitants did not agree at all with the priest's conduct. A thorough witness could then be given to all in attendance, and a large amount of literature was distributed."

Unfortunately, in some parts of the country, there are very few Witnesses. When a regular pioneer first arrived in the county of Olt, he found only nine brothers in the whole county and a large territory in which to preach. After a year the number of Witnesses grew to 27, of whom five were reactivated publishers. The pioneer established his quarters in the city of Corabia, where there were no Witnesses at all. After the Witnesses had been there only 45 days, the

local rector protested on Craiova radio against their work. He said that they had "invaded" the city of Corabia with their teachings, trying to make people change their religion. The attacks continued, with the intent to stop the work and destroy the reputation of the Witnesses in that area. It all climaxed when the brothers were in Bucharest for the district convention. The Orthodox rector of Corabia made a strong announcement after his church service: "We should all hold a street demonstration in order to stir up the police to take measures against the Witnesses, who have infected the whole area with their publications and have poisoned the people." But the very night before the meeting was supposed to take place, something unusual happened. A group of vandals destroyed the cathedral and the City Cultural Home. Therefore, the protest meeting never did take place!

Territories of the Former Yugoslavia

The 1992 service year has been a most difficult year for the brothers in the area of Yugoslavia. At the same time, however, they have had some joyful experiences. Thankfully, Jehovah does not forget their work and the love they showed for his name.

War started first in Slovenia, then in Croatia, and later in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Within a year, out of one republic, five new States were endeavoring to establish their own borders, laws, and currencies. Hundreds of Witnesses had to flee their homes and find refuge with their brothers in other places. Similar to other countries in Eastern Europe, emergency committees were appointed in larger cities, taking care of accommodations, food, and clothing for our needy brothers. During the service year, about 55 tons of food were distributed to brothers in congregations within the

troubled areas. Many letters of appreciation have been received.

The brothers in Dubrovnik related how thankful they were for the assistance given. As one sister went home with her parcel of food, a neighbor asked where she had bought the eggs. The sister told her that her spiritual brothers in another sector had sent them. The neighbor was astonished. In another case an unknown man from Slovenia called an elder and said: "I have heard that Jehovah's Witnesses are distributing the food received from their brothers in a just way. I have sent several parcels to people; however, they never arrived. Could I send such relief goods to you, and you could distribute them?" Also, newspapers and radio reported favorably about our relief work.

A brother who was baptized at the international convention in Zagreb in 1991 was aware of the rising difficulties and bought an entire food store. He took the food to his house close to the war area. As the food shortage became more severe, this supply proved to be a real blessing to the brothers.

It was possible to obtain a permit for a large truck to take staple food items for the besieged brothers in Sarajevo. We are happy to say that the delivery was carried out successfully.

The fighting has taken its toll on civilians. Sadly, by the end of the service year, six of our brothers and sisters and two interested persons had lost their lives, and some had been injured.

However, many experiences show that in the main, it is a protection to be one of Jehovah's Witnesses. In one case the brothers were traveling to a district convention in Belgrade when the bus was stopped by soldiers, asking whether there were members of a certain religion among them. The brothers replied that there were none. They

had to show their identification cards, and some of them had names that indicated they could be of that religion. The soldiers accused them of lying, but the brothers had their notice of withdrawal from the church with them; even though they were born into that religion, they stated, they were now Jehovah's Witnesses, traveling to their convention. With this the soldiers let them travel on.

The pioneers continue their service with unabated zeal, and this has proved to be a real stimulus to the work. *The Watchtower*, with its cheerful covers in full color, is being translated simultaneously in all the principal languages of the region. It is regularly providing lovers of truth and righteousness with their spiritual "measure of food supplies at the proper time." (Luke 12:42) During the 1992 service year, 674 new brothers and sisters were baptized.

For a certainty, God has not forgotten the work of the brothers in Eastern Europe and the love they have shown for his name. Further, he desires that all his worshipers, no matter where they live, follow the fine counsel Paul next gave, at Hebrews 6:11, which states: "We desire each one of you to show the same industriousness so as to have the full assurance of the hope down to the end."

In Our Next Issue

'Caught Away to Meet the Lord'
—How?

Light Bearers, for What Purpose?

Why Guard Against Idolatry?

QUESTIONS FROM READERS

What responsibility do Christians have in slowing down the polluting of our environment—land, sea, and air?

As Jehovah's Witnesses, we are deeply concerned with the many ecological problems now affecting our earthly home. More than most people, we appreciate that the earth was created to be a pure, healthful home for a perfect human family. (Genesis 1:31; 2:15-17; Isaiah 45:18) We also have God's assurance that he will "bring to ruin those ruining the earth." (Revelation 11:18) It is thus right to make balanced, reasonable efforts to avoid needlessly adding to man's ongoing spoiling of our globe. Note, though, the word "reasonable." It is also Scripturally fitting to guard against allowing ecological issues and practices to become our overwhelming concerns.

Even normal human living produces wastes. For example, the growing, processing, and eating of food products often give rise to waste, though much of it may be biodegradable. (Psalm 1:4; Luke 3:17) The broiled-fish meal that the resurrected Jesus made for his disciples likely resulted in some smoke, ash, and refuse of fish bones. (John 21:9-13) But the animate and inanimate systems or cycles of the earth are designed to accommodate such.

God's people should not be oblivious of ecological matters. Jehovah required his ancient people to take steps to dispose of wastes, steps that had ecological as well as sanitary import. (Deuteronomy 23:9-14) And since we know his view of those who are ruining the earth, we certainly should not ignore things that we can do to keep the environment clean. We can reflect this in proper disposal of garbage or wastes, especially toxic substances. We conscientiously cooperate with recycling efforts, having added reason to do so if these are mandated by Caesar. (Romans 13:1, 5) And some individuals draw satisfaction from taking additional steps, such as choosing to use biodegradable products rather than ones that would add to the mountains of refuse on land and under the seas.

The extent to which a Christian will go in this direction, however, is a personal matter unless re-

quired by law. It is plain from the news media that imperfect humans easily fall into the trap of being extremists. Jesus' advice is certainly pertinent: "Stop judging that you may not be judged . . . Why, then, do you look at the straw in your brother's eye, but do not consider the rafter in your own eye?" (Matthew 7:1, 3) Keeping this in mind may help us not to lose sight of other vital factors.

The prophet Jeremiah wrote: "I well know, O Jehovah, that to earthling man his way does not belong. It does not belong to man who is walking even to direct his step." (Jeremiah 10:23) Ignoring this principle has brought mankind face-to-face with "critical times hard to deal with," as noted at 2 Timothy 3:1-5. And what God had recorded at Revelation 11:18 proves that human efforts to rid the earth of its major ecological problems, including pollution, will not fully succeed. There may be some progress here and there, but the only lasting solution requires God's intervention.

For this reason we concentrate our efforts and resources on the divine solution, rather than trying to relieve superficial symptoms. In this we follow the example of Jesus, who spent the greater part of his ministry 'bearing witness to the truth.' (John 18:37) Instead of feeding the world or relieving wide-scale social ills—including pollution—Jesus pointed to the complete solution to the problems afflicting humankind.—John 6:10-15; 18:36.

While love for fellowmen moves us to avoid needlessly polluting the land, atmosphere, or water supplies, we continue to bear witness to the truth. This involves teaching people to apply Bible truth and so avoid ruining their bodies with smoke, excessive alcohol, or damaging drugs. As millions of new ones have become disciples, they have learned habits of cleanliness and consideration for others. So the preaching work has made a literal contribution to the lessening of the general problem of pollution today. But more important, Christian disciples strive to make over their personality and habits now so that they will fit into the clean Paradise earth that God will soon provide for his true worshipers.

"A Faithful Witness in the Skies"

FROM long before the first man walked the earth, the moon has shone brightly in the night sky. At one time many worshiped it as a goddess. The Greek author Plutarch claimed that it was the final destination of pure souls after death. In Baltic mythology the moon was a man, husband of the sun. They had a marital dispute, and the moon ran away from his wife, seldom appearing with her in the heavens!

Today, young—and not so young—lovers look up at the moon and think romantic thoughts. In the 1960's scientists spent immense sums of money to put men on the moon and bring back a few pounds of rock for research. One thing about the moon is sure. Each day, right on schedule, it will rise and set. So faithful is it in its appointed rounds that we can calculate its phases and eclipses thousands of years into the past.

When Israelites looked at the moon, they were reminded of something wonderful.



Frank Zullo

God promised that King David's royal dynasty would not pass away. He said: "As the moon it [David's seed] will be firmly established for time indefinite, and as a faithful witness in the skies." (Psalm 89:35-37) This promise was fulfilled in Jesus, the "Son of David." (Luke 18:38) After his death Jesus was resurrected an immortal spirit and ascended to heaven. (Acts 2:34-36) In time he was installed as King of God's heavenly Kingdom. (Revelation 12:10)

That Kingdom is now ruling and "will stand to times indefinite." (Daniel 2:44) In this way Jesus, the immortal representative of David's royal dynasty, will last as long as the moon, the "faithful witness in the skies."

Hence, each time you see the moon shining brightly in the night sky, remember God's promise to David and give thanks that God's Kingdom now reigns and will reign forever, to God's glory and to faithful mankind's everlasting blessing.—Revelation 11:15.

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