Awake!

Taking Time to Be a Good Parent PAGE 4

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Our Marvelous Roof—the Sky PAGE 17

APRIL 8, 1970

THE REASON FOR THIS MAGAZINE

News sources that are able to keep you awake to the vital issues of our times must be unfettered by censorship and selfish interests. "Awake!" has no fetters. It recognizes facts, faces facts, is free to publish facts. It is not bound by political ties; it is unhampered by traditional creeds. This magazine keeps itself free, that it may speak freely to you. But it does not abuse its freedom. It maintains integrity to truth.

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Awake!
"It is already the hour for you to awake."
—Romans 13:11

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It's a Big Job to be A GOOD PARENT

BEING a good parent is a big job, especially in these days. In fact, it is likely more challenging now than in any other period of human history.

The father is usually gone all day, out of sight of his children. Some hold down two jobs. When they come home, often traveling long distances, they are tired. But the children need their father to take an interest in them, to talk with them and to do things with them.

The mother, too, is busy trying to care for the house and make ends meet in these days of inflation and high prices. Some mothers even take secular jobs to make more money for family needs. Besides this, a big share of the task of rearing the children—cooking their meals, washing and ironing their clothes, looking out for their health and providing them guidance—falls to her.

In addition to pressures on fathers and mothers, youngsters also have unusual pressures on them in this difficult era. They are confronted with immorality among those their own age, as there is growing permissiveness toward loose sexual conduct. They are surrounded by youngsters who take drugs, who have disrespect for parents, and who have contempt for authority. Pressures to conform to unusual, suggestive styles of clothing are also heavy. They are bombarded by magazine, newspaper, motion-picture and television suggestions toward sex, violence and a materialistic outlook. They desperately need the loving help of their parents in order to cope with these pressures.

How, in this 'pressure-cooker' atmosphere, can fathers and mothers who want to be good parents cope with the job?

Going to the Best Source

Jehovah God is the Creator of man and woman. He made the human body and mind. He also originated marriage. (Gen. 2:18-24) And he initiated the producing of children by giving men and women the ability to have offspring.—Gen. 1:27, 28.

Who, then, knows more about how to handle the job of being a good parent? Does it not make sense to go directly to the Originator of the family for the best advice? That advice is contained in his inspired Word, the Bible.—2 Tim. 3:16.

TAKING TIME to be A GOOD PARENT

IT IS fine for conscientious parents to be concerned about providing their children with the material needs of life—food, shelter and clothing. That is proper and necessary.

But even more important is the need for parents to take time to fill the emotional, mental and spiritual needs of their children.—Matt. 4:4.

Children need the love and affection that parents can give. This includes affectionate hugs and kisses, showing in a physical way that they are loved. In fact, without this, infants may become emotionally disturbed, even mentally unbalanced. That is why it has been found advantageous even in orphanages to have nurses, or other women, come in periodically to hold the children and display affection toward them. Yes, Jehovah created children with that need, and provided adults with the ability to give it.

As the children grow older, the need to spend time with them does not diminish. Particularly in their early teens, as pressures mount, youngsters are often beset by problems, doubts, questions. The public school is not equipped to handle all of these. And God's Word shows that it is not the school's primary responsibility. It is the responsibility of parents to guide children. This can be done only by communicating with them.

Talking Over Their Problems

Much of the 'communication gap' between parents and children today is the fault of parents. Many of them have to a large extent abandoned their responsibility of spending time with their children. They do not take the time to listen to their problems and questions and to provide firm but kindly counsel. Some wait until the child is ten or fifteen years old before beginning this vital communication. That is too late. It must begin in infancy.

This communication should involve a two-way discussion. Parents cannot really get to know their children's needs unless they listen to them. This is not accomplished by just dictating to them all the time as to what they must do and not do. Such dictation might make them go elsewhere for frank discussions.

In this regard, God's Word notes: "You, fathers, do not be irritating your children, but go on bringing them up in the discipline and authoritative advice of Jehovah." (Eph. 6:4) By constantly telling children what to do without encouraging them to express themselves, without reasoning with them, they may become less and less willing to communicate—hence the 'gap.'

Even when a youngster has done something wrong and needs correction or punishment, it is often beneficial for the parent to reason with the child, to show him what he has done wrong, why it is wrong, what the consequences of the action are, and why another course is superior—all

from God's viewpoint. That takes time, but it is a good investment in the future of the child.

Parental Unity Vital

In regard to giving counsel, discipline or even punishment, a united stand on the part of both parents is vital.

It is shattering to children for them to see their parents arguing or airing differences openly, especially when the difficulties involve the children. It is calamitous for the father to say one thing to his children, and then have the mother say another. This divides the children's emotions, and often their loyalties.

Airing differences in front of the children should be avoided like the plague. It is a poison that can kill your family's unity and happiness. True, there will be differences of opinion between husband and wife on various things. But these should be settled IN PRIVATE, away from the children.

The fact that the husband is to be "head of his wife" does not mean that his views on how matters are to be handled are the only ones that are of any consequence. (Eph. 5:23) It is a wise and loving husband who listens when his wife makes suggestions and gives serious consideration to what she says.

As for the wife, she "should have deep respect for her husband." (Eph. 5:22, 33) God has appointed the man as the head of the family and equipped him for it. Hence, the wife should not attempt to usurp or undercut her husband's position as head by disputing with him in front of the children. No, she should honor his position. She is not to be a competitor, but a helper, for in creating woman for man God said: "I am going to make a helper for him, as a complement of him."—Gen. 2:18.

Reaching Final Decisions

However, after private discussion on a particular matter, what if there is still a difference of opinion between husband and wife on how to deal with their children? What then?

Then the course of action that is most successful, the one that really works for the best, the one that God's Word gives, is this: "As the congregation is in subjection to the Christ, so let wives also be to their husbands in everything."—Eph. 5:24.

This means that it is the husband's right and responsibility to make the final decision. Even though the wife may not agree, she should abide by it and support it once he makes his decision. Of course, this is provided that the husband is not asking her to do something that breaks God's laws. If he did that, then she would have to "obey God as ruler rather than men."—Acts 5:29.

There is a captain on every ship. Jehovah has appointed man in that capacity for the family. Oh, yes, he will make mistakes; but so will she. But the greatest

Do you take time to be with your child?

mistake for both would be not to follow this God-ordained procedure and thus remain divided.

Parental unity will have a very wholesome effect on the children. It will increase their love and respect for their parents, for parental authority and for Jehovah's arrangements. And even if it does not, even if the children allow themselves to be more influenced by outside pressures and turn away from the counsel of their parents after they are old enough to leave home, then parents can be comforted in the knowledge that they did the best they could. Remember, as the Bible shows, Esau did not turn out as well as Jacob, even though both Esau and Jacob were twins and had the same upbringing, being sons of the God-fearing Isaac and Rebecca.

Work Habits

Time is also required to provide practical training for the children. They should all make some contribution to the family's welfare, by taking care of things such as cleaning, mowing the lawn, setting the table, cooking, washing the dishes, and so forth. Of course, in the case of small children, their capacity is limited, and they will make mistakes. But do not let these mistakes deter you from beginning this training early.

It is tragic to see how many young men and women are unprepared for their respective roles in life. Some brides have never cooked a meal before marriage!

Good parents will begin assigning children tasks while they are very young, planning together the progressive training of their offspring. The mother can give the young girl little things to do in preparing meals or helping to set the table. Gradually, over the years, this can be expanded until the girl has learned how to prepare the entire meal. How grateful both she and her future husband will be for that training!

The loving father will spend time training his son to shoulder the responsibilities of a man. Teach him to do things around the house at an early age. Let him handle a paintbrush, hammer or other tools. Help him to learn things he will be concerned with later, such as driving a car, money matters, even such things as insurance and tax returns. Guide him into a practical trade for use in later life. Help him to understand the woman's different makeup and needs, matters that he needs to appreciate if someday he is to enjoy marital happiness.—1 Pet. 3:7.

Also, teach young ones proper respect for others, as God's Word counsels: "Do not severely criticize an older man. To the contrary, entreat him as a father, younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, younger women as sisters with all chasteness."—1 Tim. 5:1, 2.

The Knowledge of God

Without a doubt, the greatest gift you can bestow upon your children as a good parent is the right knowledge of God. That, too, requires time. How important is it? The Bible answers: "This means everlasting life, their taking in knowledge of you, the only true God, and of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ." (John 17:3) No gift you could give could ever equal that—everlasting life. But you put your children on the road to eternal life by teaching them God's purposes and requirements.

How soon should you start teaching your children about God? The apostle Paul noted of Timothy: "From infancy you have known the holy writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation." —2 Tim. 3:15.

When we say to teach children about God, we do not mean shifting this respon-

sibility onto someone else. We mean sitting down in your own home with Bible-study aids, such as Jehovah's witnesses use in their homes, and teaching the child yourself, as his parent. This should be done long before they ever go to school.

But are not preschool children too young to be taught such serious things? Not at all! Indeed, recent research proves what has always been true, that children who do best usually are those the parents took the time to teach *before* the school years.

Taking time to be a good parent includes teaching your children God's Word

Children learn a complicated language by the time they are three or four years old. So they can surely learn about God! That is why Jehovah's witnesses instruct their infant children in God's ways. And as they grow older it is a big help to teach them how to read and write. By the time the children begin school, they will have progressed nicely both in the knowledge of God and in reading and writing, which will be helpful to them throughout life.

Gets Results

That such early training gets results is borne out by many experiences of parents. For instance, one of Jehovah's witnesses writes of his experience when visiting another family of Witnesses who had a girl three years of age and a boy only eighteen months of age. He says:

"One evening after returning home from the congregation meetings [of Jehovah's witnesses] I was talking to the boy and asked him if he would like to play with a lion. He immediately knew what I was talking about and said in a tone that I could hardly understand: 'I get my book.' He brought out the book *From Paradise Lost to Paradise Regained* and turned to the picture of lions on page 17.

"I asked him about other animals and he turned to pages 40, 41, showing the animals entering the ark. I asked him if he knew who Adam was, and he turned to the picture on page 21 and pointed to him. He was also able to identify Eve and the serpent on pages 28, 29.

"I also talked to the girl, and she was able to tell the story of many of the pictures in the *Paradise* book. These children are not any smarter than other children, but it certainly shows that a child does not have to reach school age to understand God's Word."

Only by spending time teaching children God's Word can you really determine if they are beginning to understand and appreciate God's purposes. If you have taken the time to build such appreciation in their hearts from infancy, then you may reap the rich reward of seeing them develop into mature, God-fearing young men and women. As Proverbs 22:6 shows: "Train up a boy [or girl] according to the way for him; even when he grows old he will not turn aside from it." How satisfying it is to raise children who are a credit to their parents and to Jehovah!—Prov. 23: 24, 25.

Yes, it is a big job to be a good parent. But it is well worth the time and effort. Not only is homelife made more genuinely happy, but the children are put on the road to eternal life in God's new order. And the parents can stand before God with a clear conscience, knowing they have conscientiously carried out their parental responsibilities.

for GOOD HEALTH

"A STITCH in time saves nine." "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." Sayings such as these may well be applied to the matter of our keeping in good health.

Why wait until you are sick before giving thought to your health? Absence of distressing symptoms does not necessarily mean good health. Well did an ancient Chinese sage observe: "To administer medicines to diseases which have developed . . . is comparable to the behavior of those persons who begin to dig a well after they are thirsty."

The popularity of European health spas is no doubt largely due to the fact that many Europeans appreciate this principle. Regarding these a leading United States professor of physical medicine said: "Too few people who are medically well take advantage of a regimen of rest, relaxation and exercise tailored to their individual needs. The spa provides the much-needed 'maintenance therapy.' "

Why do so few people give thought to 'maintenance therapy'? Many may feel that they are too busy. But it may well be that it takes more than concern about health for the average person to take 'maintenance therapy' seriously. As one noted nutritionist observed: "Over the years I have found that a patient must have some sort of mission in life—something very important that he hopes to accomplish to the best of his ability—before he is really motivated . . . The average person does not have any real mission in life."

How little people in general are interested in health maintenance can be seen by their ignoring the warnings about the harm to lungs and heart from cigarette smoking. In fact, in regard to health maintenance or preventive medicine even the medical profession comes short, as one of its own critics noted: "The senseless spending of thousands of millions for care [of illness] and nothing for prevention is increasingly apparent."

Yet, regardless of what others do, there are things that you can do for yourself. Said Dr. J. F. Montague, one of America's leading physicians: "Everybody should get acquainted with . . . himself in this way: He should know what his reaction is to certain foods . . . to the matter of drinking, exercise and fun. He should know these things." In fact, there are four basic aids for good health to which you do well to give attention: (1) sensible eating habits; (2) regular exercise; (3) sufficient rest, relaxation and sleep and (4) good mental and emotional habits.

As reasonable as doing these things may seem to be, doing them will not always come easy. Why not? Because of inherited

inclinations. In applying these things to our lives we are faced with the same problem that faced the apostle Paul: "The good that I wish I do not do, but the bad that I do not wish is what I practice." (Rom. 7:19) But we can change if we really want to.

Sensible Eating Habits

'Better than any drugs for pregnant women is the right kind of food.' So recently said one of America's leading gynecologists. That applies not only to pregnant women but also to all who would stay well. Hippocrates, called the "father of medicine," is reported to have said: "Thy food shall be thy remedy." Better than food as a remedy is food for health maintenance!

One thing on which practically all nutritionists seem to agree is that the most common failing as to diet is eating too much. There is wisdom in being abstemious at the table. Especially would all who engage in sedentary occupations, who are overweight or who are continually plagued with one or more minor ills, do well to heed the counsel of the inspired proverb: "Put a knife to your throat if you are a man given to appetite."—Prov. 23:2, *RS*.

Self-control at the table—how can you accomplish it? First of all, convince yourself that it pays to do so. Try it out for a month and note the difference in how you feel. Some persons find it helpful to make it a rule not to take more than one helping of any one food, especially if they eat more than one variety at a meal. Others find it helpful to cut down on the number of different foods they eat at one meal. Advantageous also is eliminating rich deserts, contenting yourself with fruit as a dessert. If you are invited to a banquet you can eat slowly and so be more likely to avoid overeating. If you find that you may have eaten too much, you can skip the next meal.

The problem, however, is one not only of eating large quantities, but of *overnutrition*. One may eat too much rich food. Some have therefore found it helpful to limit themselves to fruit or fruit juices one meal a day. And the "day of meals of fruit only" that has been used for certain chronic diseases can also serve for health maintenance.

Sensible eating habits also include getting sufficient vitamins and trace minerals. Many persons need additional supplies of either or both of these elements. According to Dr. Jean Mayer, Harvard nutritionist, "the U.S. diet is often much lower in iron than are the diets of poorer populations." And so, especially for many women in the prime of life, iron supplements on a periodic or regular basis are "indispensable if progressive iron depletion is to be avoided." No doubt this is due to overrefining or highly processing foods.

Very important in this regard is eating sufficient leafy vegetables. Thus we are told: "Leaf vegetables have a high value from the point of view of nutritional physiology and the maintenance of man's health (as a form of preventive medicine)," being rich in vitamins and minerals. In addition to being rich in iron, which makes them effective against anemia, "they neutralize the acids in the blood and by their effect on the kidneys stimulate the elimination of waste."

Tomatoes, apples, sauerkraut and onions have an alkalizing effect, and just recently it has been found that mushrooms and onions are particularly valuable in com-

bating cholesterol in the blood. Giving thought to such factors of nutrition also aids in maintaining mental health, and especially in the aged.

Regular Exercise

Regular exercise is good for all, but especially should those who are overweight or do sedentary work make it a point to get some exercise—a fact being appreciated more and more. Thus a South Carolina physical education professor gathered a group of men with ages from 40 to 87 and put them through hour-long exercises three times a week. After just six weeks he compared these men with a like group that had not exercised. The difference in reduction of blood pressure and body fat, and rise in oxygen consumption (one of the best indexes of vigor) were pronounced "profound." As physicians Bierman and Light have observed: "Exercise . . . helps maintain a state of well-being in a person who is healthy and . . . has remedial value for persons suffering from diverse conditions."

For exercise to be beneficial there must be a certain degree of regularity about it. Some remind themselves of it in various ways so as to have a routine; others make it a point to get up a few minutes earlier each day for the sake of exercising. Some have found it helpful to walk instead of ride whenever that is convenient and to climb stairs instead of take the elevator. There are many forms of exercise that benefit both the muscles and the nerves, such as push-ups, swinging dumbbells, and so forth.

Especially for those in sedentary occupations and who tend to put on weight has jogging or stationary running been recommended by some physicians. These are the kind of exercises that tend to strengthen the lungs and heart, for which reason insurance companies recommend jogging. According to one health publication (*Prevention,* July 1968), such relaxed and unhurried running is "one of the easiest and most inexpensive of all exercises and also the very best for overall health." Of course, one does not want to go to extremes. Those who do much walking and climbing of stairs may well get all the exercise they need. And we may not forget the apostle Paul's inspired counsel: "Bodily training is beneficial for a little." —1 Tim. 4:8.

Sufficient Rest, Relaxation and Sleep

Ever so many persons just naturally know how to relax, have the good judgment to take sufficient rest and get their needed sleep. But others, again, need to work at these things. This may be due to their being the slim, nervous type, the ectomorph, or because of being naturally intense, or due to a mistaken sense of duty. It may also be because of materialism, trying to get rich or amass mundane treasures or because of pursuing pleasures too eagerly.

One can learn to relax if one will but work at it. Learn to work at a steady pace; do not think you must be going full speed all the time. Musicians must learn to relax if they would perform at their best without undue fatigue, and the same applies also to many other forms of activity that involve mind, heart and muscle. When driving an auto, be mentally alert but physically relaxed. Smiling will help

you to be relaxed. And that goes for many other activities that, like driving, involve responsibility and require alertness. Relaxation makes for physical ease and is conducive to mental and emotional balance. The key is self-control!

Then again, there is the matter of rest, that is, rest apart from sleep. Do not feel you must be active every waking moment, from the time you get up until you go to bed. Allow time for rest and the right kind of recreation. Do not thoughtlessly or ambitiously try to cram in too much when taking a vacation, as when traveling.

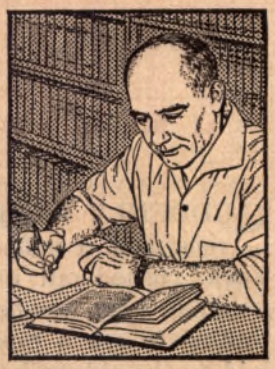
Nor may sleep be neglected if you would enjoy good health. Here again, some persons obviously need more sleep than do others, even as women usually need more sleep than do men, and children more than do adults.

Sleeplessness may be the payoff for many sins of omission and commission, such as not eating right or neglecting exercise. Or it may be due to anxiety, frustrations, feelings of guilt or like detrimental emotions. Clear house of these if you would enjoy sound sleep. If new sounds disturb you, relax. You can get accustomed to them if you make it a point to do so, enabling you to sleep in spite of them. As the saying goes, 'What cannot be cured must be endured.' Learn to slow down in the evening before bedtime. Some have found warm milk, others hot grape juice or orange juice, helpful. And G. G. Luce and Dr. Segal, two United States authorities on sleep and insomnia, offer the following suggestion:

"A person who sincerely wants to improve his sleep must be willing to make an effort for good health. He should be prepared to eat an athletic diet, eliminating starches, sweets and inessential foods. He should also undertake a gradual program of physical exercise, to be followed every day. A person who lives on coffee, cigarettes, nerves and inertia should not expect perfect sleep."

Good Mental and Emotional Habits

Yes, there is the psychosomatic factor, the effect of the mind and the emotions on the body, which must also be taken into consideration if one would continue to enjoy good health. For this there is no better guide than God's Word. As the Bible shows, those things that are bad for your body include loose conduct, hatred, jealousy, fits of anger, revelries and heavy drinking.—Gal. 5:19-21.



On the other hand, there are the beneficial emotions, such as "the fruitage of the spirit [which includes] love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, mildness, self-control." Yes, not without good reason does the Bible say that "a cheerful heart is a good medicine" and that "godly devotion is beneficial for all things," including this present life.—Gal. 5:22, 23; Prov. 17:22, *RS;* 1 Tim. 4:8.

Giving thought to maintaining good health is not following the line of least resistance. However, those with a real mission in life will want to make the best possible use of their time and their mental and physical powers. All such therefore do well to give attention in a balanced way to the four aids for good health: sensible eating habits; regular exercise; sufficient rest, relaxation and sleep, and good mental and emotional habits. Doing so will not only enable them better to carry out their mission in life but also help to give them the fine feeling of true physical well-being.

ARE YOU ACCIDENT-PRONE?

SUDDENLY deciding to ride with a neighbor, a man in Brooklyn, New York, rushed out his front door as the neighbor's car was beginning to pull away. Failing to see a pipe that workmen had laid on the sidewalk, he tripped and broke a kneecap. A few years later he injured his back when a heavy roll of paper that he was stacking in a factory fell on him. Shortly thereafter he developed a hernia from lifting heavy boxes, and not long after it was repaired he got another hernia in exactly the same manner. From appearances it would seem that this man is accident-prone.

To be accident-prone means to have a greater number of accidents than other people have under the same circumstances. Has this been your experience? Do you have repeated accidents, tripping over things lying on the floor of your home, tumbling down stairs, falling off ladders, cutting yourself when working with sharp tools, and so forth? Why is it that some persons seem to have more than their share of accidents? What can they do to overcome the problem?

It can be something of real concern to them because it can affect their employment, besides being a cause of great discomfort from the injuries. Employers may be inclined to dismiss them in an effort to reduce work injuries.

Why Do Some Have More Accidents?

It is difficult to say precisely why some persons seem to have more accidents than others. That they do appears to be confirmed by the findings of Professor Hans Hahn, who estimates that 25 percent of the population have this problem. Other researchers think the number in a working force runs from 10 to 30 percent, with this group suffering from 40 to 60 percent of the injuries from accidents.

A number of factors are undoubtedly involved. One, for example, could be lack of proper training in work procedures for doing a particular job. The man who was injured by the paper roll falling on him lacked proper training in handling such things. He was helping out at work that was unfamiliar to him.

A similar situation can exist in a factory where a man is put on a machine without sufficient training and supervision. He is more likely to have an accident than the person that has been given training in proper work procedures.

Another factor might be a person's mental capacity for a certain type of work. He might not be suited for the work because of being rather slow mentally, whereas alertness and quick decisions may be necessary for the job. He would, therefore, be more subject to accidents. If he were given something else to do that would better suit his mental capacity he probably would have fewer accidents.

The same can be true of a person that lacks the physical capacity for a job that requires the moving of heavy objects. He may be best suited physically for a job as an office worker and may not be in condition to work at something that requires considerable physical strength. Failure to recognize this may lead to accidents.

The nervous temperament of a person is still another factor. He may be emotional or easily upset when under nervous tension. If something does not go just right, he could lose his customary caution and react in a way that could cause him to have an accident.

How to Overcome the Problem

It is not possible to lay out a simple solution, because many different factors are involved. However, there are things that can be done that may help to overcome the problem.

An employer, for example, can recognize the limitations of a person who seems to be accident-prone. If better training and safety instruction are necessary, that would be worth while. It could improve the safety record of his establishment as well as production. Or it may be best to shift the person to another job, one that would be within his capabilities.

As for the person himself, he too needs to recognize his limitations. If he is not in physical condition to do work that requires heavy lifting, he would be wise to seek other employment, and thus avoid possible accidents. If a type of work puts him under a nervous strain and he knows that he is of a nervous temperament or very emotional, he could seek a different job. Thus by recognizing his limitations he can try to avoid situations that he knows will be dangerous for him.

Oftentimes accidents occur when a person loses self-control during moments of emotional stress. It is not unusual for an automobile accident to occur when the driver is under such stress, perhaps being angry about something. So the person who tends to have repeated accidents because he gets angry easily or is stirred emotionally would do well to work on developing self-control. He needs to learn how to overlook things that can cause his anger to rise up. The good counsel in the Bible can help him to do that.—Prov. 19:11.

See Dangerous Situations

To avoid accidents, a person needs to train himself to follow the warning given to automobile drivers at some railroad crossings—"Stop! Look! Listen!" In this case he might Stop! Look! and Think!

By training himself to look over a situation before acting, he is more likely to avoid an accident. If the man mentioned earlier had first looked about him when leaving his house, he would undoubtedly have noticed the pipe lying on the sidewalk and would not have stumbled over it.

For a person who has established a habit of rushing nervously about, it will not be easy to train himself to look and think first. But if he makes a determined effort to do it, he stands a better chance of not getting hurt. In the pain and expense of past accidents he has ample incentive to change his ways.

He can often anticipate what could happen in a situation. For example, suppose

you have highly polished floors in your home. To enjoy their beauty you may decide to put throw rugs on them. Now, do not stop there, but look ahead to what could happen when you step on one of those rugs when rushing to answer the phone or the doorbell. The rug could slip out from under your foot and cause a bad fall. Seeing that possibility, you can try to avoid a possible accident by fastening material to the underside of the rugs to prevent them from slipping.

In another situation a person may be about to light a burner in a gas oven. If he does not think ahead to what might happen if the oven is filled with gas, he could have a serious accident. It could explode in his face. Instead of turning the gas on before he lights the match, he ought to turn it on afterward so the gas will not have time to accumulate. That would show good thinking.

When sitting in a bathtub of water a person may decide to turn on a radio or flip a light switch. Here again he needs to stop and ask himself, Is there danger here? What could happen if I touched an electrical appliance while sitting in water? Since water is a good conductor of electricity, he could receive a fatal shock.

Suppose he gets up in the night to get some medicine from the medicine cabinet. Knowing where the bottle usually is, he may reach for it without turning on a light. Here is another dangerous situation. He needs to stop for a moment and think. He should ask himself: "Suppose someone has moved the bottle and I get the wrong one; what then?" There could be a serious accident. The same danger exists in taking medicine from an unlabeled bottle. A mistake can too easily be made. These are accident traps that a person needs to train himself to recognize.

Still another dangerous situation is to sit in a parked car with the motor running and the windows rolled up. Some persons have done this in the wintertime so as to keep warm with the car heater while waiting for someone. With no air coming into the car, what can happen? Carbon monoxide can leak in and kill the passengers. This has happened many times.

Situations such as these cause accidents among people who have not trained themselves to see accident traps. As the habit of looking both ways before crossing a street is established in a person from the time he is a child so that it becomes automatic, so the accident-prone person needs to remind himself constantly to stop, look and think. He needs to be continually conscious of his proneness to accidents so that caution becomes a habit.

When he is given safety instructions at work he ought to pay more than the usual attention to them, remembering that he needs them more than anyone else. When he comes across published articles on safety he does well to read them carefully so he can be helped to recognize dangerous situations, accident traps. When he reads about people having accidents he can take particular note of what they did that was wrong so he can avoid it.

By establishing the habit of stopping, looking and thinking before acting he will automatically become cautious under all kinds of circumstances. It can save him from many unnecessary accidents and help him to get rid of the unpleasant reputation of being accident-prone.

NEXT ISSUE

CHANGES IN THE CHURCHES —What They Mean for You.

A Search FOR THE TRUTH OF GOD

I WAS raised a Roman Catholic. At the age of fifteen, due to family difficulties, I had to move into a Protestant foster home and soon saw that the Catholic church was not right in many of its teachings. So in 1961 I became a member of the United Church of Canada and became fairly active in it, attending it regularly for about a year.

The minister of the Trinity United Church in Port Coquitlam, British Columbia, would often preach about how much more money they needed, as his wife needed a washer and dryer, and so forth. Although I knew very little about being a Christian myself, in time I saw the hypocrisy of the church. All they were concerned about were their rummage sales and efforts to raise funds to build a $100,000 church.

I did not believe in the Holy Bible whatsoever, because my previous training taught me that it was not inspired of God. However, I did believe in God and Jesus Christ.

We had some friends who are Jehovah's witnesses. When they called on me, I would talk to them and, being curious about their teachings, I would ask questions, although I was not too interested. I would take the weekend paper and look up and down the church page praying to be shown the true religion—anyone but Jehovah's witnesses. I was determined that they were wrong, and I set out to prove it.

I decided to see the United Church minister at Queens Avenue in New Westminster, thinking that he would give me some ammunition to fire back at the Witnesses. Instead he was very vague about everything, and to top it off, he said that he admired the Witnesses and wished that his people were as zealous.

I felt confused as to what was the right religion and where I would find it. I would pray to God night after night to help me find the truth about life.

The Witnesses would still call on me. Each time I spoke with them, by quoting the Bible they would refute any ideas that I was starting to accept. Though I had no faith in the Bible, I decided to study it with them, as I had nothing to lose. My husband did not like the idea, but I explained to him that I was not through searching, that I did not want to take the Witnesses' word for anything and that I was going to prove my faith from other sources.

I liked what the Bible said about creation and other subjects. It made more sense than anything I had come across. I felt I would like to find out if the Bible was true. Refusing to accept the Watch Tower Society's literature on this subject, I went to the library and read books on Bible archaeology, and I was amazed to find that the Bible is historically accurate!

Now I had so many questions about different things that I phoned the Witnesses and talked with them for a few hours. I decided from then on to attend their meetings and learn all I could.

I was so happy that I was beside myself. However, I still wanted one last chance to prove that this is God's truth. Naturally, I was shocked to learn how Christendom is saturated with paganism, right down to the cross and church steeples. I wondered if perhaps there was a good reason for this paganism. Surely, they are intelligent people. So I decided to find out their side as to why they allowed their religion to become infected with paganism.

I went to see my stepmother, who was a Roman Catholic all her life, and I asked her about church doctrines of pagan origin. She could not answer me at all! She just said that they believe the Bible but they do not base their church on it but on the sacrifice of the mass. She suggested that I visit the priest at St. Peter's church in Westminster. The priest with whom I spoke is the director of all the priests in British Columbia. When I confronted him with the things that I had learned, he replied: "Sure they are pagan but the Church says it is O.K., so it is O.K." He did not believe the Bible at all. He does not accept the virgin birth, the resurrection or, in fact, creation, but believes in evolution. By this time, I asked him pointedly, How can you call yourself a priest and teach others?

He went on to explain that he also admired Jehovah's witnesses and that he wished his people were as enthusiastic as they are. I asked him why they were not. If they really felt that their faith was right, they would have the same enthusiasm. He answered: "In the first few centuries when Christianity was new, the Christians were all zealous, but human nature set in. Give the Witnesses a few more years and they will be just like us."

I shot back, "Never!"

Shortly after this discussion, I phoned a professor of religion at the University of British Columbia. I stated that I had been looking into different religions and at this time I was studying with Jehovah's witnesses. I asked him if he could give me some information that I could use to stumble them. He said: "We just study religion. We are not interested in which one is the truth." Now I was completely satisfied that the Witnesses were right when they referred to their belief as "the truth."

I had prayed and searched for so long that when I came to realize that God's truth is found in the organization of Jehovah's witnesses, there was no need to wait before I dedicated myself to God. After six months of study I made this dedication and was baptized in symbol of it. My husband has decided to study the Bible too. How I rejoice that I made sure of all things and am now holding fast to what is fine and true!—1 Thess. 5:21. *—Contributed.*

'No Time to Read the Bible'

◆ A mother in Arizona began studying the Bible with Jehovah's witnesses. After a while she was confronted by her Baptist minister. She tried to use the Bible to support her newly acquired knowledge, but the clergyman kept saying, "That is just a figure of speech." Finally she asked him if he even believed the Bible. He replied, "A person does not have time to read the Bible anymore!" Then he left.

Our Marvelous Roof the SKY

ONE of the most beautiful, ever-changing sights on earth is the sky. Its scope and grandeur simply stagger the imagination. The whole earth is enveloped with the sky's endless majestic and colorful panorama. In the east a golden glow announces the dawn, while a crimson western sky bids the day adieu. There are moments when the sky may be adorned in a royal canopy of blue, or dismal gray or in resplendent white. White billowy, cotton-like clouds called "cumulus" proclaim a fine spring day; gay featherlike clouds called "cirrus" tell that summer is here, and a sporty fall mantle of clouds that appear like lamb's wool betokens the nearness of winter.

At night the sky's beauty is even more magnificent when bedecked in starry splendor. The breathless glory of the night is enhanced when the aurora weaves a delicate tapestry of color high overhead. Each garment assumes an infinite variety of shapes, all dazzling masterpieces of beauty, all creations of perfect art. Little wonder that worshipers of Jehovah referred to the beauties of our marvelous "roof" as "the wonderful works of the One perfect in knowledge," "the wonderful works of God."—Job 37:14, 16.

Almost daily across the sky's broad highway parade clouds of every size and description. Fluffy clouds, billowy clouds, fleecy clouds—these are like glorious floats that silently glide by. There are white pillar clouds surrounded by straggling cloudlets, like children about their parents. There are wavy clouds and rolling clouds, the shapes and forms of which are worthy of the finest sculptor. There are huge clouds that look something like a mammoth cauliflower or an enormous white anvil.

The cumulonimbus, also called thunderheads, are massive. They are composed of billions of ice crystals. These formations can rise to 50,000 feet or more in height. A single formation can contain as much as 300,000 tons of water! An estimated 44,000 thunderstorms lash the earth's surface every day, some 1,800 of them in action at any given moment! They are majestic in their awesomeness and from them can burst forth creation's regal spectacle—the rainbow. God speaks of it as "my rainbow," obviously one of His wonderful works.—Gen. 9:11-16.

Often the sky foretells the weather. In the western hemisphere when scattered cumulus clouds dot the sky, when the ba-

rometer remains steady or rises, and when the wind blows gently, fair weather will probably continue. The long curling clouds known as "mares' tails" are generally a sign that foul weather, in the form of snow or heavy rain, will probably arrive within twenty-four hours. Also when dull-gray altostratus clouds darken the whole sky and the barometer drops, rain or snow will probably continue to fall. The Bible, at Matthew 16:2, 3, gives meaning to the fiery sky often seen at sunset: "When evening falls you are accustomed to say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is fire-red'; and at morning, 'It will be wintry, rainy weather today, for the sky is fire-red, but gloomy-looking.' " A red sunrise presages the opposite of a red sunset.

Why the Sky Is Blue

What is this wonderful work of God we call "the blue sky"? Blue is not the color of air, as was believed by some in the nineteenth century. Nor is the blue due to light emitted by the atmosphere itself, for then it would appear blue at night. Were the air completely transparent or nonexistent, the sky would necessarily be as black as space, a fact confirmed by astronauts who journeyed above the atmosphere. "Up there, it's a black-and-white world. There is no color," said American astronaut Jim Lovell. But more recently spacemen returning from the surface of the moon have described the lunar surface as a nondescript gray.

Since the sky is not black to us on earth, the cause, then, must lie in the behavior of sunlight when it comes in contact with the substance of the atmosphere.

The color of the sky results from the air within less than one hundred miles of the earth. This belt of atmosphere is made up primarily of five gases, namely, nitrogen, oxygen, argon, water vapor (a compound of hydrogen and oxygen) and carbon dioxide. Besides these gases there are others that are rare, but in smaller amounts, such as helium, xenon, neon; and a few poisonous gases, such as methane, ammonia, carbon monoxide, nitrous oxide. Up to the realm of the highest familiar clouds the sky also holds quantities of foreign matter, such as pollen, dust, bacteria, soot, spores, volcanic ash, salt particles from the seas and dust from outer space.

When the sun's radiation, which consists of electromagnetic waves of many different wavelengths, passes through the atmosphere, the longer wavelengths plow through the atmosphere quite easily and reach our earth. We may feel them as heat. But the shorter ones are scattered in all directions by the air molecules and other particles in the atmosphere. The blue light is bounced about again and again as it comes earthward from the sun. In other words, the blue sky is a gauzy glowing fabric spun of blue light and air. It is, moreover, only about twelve miles high; beyond this the sky darkens to violet. Above twenty miles the sky becomes black and the stars emerge.

Why the Other Colors?

Though generally blue, the sky may be red, orange, green, in fact, almost any color. It all depends on how light waves enter the atmosphere and what they encounter on their way down.

In the lower atmosphere are concentrated clouds, dust and all kinds of particle material. These being larger than air molecules, they scatter the longer wavelengths of light. When the sun is near the horizon its rays enter the atmosphere at a slant, passing through much more of the particle-laden air. All wavelengths are scattered, and only the longest red rays penetrate at all. So we have the ruddy hues

at dawn and sunset. The more dust or cloud particles in the air, the deeper is the color. The less dust, the bluer the sky, because the long light waves come right through to the earth without being deflected, while the short blue light waves we see are the ones being bounced about by air molecules in the sky. Therefore, on a clear, relatively dust-free day, our marvelous "roof" is blue.

Other Sights in the Sky

When, after a few days of bright winter weather, high clouds, feathery and fragile, give to the sky a milky-white opalescence, bright rings, called halos, appear encircling the sun or moon. Halos of the moon are necessarily much fainter, and their colors are nearly imperceptible. In many parts of the world halos are visible, on the average, as often as once each four days. Even some of the brighter stars show coronas as thin, fleecy clouds glide slowly past. These halos may show several distinct concentric circles of color, each bluish on the inside, then passing through a yellowish white to a reddish brown on the outside. Sometimes they resemble circle rainbows in the sky. This phenomenon is caused by light waves being reflected off regularly shaped ice crystals floating high in the air.

The regular rainbow we see in the sky, which arouses awe and excitement, is formed by light playing on waterdrops as they fall. Each raindrop acts as a tiny prism, breaking down the sun's white rays of mixed light into their component spectral colors. Occasionally droplets of mist can cause a rainbow, but generally it is the larger raindrops.

No two persons see the same rainbow. Each individual sees the rainbow from his particular point of view, because a rainbow is only light coming from a certain direction. Since the drops reflecting the light are falling, this means that we see a new rainbow formed by every new set of raindrops. What a magnificent gift from God—the rainbow!

Sometimes a second rainbow may appear in the sky, lying outside the first and shining rather more faintly. Have you noticed, the colors in this rainbow are in the reverse order, with blue on the outside and red on the inside? This is because the light rays have undergone one more reflection on the internal surfaces of the raindrops and are reversed in much the same way as left becomes right and right becomes left in a mirror. But this extra reflection causes a reduction in intensity of the light, which is why the second rainbow is always dimmer.

The Aurora

Neither a rainbow nor a cloud formation, except perhaps a glorious sunset or sunrise, can compare with the aurora in the sky, that is, the northern or southern lights. No written description or photographs can convey the true magnificence of these ever-changing, luminous displays, often in vivid colors. Sometimes they are so bright that one can read by their light.

Generally the aurora flickers, suggesting a blazing fire just over the hill. Often the glow kindles into brilliance, assuming the shape of a huge arc, or it may take the form of bundles of rays like those of sunlight shining through holes in a cloud. These shafts of light may be pale white, emerald green, violet or rose red. At times the aurora may appear to hang in folds like a huge curtain or drapery of a stage. It may shimmer like the folds of a great screen hanging from the sky that is stirred by a silent wind. Or it may burst into feverish activity. Yellow becomes tinged with red and green as rays leap upward, subside, then dart ahead again.

There is nothing with which one can compare the delicate beauty and coloring of the aurora caused by clouds of electrically charged particles coming from the sun and entering the earth's magnetic field. These particles collide with molecules of air, causing them to vibrate and give off the red, white, blue and green lights of their awesome displays. The aurora—another of God's marvelous gifts to man.

The Lightning Miracle

An estimated 9,000,000 lightning bolts strike the ground daily. About half the time, what people see in the sky as a single lightning flash is actually composed of up to ten successive strokes streaking along the same path as the first. There may be as many as forty pulses in a second, which is about how long the lightning's path stays open. The heat in the path rises so abruptly that the surrounding air breaks the sound barrier in moving away. The result is thunder. The sky at such a time is alive with fire and sound.

There are various kinds of lightning. Heat lightning occurs on the horizon and is considered to be the reflection of strokes too far away to be directly seen or heard. Sheet lightning takes place inside clouds, blanketing them with a widespread flickering light. Ribbon lightning occurs when a strong wind blows the conductive channel of a multiple stroke to one side. The successive strokes rage upward a few feet apart, appearing like ribbons of light.

But what good is accomplished by all this fire filling the sky? It is now known that lightning helps greatly to fertilize the soil. Eighty percent of the atmosphere or sky is nitrogen, an essential food for plants. About 22,000,000 tons of this nutriment float over each square mile of the earth. But as it exists in the atmosphere nitrogen is unusable by plants. Before plants can take life from it, it must undergo a series of chemical changes, very much as food in our digestive system must undergo changes. Lightning in the sky touches off the series of changes. Air particles are made white-hot by lightning, for it can heat a two- to ten-inch channel of air hotter than the sun's surface. Under this intense heat, the nitrogen combines with the oxygen in the air to form nitrogen oxides that are soluble in water. The rain dissolves the oxides and carries them down to earth as dilute nitric acid. Reaching the earth, the nitric acid reacts with the minerals of the earth, there to become nitrates on which plants can feed. Since plants can feed and live, man and animals can feed on plants and live!

What a marvelous gift lightning is from God to man! It does more than light the sky. Meteorologists estimate that lightning bombards the earth at a rate of more than one hundred times a *second,* transforming the upper air into fertilizer for plants!

God has given us, not only a practical sky, but a marvelous "roof" filled with awe-inspiring, ever-changing beauties and wonder, a sky that moves faithful men to praise Jehovah the Doer of all these wonderful things.—Ps. 136:4.

Population and Land Area

In the *Brooklyn Public Library News Bulletin* of April 1969 a question was asked about the percentage of land that is utilized by the urban population in the United States. The answer was given as follows:

"According to the text in the 1960 *Census of Population,* 'Urban population which constituted nearly 70 percent of the total population was concentrated in slightly more than 1 percent of the land area of the country.'"

where Past meets Present

By "Awake!" correspondent in Morocco

THROUGHOUT Morocco contrasts can be seen in the way of life of its peoples. But this contrast is particularly noticeable in the city of Fez, an ancient center of Islamic culture. Situated in North Africa nearly one hundred miles from the Atlantic Ocean and some eighty-five miles south of the Mediterranean, Fez has for centuries been the crossroads for numerous civilizations. It now has a population of over 200,000.

Arriving at Fez by road, we enter first what is called the 'new city.' This was built mainly by the French during the time that Morocco was a protectorate of France between 1912 and 1956. It resembles a European city with its sidewalk cafés, shops and people dressed in the latest styles from Paris. The Arabs who live here also are very much Westernized. It would be easy to forget that just a mile or more away exists the ancient Fez, which is a striking contrast to what we see here.

The Ancient City

The old city of Fez was founded shortly after 800 C.E. by Moulay Idris I, who was a descendant of Ali, the son-in-law of Mohammed. Fez continued as the capital of an independent kingdom for many centuries, and long has been considered by many to be the center of the intellectual and religious life of North Africa.

This ancient site lies across a valley from the 'new city,' and its appearance is quite attractive. One sees a mass of white and gray flat-roofed houses, with every now and then the minaret that tops the numerous mosques. These protrude like pins from a pincushion.

As a backdrop to all this there is a large mountain, the foothills of which are covered with olive trees. These trees are reputedly as old as the city. From where we are it is evident that the old city is built on a series of hills. This means that we must be prepared to climb, for the only way to visit the old city is on foot. Roads are often no more than enlarged footpaths, and there are far too many people and animals to allow for vehicles to pass.

Journey into the Past

Here in the old city a guide is a great help. Not only will he ensure that we see

the most interesting places, but he will prevent us from getting lost. Fez boasts the largest *medina* in the world; this is the name given the old part of the city. (Medina is the city in Arabia that was important in the life of Mohammed, the founder of the Islamic religion.) On catching sight of the maze of dark alleyways and streets we are glad we have someone with us who knows his way around.

We are impressed by the absence of cars or motorized vehicles of any sort and the narrowness of the streets. Although Fez enjoys practically constant sunshine, the streets are so narrow that the upper floors of the houses cut out most of the light.

We notice that the majority of the people here keep to their traditional way of dress—quite a contrast to the way it is in the 'new city.' The men wear 'dejellabahs,' a long garment down to their feet, often with a hood attached. Some of the men also wear the traditional fez, a tall, red, brimless cap that was first made here in Fez, Morocco, but is well known practically world wide.

The women too wear long garments. Also, their faces are veiled, with only their eyes showing, in accordance with their Moslem religion. Almost everyone wears 'babouches' on his feet. These are leather slippers with no backs to them.

Fez is reported to have over a hundred mosques, including certain ones that are over a thousand years old. Our guide takes us to the Karouian (Karueein) mosque, the largest one in Africa. It can accommodate 22,000 worshipers at one time. As non-Moslems we are not permitted to enter, but we can get a view of the inside through one of the large doors.

The floor of this famous mosque is covered with bamboo matting for the worshipers to kneel upon when they pray to Allah facing the direction of the city of Mecca. There are beautiful mosaics on the walls, and from the delicately carved ceiling iron lanterns hang. All shoes and slippers are left outside on the steps of the mosque. It is amazing that the worshipers can identify their own on coming out.

Shopping Area

Next we come to one of the several 'suqs' or shopping areas. Here are really colorful small shops and stalls. Some of them are no more than a niche in the wall. It seems that all the stalls that sell a certain commodity are grouped together, thus the smells go with the sights. And what a sight it is to see stall after stall banked high with dates, figs, olives, raisins and varied spices!

Turning the corner, we see an endless array of fabrics and clothes of every color. In yet another row of shops we see silks, and in still another, jewelry of every sort. In one row of stalls there are candles of every length and color imaginable. These are used on the anniversaries of the deaths of famous personages in the history of Fez. On such occasions religious persons light candles for what they believe to be the souls of departed ones.

Here and there a heated discussion in Arabic ensues as someone bargains with a merchant in an effort to get his prices down. We also hear a bell ringing from time to time. It belongs to the waterman, who is colorfully dressed in red, with numerous highly polished copper cups hanging from his chest. He serves fresh water for a few francs (worth less than a penny) from a goatskin slung over his shoulder.

Due to the narrow streets there is much pushing, and we must watch our step. We must be careful, too, of the heavily loaded donkeys with sacks of grain and flour. Often the narrow street becomes blocked as two of these meet. It is the man that always rides the donkey, while his wife,

often with huge bundles on her head, walks behind.

The Moslem women here are restricted in their activities. They do not eat with the man of the house. And one will never see the women taking part in the business affairs of town. On the other hand, as we pass the open doorways of the homes we often see womenfolk grinding flour, kneading dough or winnowing wheat.

Schools, Past and Present

Our guide next takes us to a very old building called a 'Medersa.' It is an ancient form of boarding school that was used hundreds of years ago by students from all over the Arab world. In fact, students studied at the numerous universities here in Fez long before Oxford or Cambridge were ever heard of. The ceilings of this building are beautifully carved in wood.

From time to time we can hear the chanting of children's voices coming from what look like shops or houses. These are Koranic schools for the very young. Under the supervision of someone versed in the *Koran,* children spend their time reciting portions of the teachings of Mohammed. For many children this is the only schooling they receive. Peering inside, we notice that it is dark and crowded, and that the children have a slate in their hands.

A Pause to Eat, and We Go On

We are hungry after the long walk. So we stop and try some 'brochettes,' which are small chunks of meat on a skewer. These are cooked in just a few minutes over a charcoal fire. Certain parts of the *medina* are full of the pungent smell from these charcoal fires and the meat cooking, usually heart or liver. Brochettes are very inexpensive and one can sprinkle on them cummin or other spices before eating them. If one is thirsty he can have a glass of mint tea, the traditional drink here.

Our rest over, the guide leads us on to inspect craftsmen busily engraving silverware, for which Fez is well known. Many of their workshops are no more than an enlarged hole in the wall, but they proudly show us their handiwork. We marvel at their skill in deftly engraving patterns of all kinds on trays and plates.

Another place that interests us is the tannery. Just look at the hundreds of sheepskins hanging from the walls! Sheep are killed for important events in the family such as circumcision, and for the special annual feast day 'l' Aid Al Adha.' This feast commemorates what many Moslems believe was the attempted sacrifice by Abraham of, not Isaac, but Ishmael. (Gen. 22:1-14) Since each family kills at least one sheep for the occasion, sheepskins are plentiful.

Our guide is intent on taking us into one of the bazaars that sell carpets, rugs and blankets. Some of these bazaars are converted mansions with beautifully carved walls and ceilings. On display are carpets of all colors and sizes, handwoven by Moroccan craftsmen. The owner of the bazaar tirelessly unrolls carpet after carpet in an effort to tempt us to buy, all the while extolling the virtues of each article. Some bazaars provide the buyer with mint tea to drink while he watches the display.

What has particularly impressed us during our visit to Fez? The contrast between life in the ancient city, where people carry on much as they did centuries ago, and life a short distance away in the 'new city,' where the style of living is similar to that in other parts of the Western world.

MOST COMMON METAL

● Aluminum is the commonest of all earth's metals. It amounts to 8.13 percent (by weight) of the earth's crust.

TRAPPED *in a* Torrent Valley

BY "AWAKE!" CORRESPONDENT IN ISRAEL

IT WAS the annual Passover festival in Israel. Since we were free from secular duties for a few days, we decided to tour southward through Beer-sheba, across the northern part of the Negeb wilderness, and as far as the Dead Sea and Masada. Our two-car party anticipated an interesting trip.

Heavy rain on Passover morning put a damper on our excitement, but we thought that the weather would change quickly, as the season of rains is usually over in April. Apparently this was the last of the "spring rain." (Deut. 11:14) As we drove south the weather improved.

Around Gath, now known as Kiryat-Gat, the countryside was green and pleasant. Those Philistines knew where to settle! Passing black goat-hair tents of Bedouin tribesmen along the road toward Beer-sheba, we thought back nearly 4,000 years to Abraham's day when he too "dwelt in tents" in this region. (Heb. 11:9) By the time we reached Beer-sheba the sun was already shining brightly.

We headed southward now, and were climbing steadily. How colorful the wilderness is here! There are rock layers of so many hues —violet, green, yellow, scarlet, blue, to name a few that we spotted.

Two flat tires on one of the cars halted our progress. There was only one solution; the other car would have to head for the nearest town to get the tires repaired. How surprised we were to see the bright sunshine change dramatically to a violent rainstorm! Just then we reached a wadi or dry valley, across which the roadway cut. It must have been half a mile in width. We noted that already a brook was forming. The sky became even darker, and the downpour reached alarming proportions, to the extent that the car's windshield wipers were having no effect.

It seemed as though the whole valley was shaking, waters filling it with movement on every side. Everywhere streams were suddenly born and the waters ran faster and faster. Determinedly we tried to reach the other side of the valley so as to get onto higher ground. We almost succeeded, but found deep water ahead of us. A Bedouin Arab waved us back the way we had come. We succeeded in reversing the car and retracing our way.

But halfway back across the valley floor deep water cut across our path. There was no possibility of making it to the other side. The roadway disappeared completely under the rising waters. We edged the car off the road onto a large sandbank, which we shared with a variety of roadwork implements and machinery. All the workmen were home with their families, since it was the Passover holiday. A few yards away a workman's hut was overturned by the strong flow. The valley was filled with chaos. Large fuel tanks bobbed and danced in the tumultuous waters, colliding with one another and spilling out their contents. Other equipment was swept downstream.

A Bedouin watchman had his tent pitched on a nearby sandbank. We were amazed that his tent could possibly stand despite such heavy rains! His presence not far away was reassuring to us.

After an hour passed, the rains lessened somewhat and visibility improved. We could see that the entire valley was filled with tons of water that had cascaded from the skies. We also noted that the only two spots still above the surface of the waters were the sandbank where we had parked and the place where the Bedouin had his tent.

When the water level sank sufficiently, this friendly watchman waded across and assured us that we would have to wait for a few hours before we could attempt to move on. That did not matter—we were so thankful to be alive!

Some three hours later the roadway reappeared. A layer of rubble and stones covered its surface, over which we had to drive the car. It was a struggle, but we reached the other side, and eventually met up with the group in the other car.

We had come to know from personal experience just what the Bible refers to by the expression "torrent valley" and "torrent that could not be passed through."—Deut. 2:24; Ezek. 47:5.

THE VERSATILE Sago Palm

BY "AWAKE!" CORRESPONDENT IN PAPUA

IT WAS hot and humid, and there was the usual casual atmosphere in the native market. People arrived early from villages along the coast and inland. Vendors were sitting on the grass beside their goods, chewing betel nut and using the opportunity to talk over local events.

I noted that many were selling large blocks of a brown-colored substance that the buyers eagerly sought. Turning to Laea, my native companion, I asked what this was.

"Why, that's our main food," he replied. "In our language we call it 'poi,' but in English it is usually called 'sago.' "

Upon closer examination I found it to be brown on the outside only because it had dried in the sun; inside it was a creamy color.

"We make it from the pith in the trunk of the sago palms, which grow abundantly in the swamplands here in the Gulf District of Papua," continued Laea, breaking off a small piece and kneading it between his fingers.

"What are these palms like?" I asked.

"The tree attains a height of up to thirty feet in about fifteen years," he explained. "The trunk is very thick, and just before reaching maturity it becomes gorged with starch. It is then that we fell the palm and strip off the wooden shell, which is about an inch thick, exposing the soft starchy pith. This pith is grated into a meal. The meal then must be washed several times, and strained. The starch passes through the strainer, while the stringy fibers are discarded."

"How much meal can you make from one palm?" I inquired with increasing interest.

"Some palms may yield from 250 to 300 pounds," he answered. "However, if we wait too long before cutting down the tree, all of this starchy core material passes into the developing fruit and leaves the trunk a hollow shell, which then dies."

I was very interested in knowing how they cooked their sago, so I asked Laea to explain this to me. "Come to my house," he invited; "my wife will be cooking some for our noon meal."

Methods of Cooking

Laea's house was neatly made from bush materials built on posts about six

feet from the ground. Along one side of the house was built a small veranda, onto which two bedrooms opened. His wife's name was Meta. She was sitting cross-legged in the kitchen before a small hearth on which a fire was burning. The kitchen was a separate structure joined to the main house by a raised walk. She had a large block of sago, such as I had seen in the market, and with her right hand she was working the meal into a long palm leaf that she held in her left hand.

"Meta, John is interested in knowing how you cook the sago for us. Would you like to explain it to him?" asked Laea with a broad smile.

"Certainly," she replied. "Wrapping it in a leaf and roasting it in the fire, as I am doing now, is the quickest and most convenient way, because it is easy to carry with us when we go to the garden or out fishing. Sometimes I mix coconut with it; then we call it 'La'a Poi.' "

"I like 'A'i Poi' the best," interrupted Laea. "That is what we call it when shellfish is roasted in with the sago. Sometimes we boil it together with sweet potatoes, taro or bananas, and all the family enjoy it very much."

"Here, try some of this. It is ready to eat now," said Meta, breaking off a piece and offering it to me.

It was soft, spongy and quite pleasant to the taste.

"You are really a Papuan now," they laughed.

Other Uses

"The sago palm is very useful to us in other ways," Laea noted. "For example, this woven material I have used on the walls of my house is made from the branch of the sago palm."

Looking closely at it, I noticed that an interesting pattern had been woven into each sheet.

"We strip the hard layer from the stem of the palm branch and then weave the strips together as you see here."

"How long does it take to make one of these sheets?"

"A large one, perhaps six feet wide and eight feet long, would require one day to cut the branches, strip them and then weave the strips by hand. However, looms are being made now that enable a man to weave about five times as much as he can do by hand. Some of the village people are using this material, 'sero,' as we call it, to line the inside of their houses."

Laea next drew my attention to the thatched roof of his neighbor's house. "There is another use we make of the sago palm," he said. "We fold the leaves over a strip of bamboo and lay them on the roof. This forms a rainproof thatch, which also keeps our houses cool inside even when the sun is very hot. Sometimes a man may build the walls and roof of his house entirely from sago-palm leaves."

"Even the flooring of our houses can be made from the hard wooden shell from the trunk of the sago palm," continued Laea. "So you can see that it is useful to us in many ways."

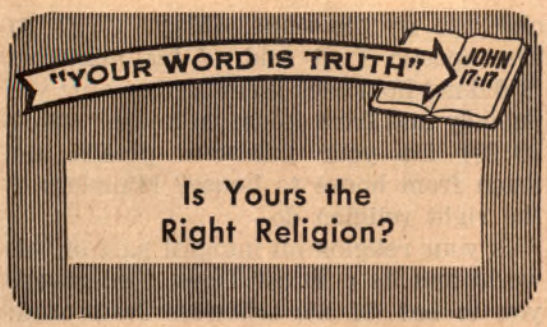
Meta interrupted, and we looked around to see her standing in the doorway wearing a brightly colored fiber skirt.

"Do you like my skirt?" she asked.

"I do indeed," I replied.

"Most people call this a grass skirt," she explained. "However, this too I have made from sago-palm leaves. We pick young leaves, dry and then shred them and dye them different colors. Finally we knot them together to form a skirt."

When I asked Laea about the brown-colored blocks sold in the market that morning, I had not realized they held such a fascinating story, nor that the lives of these friendly people were so closely involved with their versatile sago palm.



Is Yours the Right Religion?

JESUS CHRIST showed that not all persons practice the right religion, the one that leads to life. In fact, he explained that the majority of mankind would be misled into taking the broad road that leads to destruction. So he warned: "Be on the watch for the false prophets that come to you in sheep's covering, but inside they are ravenous wolves." (Matt. 7:13-15) The apostle Paul, too, revealed that false religious leaders would mislead many. —2 Cor. 11:14, 15.

Are you sure that your religion truly has God's approval? It is possible to make sure. Yes, you can determine for certain whether your religion is the right one. This can be done by examining whether its teachings and practices are in accord with God's Word, which Jesus said is the truth. (John 17:17) It is a relatively easy examination to make. And if you should find in making it that your religion's teachings and practices are not in keeping with the Bible, then it is not the right religion.

Are you willing to put your religion through such a test? There is nothing to fear, because if you have the right religion you can only be reassured by the examination. And if what you believe is not in keeping with the Bible, then you should welcome the truth, because it leads to eternal life.—John 17:3.

To begin, consider some common teachings of religious organizations. Does your religion, for example, teach the popular belief that the human soul is immortal, that it cannot die? Note what God's Word of truth says on this matter: "He hath poured out his soul unto death." (Isa. 53:12, *AV*) "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Ezek. 18:4, 20, *AV*) Is not the Bible answer obvious? It teaches that souls are mortal, that they can and do die. Does your religion teach that? It should if it is the right religion.

Another idea that many religious organizations have long taught is that hell is a place where only the wicked go, and that no one can ever get out of hell. Does your religion teach this? The Bible, however, says that Jesus Christ was in hell three days and was raised from there. In a Bible prophecy concerning him, it explains: "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption."—Ps. 16:10, *AV* (15:10, *Dy*); Acts 2:31.

What, then, is hell? The Bible shows that hell is mankind's common grave. And note what the Bible says: "Death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them." (Rev. 20:13, *AV*) Yes, not only does the Bible teach that good as well as unrighteous persons go to hell, but it shows that those in hell are to be resurrected! (Acts 24:15) Does your religion teach this? Since the Bible does, the right religion will.

Examine another common religious belief—that the dead are conscious. So many religions teach this. But on this matter the inspired Scriptures say: "The living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing." (Eccl. 9:5, *AV*) Thus, according to the Bible, the dead are not conscious. However, they do have the grand prospect of being raised from unconsciousness by means of a resurrection from the dead.—John 5:28, 29.

What about the common belief that God and his Son Jesus Christ are equal? Religions that teach the Trinity doctrine say that they are. However, Jesus said: "The Father is greater than I am." (John 14:28) And the Bible, at Mark 13:32, says that the Father has knowledge of important information of which the angels and the Son are ignorant. Obviously, then, Jesus and the Father are *not* equal. Does your religion teach this? It should if it is in full harmony with God's Word.

Can you see how such an examination of religious teachings can help you determine whether yours is the right religion? So, as you study God's Word, continue to make such an examination. But, at the same time, examine the practices of your religion, for the right religion can also be identified by what it actually does or refrains from doing.

For example, does your religion use the name of God and magnify its importance? The Bible does. It says: "That people may know that you, whose name is Jehovah, you alone are the Most High over all the earth." (Ps. 83:18)* Jesus made known God's name Jehovah. In fact, he taught his followers to pray: "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name." (Matt. 6:9, *AV*) And Jesus said in prayer to his Father: "I have made your name manifest to the men you gave me out of the world." (John 17:6) Does your religion make known God's name Jehovah?

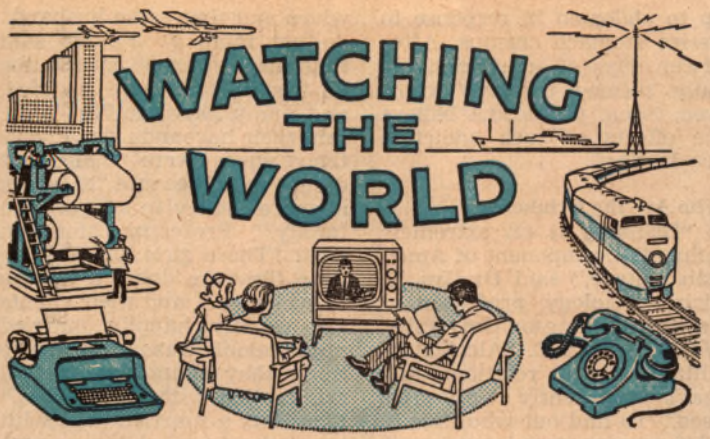
Examine your religion further. Does it teach that ministers should preach from house to house? Jesus called right at the homes of people and instructed his disciples to do the same. (Matt. *10:12-14*) The apostle Paul said of his ministry: "I did not hold back from . . . teaching you publicly and from house to house." (Acts 20:20) Do your ministers preach and teach from house to house? Ministers of the right religion do.

Is your religion an integral part of this world and its politics? Does it encourage you to be? Of his followers Jesus said: "They are no part of the world, just as I am no part of the world." (John 17:16) And James, a disciple of Jesus, wrote: "The form of worship that is clean and undefiled from the standpoint of our God and Father is this: . . . to keep oneself without spot from the world." Is your religion without spot from the world?—Jas. 1:27; 4:4.

Jesus Christ described how his true followers could especially be identified. He said: "By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love among yourselves." (John 13:35) Does your religion bear this identifying mark of love? Does it instill in its members a love that is so strong that it remains true even in difficult times? The facts show that when worldly nations have gone to war, Catholics on one side have killed Catholics on the other side, and Protestants and Jews have done the same. Is this showing love for one another? Hardly. Yet, remember, Jesus said that genuine love among themselves would be an identifying mark of those practicing the right religion.

Has this brief consideration made you want to examine further? It is the wise and proper thing to do. You should make sure whether your religion speaks and acts according to God's Word. (1 Thess. 5:21; 2 Cor. 13:5) By so doing you can come to worship God in the right way and thereby win his approval.

* Some translations substitute the title Lord for the name Jehovah. However, in the original Hebrew the proper name of God appears. This name is usually translated Jehovah, but the Catholic *Jerusalem Bible* renders it Yahweh.



Military Madness

◈ Reports out of Sweden state that every fifteen years the military budget for the world doubles. In 1968 the world spent $159,300,000,000 for military purposes. Seventy percent of that total was spent by the United States and the Soviet Union. Between 1918 and 1938, 3.5 percent of the world's resources were spent for the military. Now that figure has increased more than 100 percent to between 7 and 8 percent of the world's resources.

7,000 Priests Ask Release

◈ More and more Roman Catholic priests are leaving the ministry to marry or because of doctrinal disagreements. A study carried out on Pope Paul's instructions in October disclosed that at least 7,137 priests had asked for dispensation from the vows of celibacy during the previous six years. Latin America had 661 applications for dispensation, followed by France, 553, and North America, 455. The Brussels center says priests are leaving the ministry at all ages, but particularly in the first five years after ordination.

Expo '70 Pavilion

◈ The U.S. Pavilion for Expo 1970, the world's fair to be held in Osaka, Japan, features a translucent, inflated roof. The structure is 274 by 465 feet and covers an area almost the size of two football fields. The roof is the largest clear-span air-supported roof ever built. The roof is extremely light, weighing only a pound per square foot. But it is said that it will withstand earthquakes and typhoon winds. The cost, including exhibits, will be around $10 million.

History Plotted by Ignorance

◈ British cabinet secrets used to remain locked away for fifty years before others could see them. By an act of 1967, the Wilson government made them available annually on January 1, just thirty years after the event. This year, 1939 cabinet papers were made public, opening the story of how Britain went to war against Hitler in September 1939. Said a report: "The British cabinet papers for 1939 are a revelation, not of what was done, but of the astonishing ignorance and misinformation on which statesmen of the time based their policies. . . . The information on which other statesmen acted was probably no better than that of the British. And there is no assurance that governments today act on any better information. . . . Britain's annual revelation of cabinet secrets may be healthy for a democracy. But it doesn't inspire the citizens to march into the new year with a touching faith in the wisdom and omniscience of their political leaders."

The Air You Breathe

◈ The last vestige of clean air in the United States disappeared six years ago, according to the Atmospheric Sciences Research Center. Defining air pollution as at least 2,000 particles of pollution in a section of air half the size of a sugar cube, biologist Alfred Hulstrunk estimated that most metropolitan areas today average 15,000 particles, and the concentration is increasing at the rate of 1,500 particles a year. Hulstrunk predicted that, at the present rate, within 10 to 15 years most animal life and much plant life in the northern hemisphere would die, and the only human survivors would have to don semi-space suits when venturing outside the home. "We have no solution," he added.

Church Art for Sale

◈ According to *Parade* for January 25, "Spanish priests are selling art treasures from their own provincial churches to antique dealers in Madrid, who in turn are re-selling them to wealthy American buyers or local merchants." The Spanish government has called upon the bishops to stop this practice, but the bishops have informed the Vatican that they would stop the practice as soon as the Vatican sent additional help. Spain's Director of Fine Arts, Perez Embid, said he has seen chalices, altar pieces, and holy paintings decorating Madrid nightclubs. Markets in Madrid now are reportedly overflowing with pulpits, stained-glass windows, wooden statues and other church artifacts, some of it dating back to the 12th century.

Rock Music and Sex

◈ According to a study of 400 pregnant teen-agers and

91 nonpregnant college girls, rock music turns young girls to premarital sex. And so do television soap operas that feature "sexy" singers. The music is found especially disturbing to 12- and 13-year-olds who are just beginning to be aroused and have trouble expressing their feelings, says Dr. Patricia Schiller of Washington, a psychologist and a mother of two college students. The college students listed movies, books, records and television, in that order, as sexual stimuli. The 12- and 13-year-olds put the emphasis on records and television, particularly afternoon soap operas with their heavy doses of adultery, illegitimate pregnancy and illicit sex.

No Merger in Sight

◈ Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, general secretary of the world Protestant-Orthodox body, said that he is skeptical that church union would ever become a reality. "Not only am I fearful it won't happen," he said, "but I've just about lost all interest in it." The aim of a united church, he said, is to effect spiritual renewal and fervor, to develop a church that would confront today's problems head on. "This is not a time for business as usual when the world's falling apart," said Blake. But those involved in church mergers seem to be so involved in the organizational concerns that they have just about forgotten the reason the proposal was made.

Born a Drug Addict

◈ At the Tucson Medical Center a baby was born a heroin addict. The infant's mother and father became addicts after their fourth child. The mother said that if she did not have a "fix" for two or three days during pregnancy, the baby would start kicking violently. After birth the infant showed the classic signs of heroin withdrawal: restlessness, running nose, tiny legs drawn up to abdomen in response to severe stomach cramps. After fifteen days of treatment, the baby seemed to have recovered. Some physicians believe the effects of such addiction are lasting.

Who Are the Drinkers?

◈ "Drinking is an extremely influential component of American culture," said Dr. Ira H. Cisin, sociology professor at George Washington University, Washington, D.C. "Alcohol facilitates social relations and that's apparently how it's used." To find out who uses it, 2,746 persons were interviewed. All of them were 21 and over. In the study "alcoholic beverages" meant all kinds—wine, beer and whiskey. Almost one-third of the men and women surveyed, 32 percent, were listed as "abstainers," that is, they drink less than once a year or not at all. "Infrequent drinkers," who drink at least once a year but less than once a month, accounted for an additional 15 percent. That leaves a 53 percent majority who drink larger quantities and more often, with heavy drinkers the smallest percentage. More men drink, and they also drink more than women, but drinking among women is on the rise. About 60 percent of the women drink at least once a year—up from 45 percent a dozen years ago. Italian-Americans are said to rank highest among nationality groups in the proportion of drinkers, 91 percent. But sons of Irish-born fathers have the highest proportion of habitual drinkers, 93 percent, and of heavy drinkers, 31 percent.

Housewife Prostitutes

◈ A published Associated Press report from Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, quotes sociology professor William Morrison as saying that many of Winnipeg's "better-class" prostitutes are suburban housewives and that some husbands do not mind at all. He said that more than 50 prostitutes he interviewed were married, and many had families. Some said their husbands knew what their wives were doing, but do not mind because "it brings in more money to support the family." Professor Morrison said: "These girls honestly believe they are doing a service to society . . . and their clients are usually happily married upper-middle-class types who think they cannot get sexual satisfaction with their wives." Morrison, a married man with two school-age children, sees no reason why prostitution should not be made legal in Canada, particularly since restrictions have been removed on homosexual relations between consenting adults. Do you share his view? The Bible does not.

Talkative Nations

◈ Leading the world in the number of telephones are the United States, with 109 million; Japan, with 21 million, and the United Kingdom, with 13 million. Since 1951, Canadians had been the most talkative, but they dropped to second place with 693 conversations per person. Iceland was third, with 632. In the Number One spot now as the most talkative people in the world, at least on the telephone, are the Americans, with an average 701 telephone conversations per person during 1968, an increase of more than 33 conversations per person over the previous year.

Traffic Deaths in 1969

◈ It was a year of slaughter on America's highways. More people died than in any previous year. The National Safety Council reported 56,400 traffic deaths in 1969. Howard Pyle, the Council's president, said that unless people take an interest in highway safety, "1970 promises to be even worse."

Catholic Women "Ministers"

◈ The shortage of priests has forced the Roman Catholic diocese of Dubuque in northeast Iowa to use two Catholic women to distribute communion. They are reportedly the first laywomen in the United States to be granted the right to distribute the Eucharist, a duty usually performed by ordained Catholic priests.

Discouraging Drunkenness

◈ The government of the Soviet Union is making a concerted drive nationwide against heavy drinking. Vodka prices have doubled in Moscow's restaurants. Cafés have locked away their cognac and now serve only wines. Liquor outlets around factories and plants have been ordered to move or close, and hours of sales have been curtailed. The reason behind the move to reduce drunkenness is believed to be, not morality, but a rumor that drinking is partly responsible for a sag in industrial production.

"Stinkville"

◈ The inhabitants of Coccolia, Italy, became aroused by the pollution of its river and renamed their town "Puzzolia," freely translatable as "Stinkville." The stench of the Ronco River, beside which the village lies, has become intolerable. Studies have been made that show the stream is six times as filthy as the ordinary sewer. Italy, a country of 50,000,000 people, has fewer than twenty sewage treatment plants, according to experts in Rome. Many inhabitants remember when they used to wade in the Ronco River. "We used to wash our clothes and take baths in the Ronco," said an inhabitant of Coccolia. "Now, just the smell of the river makes you want to vomit." Another aroused citizen points to a blackened metal railing of a bridge painted two years ago and now fiercely corroded. He says, "If the gases from the river do that to paint, imagine what they do to humans living here."

A VD Epidemic

◈ Venereal disease in America is increasing at a rate approaching epidemic proportions, according to Dr. William J. Brown, chief of the National Communicable Disease Center's venereal disease branch. He says the incidence rate of the disease has climbed from an all-time low in 1957 to an alarming high today. In the past five years, the reported cases of gonorrhea rose 60 percent. The actual number of cases in the nation is placed at 1,680,000. The disease has baffled the experts, and according to Dr. Brown, medical science's lack of knowledge about this disease makes it impossible for them to design an effective control program.

How valuable, really, is truth?

The dictionary is still clear cut in its definition of the word "truth." Do you know many people who adhere strictly to its real meaning? Regardless of the position taken by many in this modern society, there is a standard that has never changed, a standard found only in the Bible. How valuable is it to you? Read the book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life.* Do you have anything else that promises that much? See how "valuable" *truth* can be! Send today. Only 25c.

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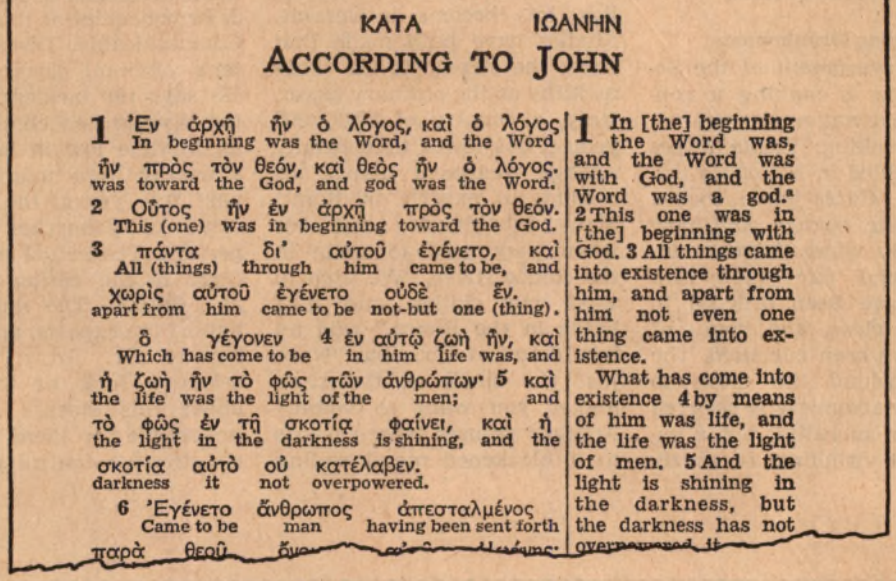

ΚΑΤΑ ΙΩΑΝΗΝ

ACCORDING TO JOHN

1 Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἦν ὁ λόγος, καὶ ὁ λόγος
In beginning was the Word, and the Word
ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεόν, καὶ θεὸς ἦν ὁ λόγος.
was toward the God, and god was the Word.
2 Οὗτος ἦν ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸς τὸν θεόν.
This (one) was in beginning toward the God.
3 πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο, καὶ
All (things) through him came to be, and
χωρὶς αὐτοῦ ἐγένετο οὐδὲ ἕν.
apart from him came to be not-but one (thing).
ὃ γέγονεν 4 ἐν αὐτῷ ζωὴ ἦν, καὶ
Which has come to be in him life was, and
ἡ ζωὴ ἦν τὸ φῶς τῶν ἀνθρώπων· 5 καὶ
the life was the light of the men; and
τὸ φῶς ἐν τῇ σκοτίᾳ φαίνει, καὶ ἡ
the light in the darkness is shining, and the
σκοτία αὐτὸ οὐ κατέλαβεν.
darkness it not overpowered.
6 Ἐγένετο ἄνθρωπος ἀπεσταλμένος
Came to be man having been sent forth
παρὰ θεοῦ ὄνομα

1 In [the] beginning the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god.[a] 2 This one was in [the] beginning with God. 3 All things came into existence through him, and apart from him not even one thing came into existence.

What has come into existence 4 by means of him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 And the light is shining in the darkness, but the darkness has not overpowered it

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