



**God's
Way**

Is Love



Our God-fearing readers will be interested to note that all the scriptures used in this booklet are taken from Catholic editions of the Holy Scriptures. The best-known English Catholic edition is the Douay-Rheims Version, which was revised by Bishop. R. Challoner and published with the approval of the Catholic Church. Another version now growing in popularity and written in modern English is the translation by Monsignor Ronald A. Knox. These are the two recognized Catholic versions of the Holy Bible quoted herein.

You will be pleased at observing how, from these two translations of the Divine Word, the wonderful works of God are shown, which prove that "God's way is love", and you will see what blessings are in store for faithful mankind through God's arrangement. With the Holy Scriptures at hand, if you have a copy, read the lecture herein printed as given by the president of the Watch Tower Society at an advertised public meeting and at the same time broadcast over a well-known New York radio station.

-THE PUBLISHERS

In Quoting Scripture verses we give first the name of the Bible book, then the number of the chapter, then the number of the verse, and finally the name of the translation quoted from.

The questions at the bottom of the page are for individual or group study.

PUBLISHERS

Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, Inc.
International Bible Students Association
Brooklyn, New York, U. S. A.

Made in the United States of America

GOD'S WAY IS LOVE

"God is love." - 1 John 4:16, Knox.

THE Most High God, who created mankind, gave us his written Word, the Holy Scriptures, and set forth many promises therein. These prophecies foretold that in time a holy One would be brought forth to bless all the families of the earth. That promised One was Jesus Christ. Today mankind, conceived in iniquities, conceived in sins, wonders why there is so much difficulty, why so much pain, sickness and sorrow among men, why so much selfishness and discontent in this world, so long after this promised One, Jesus Christ, was brought forth. Mankind wants and seeks blessings. So they ask: "If Jesus Christ is the promised Seed of God and he is to bring blessings that will affect men of all nations, why is not something done about it now?" Will you continue reading and understand why from the Holy Scriptures?

2 Over nineteen centuries ago Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem. He was born of a woman highly favored of God, the virgin Mary. One of the most wonderful things that ever occurred on earth was this miracle, a man-child born of a virgin. It was Almighty God in heaven who, through his holy spirit, transferred the life of his heavenly Son to the virgin's womb and in due time brought forth the promised Seed. God's prophet Isaias had foretold this: "Therefore the Lord himself shall give

1. (a) Who was God's promised One? (b) Since he was brought forth so long ago, what question do men ask today?
- 2, 3. (a) Where and how was this promised One born? (b) How did the virgin Mary know he would be born by her?

4

you a sign. Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son: and his name shall be called Emmanuel." (Isaias 7:14, Douay) Jesus' mother was of the line of King David and so could bring forth his royal heir. She was the virgin chosen to bring forth the Seed of promise. She knew of this because the Lord's angel, Gabriel, came and spoke to her, as the record in the Holy Bible says:

3 Then the angel said to her, Mary, do not be afraid; thou hast found favour in the sight of God. And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call him Jesus. He shall be great, and men will know him for the Son of the most High; the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob eternally; his kingdom shall never have an end. But Mary said to the angel, How can that be, since I have no knowledge of man? And the angel answered her, The Holy Spirit will come upon thee, and the power of the most High will overshadow thee. Thus that holy thing which is to be born of thee shall be known for the Son of God. -Luke 1:30-35, Knox.

4 This marvelous miracle was performed in fulfillment of God's promise, a virgin bringing forth the Son of God, and His further promise will also have fulfillment, "His kingdom shall never have an end." Why, then, was God's Son brought forth in this manner? Primarily to make known the name, the Word and the kingdom of the Most High God, his Father in heaven. In his ministry Jesus himself told us that very thing: "No man has ever seen God; but now his only-begotten Son, who abides in the bosom of the Father, has himself brought us a clear message." (John 1:18,

Knox) Yes, this Son, who had resided with his Father in his prehuman existence, was transferred from heaven to earth and made a "little less than the angels" to give us a clear message from his Father. He knew his Father, and we come to know the

4. For what two purposes was Jesus born in this manner?

5

Father because the Son was with the Father. For the Son said in prayer to the Father: I have exalted thy glory on earth, by achieving the task which thou gavest me to do; now, Father do thou exalt me at thy own side, in that glory which I had with thee before the world began. I have made thy name known to the men whom thou hast entrusted to me, chosen out of the world. (John 17:4-6, Knox) Thus Jesus' primary purpose on this earth was to make known his Father's name, Word and kingdom. His secondary purpose was to provide the ransom sacrifice for mankind.

5 These two purposes accomplished by Jesus are great blessings that affect us all. So this gift of God, this sending of his Son into the world for these purposes, shows the great love that God has for us and proves that God's way is love. Time and again he has manifested his love toward mankind, and he is constantly arranging for blessing them, even though man today thinks that God is slow in doing it. But are we patient enough to find out further what God has done, is doing and will yet do for us? Let us read on, then.

6 From his walking with Jesus Christ, the apostle John tells us that "God is love", which means that His way is love in guiding and dealing with mankind. How can the man who has no love have any knowledge of God, since God is love? What has revealed the love of God, where we are concerned, is that he has sent his only-begotten Son into the world, so that we might have life through him. That love resides, not in our shewing any love for God, but in his shewing love for us first, when he sent out his Son to be an atonement for our sins. Beloved, if God has shewn such love to us, we too must love one another. No man has ever seen God; but if we love one another, then we have God dwelling in us, and the love of God has reached its full growth in our lives. -1 John 4:8-13, Knox.

5. What great attribute has God thus been manifesting to mankind?

6. What, then, is God's way, and how do we show we know God?

6

7 Seeing what God has done in fulfilling his own prophecies in the Scriptures, by sending his only-begotten Son into the world to help man to understand and become acquainted with his Creator, certainly we must say that God is love. From the way Jesus taught us and the way the inspired Holy Scriptures teach us we can realize that God is LOVE. But what a difference there is when it comes to the things that men teach us today about God! In view of such teachings of men and seeing that God has done so much with our eternal blessing in mind, we are led to ask: If God is love, how could there be a place of eternal torment, called hell, where billions of human creatures in God's image are said to go after death of the body? There fire and brimstone are said to be burning for eternity and condemned souls are said to remain there without release, in conscious torment. How could there be even such a place as "purgatory", where souls are said to endure excruciating pains while they await their release to be taken to heaven? Why should it be God's will that the vast majority of people should live and suffer in such poverty and distress,

so that many people say man has his hell right here on earth? How can God's being love harmonize with such ideas and teachings of men? When the God-fearing people at Berea were taught certain things even by the apostle Paul, they went "daily searching the scriptures, whether these things were so". (Acts 17:11, Douay) We can be just as noble as those Bereans were by doing the same thing.

8 In their present condition mankind is miserable. What man is not sorrowful? He lives a few years and then goes into death. After that, accord-

7. In view of what men teach about God in contrast with what his Word teaches, what questions are we led to ask?

8, 9. (a) Because of man's present misery, what question do we ask about his future? (b) How would God have more love for a tree than for man?

7

ing to certain teachings in this world, if he has not been a good man he must go to eternal torment in the fires of hell. Patient Job, a man who loved and served God, said this: "Man, born of a woman, living for a short time, is filled with many miseries." (Job 14:1, Douay) Does it not appear that man has enough trouble on earth without having to go to a place of eternal torment after he dies in order to experience more and worse misery? So we listen with interest to what further Job has to say: A tree hath hope. If it be cut, it groweth green again, and the boughs thereof sprout. If its root be old in the earth, and its stock be dead in the dust: at the scent of water, it shall spring, and bring forth leaves, as when it was first planted. But man when he shall be dead, and stripped, and consumed, I pray you where is he? (Job 14:7-10, Douay) A tree is beautiful; it is God's creation, but it is not intelligent.

9 Man is intelligent, in God's image, and are we to believe that God loves a tree more than man, that a tree after it is cut down will sprout and grow again, but man - no; even though he has lived in his miseries here, God torments him more after death? None of us like death. We should like to sprout again as a green tree does, and we should like to live in pleasant surroundings, if only we knew how. But after death where is man? Job asked. Did Job believe he was in a burning hell, a fiery purgatory, or even a limbo?

10 What did Job know about this subject of "hell"? At the time Job was covered with boils due to a sickness brought upon him by Satan the Devil. He was really a man in misery on earth. So in view of popular teachings about "hell", is it not strange that Job should say this to God: "Who will grant me this, that thou mayst protect me in hell, and hide me till thy wrath pass, and appoint me a time when thou wilt remember me"? (Job 14:13,

10. What did Job pray respecting hell, and why?

8

Douay) Here Job, in his misery, prays to God in heaven to hide him in hell. Can you imagine his wanting to go there if hell is a place of terrible conscious torment? Certainly Job had enough trouble and was not wanting to hop out of a frying pan into a fire. No, he did not. But to avoid this seeming contradiction some have imagined that there must be a part of hell that is blissful and another part for torment. On the contrary, Job prayed as he did because he knew God's arrangements and knew what "hell" in the Holy Scriptures means. He knew that sometime in the future God would remember all those that had gone to this Scriptural "hell", and would give

them an opportunity in a new world, "in which justice dwelleth." (2 Peter 3:13, Douay) So what is that "hell"?

11 One writer of the Psalms had this to say about it: Hear these things, all ye nations: give ear, all ye inhabitants of the world. All you that are earthborn, and you sons of men: both rich and poor together. They are laid in hell like sheep: death shall feed upon them. And the just shall have dominion over them in the morning: and their help shall decay in hell from their glory. (Psalm 48:2, 3, 15, Douay) Sheep are not in hell, but sheep are slaughtered by the millions. In such great numbers, too, men die and go to the Scriptural "hell". There the psalmist says that death feeds upon them and their help decays, but he adds: "But God will redeem my soul from the hand of hell, when he shall receive me." -Psalm 48:16, Douay.

12 Another writer of Psalms says: "Who is the man that shall live, and not see death: that shall deliver his soul from the hand of hell?" (Psalm 88:49, Douay) By no human means of his own or 11. Who are laid like sheep in hell, and what hope is there for them?

12. (a) Why have men been obliged to see death? (b) Why could their going to hell not be to save their souls tormented?

9

of another man can any person living on earth today escape the Scriptural "hell". Why man has been obliged to see death is that he has been born a sinner due to the sin of our first parents Adam and Eve in the "paradise of pleasure". "The wages of sin is death. But the grace of God, life everlasting in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 6:23, Douay) Since all have been obliged to go to the Scriptural "hell", was it in order to have their souls tortured in any way? How could that happen to sinful souls, when God says, at Ezechiel 18:4 (Douay), this: "Behold all souls are mine: as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, the same shall die"? So, from the Holy Scriptures, man goes out of existence when he goes to "hell", for his soul dies, making it impossible for his soul to be tormented for a time or for eternity.

13 If anyone wants to argue that hell is a place of conscious fiery torment, then he must argue, too, that Christ Jesus, the Son of God, this one born of the virgin Mary, also went to a place of soul torment to take the place of sinful mankind. Speaking of Jesus' resurrection, the apostle Peter said: For David saith concerning him: . . . *Because thou wilt not leave my soul in hell: nor suffer thy Holy One to see corruption....* he spoke of the resurrection of Christ. For neither was he left in hell: neither did his flesh see corruption. (Acts 2:25-31, Douay) The Scriptural hell in which Jesus was for parts of three days is mankind's common grave, and it was from this grave that his heavenly Father raised him on the third day. In proof of this Mgr. Knox's translation of Acts 2:27, 31 does not use the word "hell" as the Douay Version does, but reads: *Thou wilt not leave my soul in the place of death,*

13. (a) If hell means torment, then what must we argue about Jesus? (b) How does comparing the Douay and the Knox translations show what hell is?

10

or allow thy faithful servant to see corruption. It was of the Christ he said, foreseeing his resurrection, that he was not in the place of death, and that his body did not see corruption.

14 The Holy Scriptures speak of the dead as being asleep, not as consciously suffering torment. The dead could not be tormented by going to the Scriptural "hell", because that word is translated into English from the Hebrew word *she-ol'* in the Old Scriptures and from the Greek word *ha'des* in the New Scriptures. Out of 65 times that the Hebrew word *she-ol'* occurs, the Douay Version translates it 63 times "hell" and once "pit" and once "death". (Job 17:16; Osee 13:14, Douay) But at Job 14:13, quoted above (§10), Mgr. Knox translates *she-ol'* "grave" instead of "hell", and he translates it "grave" instead of "hell" at other places also. (Genesis 37:35; 42:38, Knox) Thus Catholic scholarship recognizes that the Scriptural "hell" is the common grave of mankind.

15 So when anyone dies and goes to hell, does he have any feeling there? Does he have any senses that would make him subject to any torment? God's Word, not man's word, answers: For the living know that they shall die, but the dead know nothing more. Neither have they a reward any more: for the memory of them is forgotten. Whatsoever thy hand is able to do, do it earnestly: for neither work, nor reason, nor wisdom, nor knowledge, shall be in hell, whither thou art hastening. (Ecclesiastes 9:5,10, Douay) In this scripture, instead of "hell", Mgr. Knox translates *she-ol'* as "grave". Certainly if a person were alive in purgatory or in hell, he must have some reason, some knowledge, some senses, in order to feel the torture and pain that some teachers tell us a person suffers there after death. To the contrary, we are told definitely, at Psalm 145:4 (Douay): "His spirit shall go forth, and he shall

14. How does Catholic authority show "hell" is the common grave?

15. Does anyone have any feeling in hell? What do the Scriptures show?

11

return into his earth: in that day all their thoughts shall perish." And at Psalm 6:6 (Douay): "For there is no one in death, that is mindful of thee: and who shall confess to thee in hell?" According to the Holy Scriptures, when a man dies he stops thinking and feeling; he goes to "hell", the Scriptural hell, which is the common grave, and there he is asleep until the resurrection. He does not enjoy any *conscious* rest there.

16 Jesus' friend Lazarus was dead in the grave for four days. Jesus, talking to his disciples about Lazarus' death, said he was asleep. His disciples thought Jesus meant he was not yet dead but merely resting. John 11:11-15 (Knox) tells us: He told them, Our friend Lazarus is at rest now; I am going there to awake him. But, Lord, the disciples said to him, if he is rested, his life will be saved. Jesus had been telling them of his death; but they supposed he meant the rest which comes with sleep. So now Jesus told them openly, Lazarus is dead. And for your sakes, I am glad I was not there; it will help you to believe. But come, let us make our way to him. Jesus had a wonderful opportunity here of showing what the resurrection would be in the new world, by bringing forth Lazarus who was actually dead and in the grave. On his arrival Lazarus' sister Martha said to Jesus: "If thou hadst been here, my brother would not have died." Later Jesus raised Lazarus from the tomb, but there is nothing in the Holy Scriptures to show that Lazarus said anything about being in a hell of fiery torment or in purgatory for four days or in a limbo, or of being in heaven with the holy angels. Certainly if Lazarus had been any place else than in the grave and if his soul had gone off alive into space somewhere, he would have known it when he returned to Bethany his home town. He would have told the apostle John and then the apostle John would have reported it in his Holy Gospel. But he

16. What did the experience of Lazarus, whom Jesus raised from the dead, show about those in hell?

did not do so. So Lazarus experienced just what Ecclesiastes 9:10 said, that there is no wisdom; knowledge, sense, activity in the hell or grave to which man goes at death.

17 God never could have contemplated anything like purgatory or eternal torment in hell. That would be the farthest thing from his mind. Proof that God never thought of such a thing is set forth in his Holy Bible, where he objects to such a thing, saying: They have built the high places of Topheth, which is in the valley of the son of Ennom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire: which I commanded not nor thought on in my heart. God never had such an idea for his creatures, and yet his apostate people took their sons and daughters and burned them in the fire to idols and images of false gods. At this God said: Here the gods of the countryside must have their hill-shrines, and children must be burnt as a sacrifice in their honour; a rite not of my prescribing, or enjoining, or imagining. (Jeremias 7:31, Douay; and 19:5, Knox) No, a loving God never could imagine tormenting creatures made in his image, putting humans alive in fire as a sacrifice. Much less could his love let him think of a doctrine of eternal torment or purgatorial torment in fire for human souls after death.

18 When fire is mentioned in the Holy Scriptures it indicates complete destruction, not eternal torment; as, for instance, in this text at 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9 (Douay):

And to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with the angels of his power: in a flame of fire, giving vengeance to them who know not God and who obey not the gos-

17. Why could God never have thought of such a thing as eternal torment of souls after death?

18. In the Holy Scriptures what does fire indicate, as at 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9?

pel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who shall suffer eternal punishment in destruction, from the face of the Lord and from the glory of his power. Here "destruction" does not mean spoiling or damaging. When God destroys or burns something, he puts it completely out of existence.

19 Now those who hate God he will not bless. Psalm 144:20 (Douay) states: "The Lord keepeth all them that love him: but all the wicked he will destroy." His expression of love will not go out to those who are his haters; but to those who love him God does exercise mercy: I am the Lord thy God, mighty, jealous, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation *of them that hate me*: and shewing mercy unto thousands to them that love me, and keep my commandments. (Exodus 20:5, 6, Douay) You note that God shows his anger only toward those who hate him. He does not show hatred against people just because they are born of certain fathers in a sinful condition. Every grown-up person is a free moral agent. He can decide for himself whom he will serve. Those who hate God and reject him he will not love. His mercy he shows to thousands of them that love him. It pays to be God-fearing and show love toward God. It preserves us from God's fiery destruction of the wicked.

EXPRESSIONS OF LOVE

20 Everything God has done and will do in the future is prompted by love. It could not be otherwise, since "God is love". Our very existence is an expression of his love. He created us, giving us life. "For with thee is the fountain of life." (Psalm 35:10, Douay) He is the self-existing One. It does no good to try to imagine when he started, for he did not start: he is without beginning and likewise

19. Whom does God hate and to whom does he show mercy?

20. How is our being alive an expression of God's love?

14

without end. Before he began creation he was alone. But he had great joy and happiness in bringing forth creations of all kinds, so that today we see about us the marvels of his creation. All things that he makes bring praise and honor to him when obedient to his rules, and that is the way it should be. He has produced a race of intelligent earthly creatures, human creatures. It is natural for them to want to live, because God gave them life and the desire to keep it. Just living is not complete in itself, but living in happiness, living with the opportunity to praise one's Creator, does bring complete joy to the human creature.

21 When we look about us, we see all nature proving that the Creator is a God of love. He made all things for man's pleasure. Look at his generosity in nature. For mankind he has provided all kinds of food: fruits, vegetables, nuts, grains, berries, besides water to refresh us. As far as things that we need for our life are concerned, he gives mankind an overabundance. One has but to travel in various parts of the earth to see the different sorts of food used by the different peoples, all of them nourishing, all of them pleasant to eat. Our needs in the way of covering and shelter God considers, too. He has brought forth animals that produce wool, and in the fields the cotton and fiber-furnishing plants, materials that can be turned into cloth, and trees that produce wood and branches and foliage for shelter. Even animal skins may serve for clothing; so we can have the necessary clothing and protection for our bodies, everything in such abundance. All mankind need to do is to use their capabilities and put these things to proper use.

22 Consider this body God has given us, and ob-

21. How does all nature prove the Creator is a God of love?

22, 23. (a) What senses has God given us, and for what purpose? (b) How can man express life, and where would he like to live always?

15

serve what man can do with it. He can see, looking at his fellow creatures, beholding all the wonderful creation of God living and inanimate. He can feel, telling whether things are hot or cold, determining the shape of things by touching them with his fingers, even if he could not see them. God has given us a wonderful sense of taste. No matter what we eat we can distinguish it, even though there be just a slight shade of difference in taste between this and that food. He has allowed us to hear, capturing the music in the melody of the birds, the surging of the waves, the varying audible movements of the winds. He has granted us hearing so that we can listen to loved voices, those of our brothers and sisters, our fathers and mothers and our friends. We can detect what they mean and what they wish to express to us. God has also given us the sense of smell. With it we can enjoy the fragrance of the grand array of flowers he has made, the natural perfumes that fill the air, the odor of the enjoyable foods we eat.

23 All these senses God has given us as a precious gift to add to our enjoyment of living, not to experience torment now or hereafter. It shows he loved his creatures from the start. How his creatures can express life on earth! Man can walk, run, climb, swim, yes, fly, not with natural wings like birds but by using machines which God's mental gifts to man enabled him to make to get up into the air by applying God's laws for nature. All this God has given us. We are not self-developed creatures of evolution. We did not get here by chance. We were made, created by God's power, and all these things that we possess are His gifts, blessings from a loving God. Even though imperfect now, man enjoys his five senses and enjoys his home, the earth. If things were perfect and peaceful, man would be content to live for eternity on earth. Now, would you not?

16

24 You really would not know you were alive if it were not for the brain God has put into your head. What an organ it is! What records it makes! What impressions are put upon it during our present brief lifetime! How many things we can recall by it! What imagination it has to conceive things! How it can reason! There is will in that brain which moves us to action, makes us take certain courses. This brain of ours has a conscience that can be trained in righteousness. There seems to be no limit to the extent that our brain can be used. It can be directed to the study of scientific matters, astronomy, mathematics, engineering. It can study out the putting up of great structures and buildings for the housing and the work of earth's people. It can study and devise and develop languages. We could go on endlessly thinking of what the human brain can do, because we have men all over the world today who are using their brain in so many different ways, some for the blessing of the people and, alas, others for the injury of the people. Regardless of how fallen man uses it, God gave us the brain and certainly this in itself is an expression of his love.

25 Another important thing: God gave man his own attributes. God's attributes are love and wisdom, justice and power. These he put in the first man Adam when creating him, for God made Adam in his own image. "God is love." (1 John 4:8, Knox) "All God's doing; his are the wisdom and the power." (Job 12:13, Knox) "See where he sits,... justice and right the pillars of his throne." (Psalm 96:2, Knox) "Not once, but twice I have heard God's voice of warning; all power is God's." -Psalm 61: 12, Knox.

26 Those several scriptures testify that he is a God of wisdom, love, justice and power. If all men

24. What can the brain do, and what does God's gift of it show?
25. What attributes did God give to man?
26. In expressing love, what did God put man in charge of?

17

followed these attributes as put in the first man in perfection, this earth would now be a grand place on which to live. By his loving interest in man, God gave him directive powers for his responsibilities in taking care of the lower animals and in dealing with all the human family: And God said, Let us make man, wearing our own image and likeness; let us put him in command of the fishes in the sea, and all that flies through the air, and the cattle, and the whole earth, and all the creeping things that move on earth. (Genesis 1:26, Knox) God was generous, loving, in that he should take man and put him in charge of all these things.

27 So the Lord God took the man and put him in his garden of delight, to cultivate and tend it. And this was the command which the Lord God gave the man, Thou mayest eat thy fill of all the trees in the garden except the tree which brings knowledge of good and evil; if ever thou eatest of this, thy doom is death. (Genesis 2:15-17, Knox) Then God gave man a perfect, lovely wife as his helper and for peopling the earth. And God pronounced his blessing on them. Increase and multiply and fill the earth, and make it yours; take command of the fishes in the sea, and all that flies through the air, and all the living things that move on the earth. (Genesis 1:28, Knox) Another expression of God's love! He did not just make a man and a woman and put them there in a paradise home and let them live alone with the animals. No! He made provision for happy family life among men, as the means of peopling the earth. He said: 'Now you multiply, fill this earth with your kind and subdue it. Bring forth children and let them grow up to be people like yourselves and let them multiply again till this whole earth is filled with human creatures. At the same time make the earth a perfect paradise. This is your home.' Certainly the Creator showed love in mak-

27. Where did God put man and how did he provide for him not to live alone?

18

ing man and putting him in an earthly paradise of pleasure.

LOVE'S TEST

28 Had man continued in God's love things would be different today. But man left God's love and went his own way. Although man did so, God did not forsake humankind. "For God so loved the world, as to give his only begotten Son: that whosoever believeth in him may not perish, but may have life everlasting." (John 3:16, Douay) But some people wonder: 'Well, God could not have been very loving in putting the tree of knowledge of good and evil there in the paradise. How could this tree and the forbidding of man to eat of it be an expression of divine love?' However, the Creator knows what is best for man. He knows His purpose in making him and placing him here on earth. Happiness and contentment on Adam and Eve's part, together with their family, depended on their continued appreciation of God's blessings. If God once got out of their lives they could not be content, nor enjoy life, because they would have lost the Father's love, and that is an essential thing to living. What God was concerned about was man's continuing to live in His favor, in His blessing and in His true worship. So it depended on God's love, righteousness, wisdom and power and upon God's law's being put into effect, and not man's law.

29 God did not arrange for man to govern himself. God had made full arrangement for handling the affairs of the earth and for having man do the things the way God knew it would be best for man to do them. All this for the blessing of the creation. Man should now show appreciation for 28. God's putting the forbidden tree in the paradise showed that man's happiness and contentment depended upon what?

29. (a) Was man to govern himself? (b) So what did God want to see in man?

God's sovereignty, for his rulership over the universe. If no appreciation was shown, naturally the blessings would be lost. God told the man: "Thou mayest eat thy fill of all the trees in the garden except the tree which brings knowledge of good and evil; if ever thou eatest of this, thy doom is death." (Genesis 2:17, Knox) This shows God would govern man, not by force or coercion, not by fear of hell-fire torment, but by appealing to man's appreciation, man's own gratitude, man's love for his Creator. God rules in love. All he told man to do was: Do not eat of that one particular tree. What God wanted to see in man was obedience.

30 Obedience is expressed through appreciation and doing what the One who is blessing you wants. It would be for man's own good to do what God wanted him to do. If man was appreciative, gracious and loving toward his Father, he would do exactly what his Creator wanted done. What did man have? Nothing except what God had given him, and everything he had was for his good. Man should therefore have love and appreciation for his Maker. He must observe the principles God set forth for man and abide by those principles. Man must remember it is Jehovah God who is the Lawgiver, giving the directions for the course of action man is to take. Man should respect these laws and commandments of God. So God put a simple test upon man. It was one of obedience as regards his eating. By just staying away from that forbidden tree man certainly could have shown he appreciated and loved God.

31 But Eve and Adam did not love God, for they partook of the fruit of that tree. Through the serpent, Satan the Devil presented himself to Eve and she preferred to believe Satan the serpent rather than the Creator. The serpent said to Eve:

30. What would appreciation have led man to do?

31. To whom did Eve prefer to listen?

What is this command God has given you, not to eat the fruit of any tree in the garden? To which the woman answered, We can eat the fruit of any tree in the garden except the tree in the middle of it; it is this God has forbidden us to eat or even to touch, on pain of death. And the serpent said to her, What is this talk of death? God knows well that as soon as you eat this fruit your eyes will be opened, and you yourselves will be like gods, knowing good and evil. (Genesis 3:1-5, Knox) And the serpent said to the woman: No, you shall not die the death. -Genesis 3:4, Douay.

32 There was no love shown on Eve's part in partaking of the forbidden fruit. Adam showed his selfishness, too, by eating. There was no love in their hearts, no appreciation, no gratitude for all the wonderful things God had given them. They preferred to be disobedient, to make their own laws, to decide for themselves what was good and what was evil, no longer looking to the great Sovereign of the universe who has all power, wisdom and love for his guidance. No, now they would act smart, make their own laws and live by them, be like God. How foolish, for in order to enjoy life a creature must recognize the Supreme One's law, arrangement and way of blessing, not what the creature thinks ought to be done!

33 Back there in the paradise of pleasure our first parents turned against God. But God's love did not fail. In this promise he expressed his way of love toward the human family: "I will put enmities between thee [the serpent] and the woman, and thy seed and her seed: she shall crush

thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel." (Genesis 3:15, Douay) So God let Adam and Eve live long enough to raise a big family. God knew he could win the love of those of Adam's offspring who appreciated divine blessings; but those who

32. What did Adam and Eve show a lack of, and why?

33. How did God then show his love did not fail for mankind?

21

proved willfully wicked and did not want to live under God's law and arrangement He would destroy. They would not be blessed eternally by the Seed of God's woman, but would be crushed as the serpent's seed.

34 For disobedience Adam and Eve lost the right to live on earth. They lost their home in the paradise of pleasure and were put out of the garden of Eden. But as for their offspring, God promised that his Seed of promise would come and change things. God purposed for man to live for eternity in his earthly home, whereas now mankind lives for a short time. This earth was meant for man's home, not heaven, not purgatory, not a hell of eternal torment. The Lord has pronounced it; the Lord who made the heavens, and the whole frame and fashion of earth, moulded to his will. He did not create it to lie idle, he shaped it to be man's home. (Isaias 45:18, Knox) God says further: "So shall my word be, which shall go forth from my mouth. It shall not return to me void, but it shall do whatsoever I please and shall prosper in the things for which I sent it." (Isaias 55:11, Douay) This earth, man's home, is not going to be burned up and put out of existence. God says this earth will not lie idle, and he did not create it to be idle, but he made it as man's home, to be filled with perfect humans and to be brought to a paradise state all over. Psalm 103:5 (Douay) says: "Who hast founded the earth upon its own bases: it shall not be moved for ever and ever." Ecclesiastes 1:4 (Douay) adds: "One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth standeth for ever." Earth will remain forever for man's home, and in due time . God will have perfect mankind live upon it for eternity in pleasure, in prosperity, with abun-

34. What right did Adam and Eve lose, but what remains God's purpose concerning mankind's home?

22

dance. Man will then be praising God, because God's way is love and he is working it out for man's benefit and blessing.

LOVE'S GIFT OF A BOOK

35 All of our quotations above are from the Holy Scriptures, the Holy Bible. That Book of books is a gift of God's love, for it sets out a record of his promises. It shows how he has dealt with man for the past 6,000 years, blessing and guiding obedient men up to this present time. In the sixteenth century before Christ God began to have the Bible written in its present form. It was started with the writings of Moses. Other inspired writers came along, all writing under God's direction. Finally, about A.D. 98, the apostle John finished writing the last of the books of the Bible.

36 Speaking about the more than thirty-five books of the Bible written before the Christian church began, the apostle Peter writes: Now the word of the prophets gives us more confidence

than ever. It is with good reason that you are paying so much attention to that word; it will go on shining, like a lamp in some darkened room, until the dawn breaks, and the day-star rises in your hearts. Yet always you must remember this, that no prophecy in scripture is the subject of private interpretation. It was never man's impulse, after all, that gave us prophecy; men gave it utterance, but they were men whom God had sanctified, carried away, as they spoke, by the Holy Spirit -2 Peter 1:19-21, Knox.

37 Now all these things were written for our benefit. God saw to it that the Bible text was preserved, for that text was his own, written under his inspiration. Hence His Word is a perfect guide to us all. We should turn to it and study it. It makes us wise for gaining salvation. Paul told Timothy so:

35. What book is a gift of God's love, and how was it produced?

36. What did the apostle Peter say about the writings of God's prophets?

37. So what is the best written guide for us, and why?

23

Because from thy infancy thou hast known the holy scriptures, which can instruct thee to salvation, by the faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture, inspired of God, is profitable to teach, to reprove, to correct, to instruct in justice: that the man of God may be perfect, furnished to every good work. -2 Timothy 3:15-17, Douay.

38 We can certainly depend on the Bible, more so than on man's spoken word. It is God's word of truth, setting out mankind's history from Adam to the present time and telling us what will happen in the near future. The Holy Bible reveals God's purposes for a new world. As we turn to the Scriptures we can hear God's promises about this new world with blessing for all faithful mankind. Long ago God promised Abraham: "In thy seed, shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice." (Genesis 22:18, Douay) Adam had disobeyed and brought sin, sorrow and death on the human family, but to obedient Abraham God promised that blessing would come to all nations through his Seed, who is Jesus Christ. Later to David God promised a Ruler for mankind: I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons: and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build me a house: and I will establish his throne for ever. I will be to him a father, and he shall be to me a son: and I will not take my mercy away from him, as I took it from him that was before thee. But I will settle him in my house, and in my kingdom for ever: and his throne shall be most firm for ever. -1 Paralipomenon 17:11-14, Douay.

39 Centuries afterward God inspired Daniel to prophesy: But in the days of those kingdoms the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed: and his kingdom shall not be delivered up to another people. And it shall break in pieces and shall consume

38,39. (a) What book reveals God's purposes, and what did God promise to Abraham, David and Daniel? (b) What will the Kingdom make secure for mankind?

24

all these kingdoms: and itself shall stand for ever. (Daniel 2:44, Douay) These scriptures, along with many other prophecies in the Bible, point to a kingdom that God will set up forever for blessing faithful men and women. That kingdom will make mankind secure in their homes:

They shall build houses and inhabit them: and they shall plant vineyards and eat the fruits of them. . . . they shall not plant and another eat. . . . The wolf and the lamb shall feed together; the lion and the ox shall eat straw; and dust shall be the serpent's food. They shall not hurt nor kill in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord. Further, regarding the King and his rule Isaias says: He shall judge the poor with justice, and shall reprove with equity for the meek of the earth. . . . The wolf shall dwell with the lamb: and the leopard shall lie down with the kid. The calf and the lion and the sheep shall abide together: and a little child shall lead them. The calf and the bear shall feed, their young ones shall rest, together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp: and the weaned child shall thrust his hand into the den of the basilisk. They shall not hurt, nor shall they kill in all my holy mountain: for the earth is filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the covering waters of the sea. -Isaias 65:21-25 and 11:4-9, Douay.

40 In that day, under that kingdom, will there be any more war between nations? Listen to Micheas 4:3, 4 (Douay): And he shall judge among many people and rebuke strong nations afar off: and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into spades. Nation shall not take sword against nation: neither shall they learn war any more. And every man shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree, and there shall be none to make them afraid: for the mouth of the Lord of hosts hath spoken. Christ Jesus, the Seed of God's promise, is the One

40. What about wars between nations under the Kingdom?

25

who will bring all these blessings to the human family through the Kingdom which God has decreed shall be set up with Jesus as King.

41 Recall now the angel's words to the virgin Mary: Thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call him Jesus. . . . the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob eternally; his kingdom shall never have an end. (Luke 1:31-33, Knox) That was carried out for the fulfillment of Isaias 9:6, 7 (Douay): For a child is born to us, and a son is given to us, and the government is upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, God the Mighty, the Father of the world to come, the Prince of Peace. His empire shall be multiplied, and there shall be no end of peace. He shall sit upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom: to establish it and strengthen it with judgment and with justice, from henceforth and for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.

42 Jesus knew he was called to this exalted position to be the Ruler of the new world. So he taught his apostles to pray for this kingdom, for they were going to be taken into it with him. To God their Father in heaven they prayed: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." (Matthew 6:10, Douay) To this day Christians pray that same prayer, but have you ever thought just what you have been praying for? Do you realize that when you ask the Father in heaven to have his will done on earth the same as it is done in heaven you are asking Him to destroy all this wicked arrangement that exists on the earth? For the earthly nations are not doing his will. You pray for them to be removed as Daniel

41. How did the fulfillment of the angel's words to Mary lead to fulfillment of Isaiah 9:6, 7?

42. What prayer did Jesus teach his disciples, and what does its fulfillment mean as to nations of this world?

26

prophesied and in their stead to have God bring in his kingdom. So will you now stop praying that prayer or do you want the Kingdom and its blessings?

RANSOM AND RESURRECTION

43 On earth Jesus not only vindicated the holy name and Word of his heavenly Father but also provided the ransom which mankind needed, by dying as a perfect sacrifice on Calvary. By giving his perfect, sinless human life he met the condemnation that God's law imposed on Adam's offspring. Thus, all that rebellious Adam had lost for his unborn posterity, Jesus bought out from under that sentence. By this he made it possible for man to gain everlasting life. Therefore the apostle Paul writes: "Sin offers death, for wages; God offers us eternal life as a free gift, through Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 6:23, Knox) All that Adam got as his wage for sin was death, not eternal life in a fiery hell or purgatory. If we today accept Christ Jesus, God's free gift to us through him is eternal life, in the new world. Jesus said:

As the Father has within him the gift of life, so he has granted to the Son that he too should have within him the gift of life, and has also granted him power to execute judgement, since he is the Son of Man. Do not be surprised at that; the time is coming, when all those who are in their graves will hear his voice and will come out of them; those whose actions have been good, rising to new life, and those whose doings have been evil, rising to meet their sentence. - John 5:26-29, Knox.

44 There we have Jesus' promise that all those in their graves will come forth in due time, some to a resurrection of life and blessing in the new world and others to a judgment that will go against some

43. How has Jesus made it possible for man to gain eternal life?

44. By whom did death come, but through whom does life come and for how long must he reign?

27

of them because they will not line up with God's kingdom under Christ at that time. Life is through Christ Jesus; as we read, at 1 Timothy 2:5, 6 (Knox): "There is only one God, and only one mediator between God and men, Jesus Christ, who is a man, like them, and gave himself as a ransom for them all." The first man Adam brought sin into the world and death by sin, so that all of us his descendants have died. The man Christ Jesus has provided a ransom for all believers. Jesus presented his ransom to God in heaven after his resurrection from the dead, and now God has seated him in the heavenly throne to rule as King of the new world. Says the apostle Paul: "His reign, as we know, must continue until he has put all his enemies under his feet, and the last of those enemies to be dispossessed is death." (1 Corinthians 15:25, 26, Knox) Christ's reign is God's provision for mankind, in expression of his love to them. God loves life, not death. Death is sin's wages. Jehovah loves the sinner who repents and turns to Him. Because the first man sinned and went against Him, that has not made God go against the human family. But God does insist that we be obedient to his laws and follow out his arrangements, if we expect to live.

WHEN

45 Well, someone says, you speak of God's way as love; so when is it all going to happen? For an answer turn to Matthew, chapter 24. It tells us of a sign of many features, wars, pestilences, famines, earthquakes, Christians persecuted, that would appear when the Kingdom was due to begin. Jesus there told his disciples that when Christians saw these things occurring together on earth they should know that this old system of things is pass-

45. When is all this to begin happening, and to what are selfishness and hate leading all nations?

28

ing out and the new and righteous government, God's kingdom for which he taught them to pray, is established in the heavens. He said: "Then shall many be scandalized and shall betray one another and shall hate one another." (Matthew 24:10, Douay) Now is that not a true description of the situation on earth today? Selfishness rules supreme. This is leading to a "great tribulation" such as man has never seen nor will ever see again. It will destroy all this wickedness and the nations engaging in it. The climax of that great tribulation will be the battle of Armageddon that the Pope has been moved to mention. That battle will put out of existence all the wicked angels together with Satan the Devil, and all the humans who are serving this wicked organization.

46 Is that battle, then, an expression of God's love for the human family? Yes. God takes no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but it will be a blessing for mankind for God to destroy all the wicked. As I live, saith the Lord God, I desire not the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways: and why will you die, O house of Israel? (Ezekiel 33:11, Douay) It is so foolish for any creatures to turn away from God's commandments and direction. Why will you die just to carry out your own will and way of life? Those who refuse to obey God's commandments he will bring to extinction, wiping them out, annihilating them. That is what will happen to the wicked. (Psalm 144:20, Douay; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9) It is essential to all men loving righteousness that the wicked be thus destroyed. It expresses God's love of righteousness and his kindness to man to destroy those wicked ones from the universe.

47 The Sovereign Ruler of the universe will bring

46. How could the battle of Armageddon be any expression of God's love?

47. With whom will God people the earth?

29

forth a perfect earth, peopled with a perfect human family. Why, then, should God let the wicked remain on this earth and corrupt it? It is God who purposes to produce a perfect society of men and women, all in expression of his love, bringing them happiness, peace, plenty and contentment with their perfect life. It is his purpose to fill this earth with happy, righteous creatures, not wicked ones.

48 In Noah's day the flood was a very essential thing. Earth was then filled with wickedness, for mankind in general had turned against God. The exception was the immediate family of Noah, who loved and preached righteousness, eight persons. The people refused to be converted by God's warning through Noah, and clean themselves up; he annihilated them, including the governments that then existed, because God regretted he had made man; he was grieved at the condition to which they had descended. So he destroyed them all. Noah loved God and God loved Noah and his family, four married couples. These God brought through the catastrophe, the destruction of that old, ungodly world. God had to destroy that first world and all its people

in order that Noah, his wife, their three sons and their wives, might enjoy life in happiness. God will do the same thing again. He must do it. As the flood was an expression of his love, it is also love's expression for him to bring the battle of Armageddon. It is essential now so as to let people who love righteousness live in peace and unity for eternity.

48 Life is enjoyable in happiness only under God. We are living today - yes, but few of mankind are enjoying this life. Man lives, exists, but when sincere people come to know God and follow out his righteous commandments and live according to his good principles, they begin to live in happiness.

48. How does the flood of Noah's day show Armageddon will be an expression of God's love?
49. How do men come to know more than a mere existence?

30

"The blessing of the Lord maketh men rich: neither shall affliction be joined to them." (Proverbs 10:22, Douay) Jehovah's kingdom for which we pray will be earth-wide and will be a lasting blessing for obedient mankind.

50 And now, before the battle of the "great day of the Almighty God", Armageddon, this good news of the destruction of this world and the establishment of God's kingdom must be preached in all lands and the islands of the sea. (Apocalypse 16:14-16, Douay; Matthew 24:14) Just as Noah learned of the coming flood and was a preacher of righteousness and preached the saving news in his day, so those who learn of Armageddon and of God's kingdom must preach "this gospel" in all the world for a testimony. There is no way to escape destruction at the battle of Armageddon unless people come to the Lord God and seek the just and seek the meek, "if by any means you may be hid in the day of the Lord's indignation," the same as Noah and his family went through the flood. They were hid in the day of the Lord's indignation against that old world. (Sophonias 2:3, Douay) God does not change. He can preserve his people in all parts of the earth in this day, in the end of this wicked world.

51 God is therefore seeing to it that "this gospel of the kingdom" is preached in the whole world for a testimony to all nations. After that the end will come, the end of this system of things. God has raised up his witnesses. These witnesses of Jehovah God are very anxious about this matter. They want people to know God's way. They show their appreciation to him by preaching the good news of the Kingdom in all the world. Jehovah's witnesses feel their responsibility for taking this

50. What must now be preached before Armageddon, and in order that men may do what?
51. Has God raised up any witnesses, and what are their purpose, their work, their way?

31

message to the people. They are not political, nor commercial, and are against any such false hope as godless communism. They love God in heaven and want to serve him and his Son Jesus Christ the King. They want others, too, to know about him and serve him. They encourage all people who love righteousness to prove by the Holy Scriptures all the things they preach. Anyone can take the Holy Bible, whether it be a Catholic edition or not, and prove to his own satisfaction what God's provisions are for him. Everyone should turn to the Holy Scriptures for proof, just as the ancient Bereans did: "These were of a better breed than the Thessalonians;

they welcomed the word with all eagerness, and examined the scriptures, day after day, to find out whether all this was true." -Acts 17:11, Knox.

52 By those Holy Scriptures we, as Jehovah's witnesses, believe that the first man sinned and brought death on the whole human family. But Jehovah God loved mankind and arranged for their redemption that they might gain life in the new world. He gave his Son Jesus Christ that the sin of the world might be taken away.

53 From the Holy Scriptures we have learned and bear witness that the resurrection is one of the greatest doctrines taught in God's Word, and that mankind now in the graves will be raised and given the opportunity for everlasting life, the little flock of Jesus' faithful followers gaining life in heaven as Christ's bride, and the rest of believing mankind gaining an inheritance in paradise restored to earth. Those who show love for God and seek to do God's will faithfully will live for eternity. Those who refuse to follow God's law will go into everlasting death.

52. As Jehovah's witnesses, what fundamental things do we believe?

53. What witness do we give about resurrection and gaining or failing to gain life in the new world?

32

54 The new world is just ahead of us. Before Armageddon we should seek righteousness and meekness that we may be hid in the day of the Lord's indignation. Jehovah God is not angry with those who love him. He will express his anger against the Devil and his wicked demons and people on earth who serve the Devil. These the Seed of God's woman will crush out of existence.

55 Everything God has done he did out of love. He has expressed his purpose in the Holy Scriptures, and we can depend on his Word. The Holy Bible has been proved to be true thus far, and we can have faith in God's promises for the future. To gain eternal life in happiness we must come to know the great Creator Jehovah God and his Son. That is why Jesus said to God: "Now this is eternal life: That they may know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." (John 17:3, Douay) Get a Douay Version Bible or a Knox Version Bible. Read it. Prove to yourself that what you have read here is Scripture truth. In love God preserved his Word, the Bible, for you. So read it. Learn of life and your opportunity for it, in proof that God's way is love.

54. What things should we seek before Armageddon, and why?

55. What book should we get, read and study, and why?