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OKLYN, N. Y.

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name she bears, "Jehovah our righteousness"! (Jer. 33:16, AS) And what a joy is ours in reflecting on high the divine light beaming down upon us from her royal person as we welcome all lowly-hearted ones from the dark corners of the world to come out into the brightness of Jeho-

vah's pleasure and bask in the warmth of his smiling approval!

¹⁶ With thankful hearts we acknowledge God's mercy and gratefully and willingly show our respect for Jehovah's organization, for she is our mother and the beloved wife of our heavenly Father, Jehovah God.

Use Theocratic War Strategy

A WITNESS of Jehovah was going from house to house in Eastern Germany when she met a violent opposer. Knowing at once what to expect she changed her red blouse for a green one in the very next hallway. No sooner had she appeared on the street than a Communist officer asked her if she had seen a woman with a red blouse. No, she replied, and went on her way. Did she tell a lie? No, she did not. She was not a liar. Rather, she was using theocratic war strategy, hiding the truth by action and word for the sake of the ministry.

In this she had good Scriptural precedent. Did not Rahab hide the Israelite spies by both action and word? Did not Abraham, Isaac, David and others likewise hide the truth at times when faced with a hostile enemy? They certainly did, and never do we read a word of censure for their doing so. Rather, we read of their being termed exemplary servants of Jehovah. Their actions were in line with Jesus' wise counsel: "Look! I am sending you forth as sheep amidst wolves; therefore prove yourselves cautious as serpents and yet innocent as doves."—Matt. 10:16, NW.*

Perhaps some will wonder as to where the line is to be drawn between use of theocratic war strategy in hiding the truth and the telling of lies. First of all, let it be noted that whenever one takes an oath to tell the truth he is obligated to

do so. By dedicating himself to do God's will each Christian has taken a vow or made an oath to do God's will and to be faithful to him. To this oath he certainly must be true. Likewise, when a Christian is placed on a witness stand he is obligated to speak the truth if he speaks at all. At times he may prefer to refuse to speak and suffer the consequences rather than betray his brothers or the interests of God's work. And, of course, there is no occasion for use of war strategy when dealing with our Christian brothers. In dealing with them we tell the truth or tactfully remind them that what they seek to know does not concern them.

Lies are untruths told for selfish reasons and which work injury to others. Satan told a lie to Eve that worked great harm to her and all the human race. Ananias and Sapphira told lies for selfish reasons. But hiding the truth, which he is not entitled to know, from an enemy does not harm him, especially when he would use such information to harm others who are innocent.

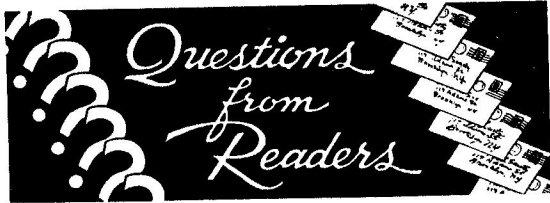
A great work is being done by the witnesses even in lands where their activity is banned. The only way they can fulfill the command to preach the good news of God's kingdom is by use of theocratic war strategy. By underground methods the literature is brought into the country and distributed. Would it make sense to hide

* For details see *The Watchtower*, February 1, 1956.

this literature by one's actions and then reveal its whereabouts by one's words when queried? Of course not! So in time of spiritual warfare it is proper to misdirect the enemy by hiding the truth. It is done unselfishly; it does not harm anyone; on the contrary, it does much good.

Today God's servants are engaged in a warfare, a spiritual, theocratic warfare, a warfare ordered by God against wicked

spirit forces and against false teachings. God's servants are sent forth as sheep among wolves and therefore need to exercise the extreme caution of serpents so as to protect properly the interests of God's kingdom committed to them. At all times they must be very careful not to divulge any information to the enemy that he could use to hamper the preaching work.



● The belief in the inherent immortality of the human soul is basic in world religions, whether they be Christian or Jewish or pagan. Why do Jehovah's witnesses believe the soul is not immortal?

Because there is no text in the Bible that says it is, and several that say it is not. The soul that sins dies: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Even of the sinless man Jesus it is written: "He hath poured out his soul unto death." A soul is not some intangible, invisible spirit existence separate from a creature's body, but "soul" means "life." Whether man or beast, a creature having life may be said to have soul. Of water creatures made before man the Bible says, at Genesis 1:20, *margin*: "Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath soul." Neither animals nor men have immortal souls; both are living souls and become dead souls: "For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast: for all is vanity. All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again." It is sheer fiction for religions to say man has an immortal, conscious soul that lives on after the death of the body: "For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with

thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest." Death ends man's consciousness: "His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish."—Ezek. 18:4; Isa. 53:12; Eccl. 3:19, 20; 9:5, 10; Ps. 146:4.

Would Christ's followers be told to seek immortality if they already had it? Yet they are told: "Seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life," and, "This mortal must put on immortality."—Rom. 2:7; 1 Cor. 15:53.

● Mark 9:47, 48 reads: "And if thine eye offend thee, pluck it out: it is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God with one eye, than having two eyes to be cast into hell fire: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." Does this not prove eternal torment for the wicked?

For the soul of the wicked to be tormented forever in fire and consumed forever by worms would mean it must be indestructible, immortal. But the previous answer shows the soul is not immortal; it shows that the sinful soul dies and is totally unconscious. In Eden God did not tell Adam that the penalty for disobedience was eternal torment. Rather he said to Adam: "Thou shalt surely die." Thousands of years later the penalty was still the same: "The wages of sin is death." Not eternal torment.—Gen. 2:17; Rom. 6:23.

Then what about Mark 9:47, 48, quoted in the question? It is obviously symbolical language, not meant to be taken literally. No one who believes in fiery torment plucks his eyes out when his eyes look with lust or covetousness, yet that is what he should do if he takes this text literally and wants to avoid eternal roasting in fire. If the undying worms and the unquenchable fire are literal dangers to be

avoided the saw applied. But no chops off a hare eye because the his sinning. The ing the part ab

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