

King Ahasuerus himself. At the risk of her own life she pleaded for relief for her people, at the same time exposing the mischievous designs of their religious enemy Haman. This wicked persecutor was hanged on gallows he had built for Mordecai, and Mordecai was advanced to higher office in the Persian government. By authority of the emperor he wrote a law into the government statutes, providing for the Jews on the fixed day of assault by their foes "to gather themselves together, and to stand for their life, to destroy, to slay, and to cause to perish, all the power of the people and province that would assault them, their little ones and women". Did the Jews pacifistically refuse to act upon this law for their self-defense by force of arms? No! On the 13th and 14th days of their last month Adar, they fought valiantly for the defense of their own lives and those of their brothers. Jehovah God was with them in this and handed them the victory and fulfilled his own prophetic command to have the Amalekites wiped out to a man. The Jews, his witnesses, he used as his executioners.—Esther 8:10 to 9:16; Ex. 17:13-16, *AS*.

NO SHIFT TO PACIFISM
AT THE WORLD'S END

¹² Many of our readers or public officials may ask: If Jehovah's witnesses of today are linked up in one unbroken chain with those witnesses of ancient times with such a history, why is it that they do not carry out this tradition of military combat? Why are they not found in the ranks of the armies of Christendom? Why do they seek exemption from military service? Why do they go so far as even to refuse to enter the Public Service camps maintained for or by pacifists and conscientious objectors, or take any part in the defense

¹² Why do witnesses today not keep up this tradition of military combat, since they claim not to be pacifists?

or war effort? Ask Jehovah's witnesses why, and they will tell you it is not because they have turned pacifist. It is because they have conscientious objection to taking part in such war and defense efforts of Christendom and the rest of the world, their objection being based on God's Word, the Bible. But, you ask, how can they be conscientious objectors and not at the same time pacifists? They are not against war between the nations, and they do not interfere with the war efforts of the nations nor with anyone who can conscientiously join in such efforts. They fight only when God commands them to do so, because then it is theocratic warfare.

¹³ Were Jehovah's witnesses today to claim to be pacifists, it would mean for them to denounce all the pre-Christian witnesses of Jehovah who took up arms to uphold Jehovah's universal sovereignty and his theocratic nation of Israel. But this denunciation we cannot make. Jesus Christ never did so, and he is Jehovah's greatest witness, who has earned the title "The faithful and true witness". (Rev. 3:14) Jehovah himself is no pacifist. Neither are his witnesses such, although they are conscientious objectors. Jesus was no pacifist, although there is no record that he ever took up carnal weapons in self-defense. Ah, you say, but did not Jesus make a whip of cords to drive all the commercial venders from the temple at Jerusalem? Yes, but the record does not say he used this whip on the men who were doing the selling but he used it upon their sheep and cattle which they had brought into that sacred place, "making the house of my Father a house of merchandise."—John 2:13-16, *NW*.

¹⁴ Again you object, Did not Jesus, after

¹³ If we claimed to be pacifists, what would we consistently have to do toward pre-Christian witnesses? Why can we not do this?
¹⁴ When Jesus told his apostles to sell a garment and get a sword, did he mean we should take up the sword? What did his conduct show?

setting up the Memorial with his disciples, tell them before going out to Gethsemane, "Let the one having no sword sell his outer garment and buy one"? And when his disciples said, "Master, look! here are two swords," he said to them, "It is enough." (Luke 22:36-38, *NW*) Yes; but by this Jesus indicated to them that he was to be seized by an armed band, under circumstances which could provoke armed resistance. The facts that developed showed Jesus did not resort to a sword when his illegal arrest came. Why, then, did he suggest getting a sword and let at least one sword be taken along to Gethsemane? He did it to show that he chose not to resort to armed resistance but would give himself up voluntarily in harmony with his Father's will. Peter tried to put up armed resistance, used the sword and struck off a man's ear. Then Jesus said to Peter: "Return your sword to its place, for all those who take the sword will perish by the sword. Or do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father to supply me at this moment more than twelve legions of angels? In that case, how would the Scriptures be fulfilled that it must take place this way?" (Matt. 26:52-54, *NW*) According to John's account Jesus added: "The cup that the Father has given me, should I not by all means drink it?" (John 18:11, *NW*) So we see why Jesus acted in a way that to some seems like pacifism. He was, however, not going before his Father's court or before the courts of the land on a charge of armed resistance. He did not expose himself to being killed under armed resistance; he must die willingly, sacrificially, like a lamb led to slaughter.

CONSISTENT WITH PROPHECY
AND THEIR MESSAGE

¹⁵ Jehovah's witnesses copy Jesus and

¹⁵ In view of Jesus' prophecy, why could we not be pacifists?

obey his instructions. That is why they have not joined worldly armies and taken part in the war efforts of the nations in any way. This does not mean they are pacifists opposed to war and resisting it and interfering with worldly governments in prosecuting wars of aggression or of defense. They could not be war-resisters, for they submit to the fulfillment of Jesus' words concerning the consummation of this system of things. Asked by his disciples, "Tell us, When will these things be, and what will be the sign of your presence and of the consummation of the system of things?" he told them: "You are going to hear of wars and reports of wars; see that you are not terrified. For these things must take place, but the accomplished end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be food shortages and earthquakes in one place after another. All these things are a beginning of pangs of distress." (Matt. 24:3, 6-8, *NW*) So how could the Christian witnesses of Jehovah oppose worldly wars or try to prevent them since Jesus prophesied that they were certain to be fought? Jesus did not tell them they would be in the fighting. They would merely hear the wars being fought within their earshot or else hear the reports about the wars fought elsewhere.

¹⁶ Were Jehovah's witnesses today to be pacifists, then, to be consistent, they would have to oppose Jehovah's war against the Devil's entire world at the battle front of Armageddon. They have seen the nations of this world assault God's visible organization of his people, prophetically spoken of as "Jerusalem", during the world war of 1914-1918, as foretold by Zechariah. Now they look for the rest of his prophecy to be carried out shortly, namely: "Then

¹⁶⁻¹⁸ (a) If pacifists, what action soon of Jehovah would they have to oppose? (b) What unpacifistic proclamation does he have them make?