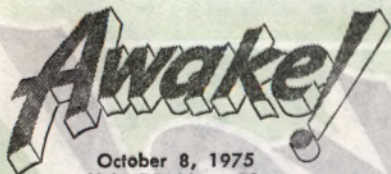


Awake!

A SOUND GUIDE for MODERN LIVING

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WHY THIS MAGAZINE IS PUBLISHED

Today as never before, what goes on in the rest of the world affects each one of us. "Awake!" reports on the world scene. But it does more for you personally.

It probes beneath the surface and points to the real meaning behind current events. And it gives practical suggestions to help you to cope effectively with the mounting problems of our time.

The scope of subjects covered by "Awake!" makes it a magazine for the entire family. Customs and people in many lands, the marvels of creation, religion, practical sciences and points of human interest all are included in its pages.

In keeping its freedom to bring you the truth, this magazine has no commercial advertisers to please. Also, it stays politically neutral and it does not exalt one race above another.

Most importantly, "Awake!" provides hope, giving you a basis for confidence in the Creator's promise of a new order of lasting peace and true security within our generation.

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People Need A SOUND GUIDE

TRAVELERS know the value of dependable maps. Repairmen may consult manuals before undertaking a particular job. Even experienced cooks may use others' recipes. Regardless of what activity a person might pursue, he will likely benefit from some kind of guide.

In caring for daily matters of life, people often rely on past experience and training. Then, too, a person may prepare ahead of time for various situations that he may have to face. A traveler, for example, can read, talk to others and then decide what to take along in the way of clothing, equipment and the like.

However, there are things in life for which one cannot plan ahead. Totally unexpected situations crop up. A person's knowledge and experience may fail, and his everyday sources of guidance may prove deficient. He may be unsure which way to turn. His situation may be like that of the seamen caught in a fierce storm, described by an ancient Hebrew songwriter as men who "reel and move unsteadily . . . and even all their wisdom proves confused." (Ps. 107:27) Have you ever felt this way?

Especially in the field of human relations do people keenly sense the need for dependable guidance. For example: What is the best way to bring up children? How can parents maintain good communication with teen-age sons and daughters? What will keep the marriage bond strong? How can good relations be maintained with neighbors and fellow workers? These questions and many others like them deserve answers. But is there a source that can provide the right answers?



There are times when problems simply cannot be solved on the individual level. A person may be the victim of circumstances that are beyond his control—like the pressures resulting from what others do. He may be honest and fair in his dealings with fellowmen. Yet he is powerless when it comes to putting a complete end to all the moral and ethical wrongs that may be committed by those among whom he must live and work. He may work hard, spend money wisely and save on a regular basis. But he cannot prevent national inflation from reducing the value of his savings. Nothing he can do will positively guarantee economic security for himself.

Clearly, people today need a guide that, not only provides sound answers, but also gives aid in coping with problems for which there may be no personal solutions. And since many of the problems are global, that guide should tell how these global problems will be solved.

If such a reliable guide for living exists, what would you expect it to do for you? What effect can its application have on your family, your health and your future?

Where

SOUND GUIDANCE

Should Lead

Living in harmony
with sound guidance
should result in producing . . .



NOT THIS . . . BUT



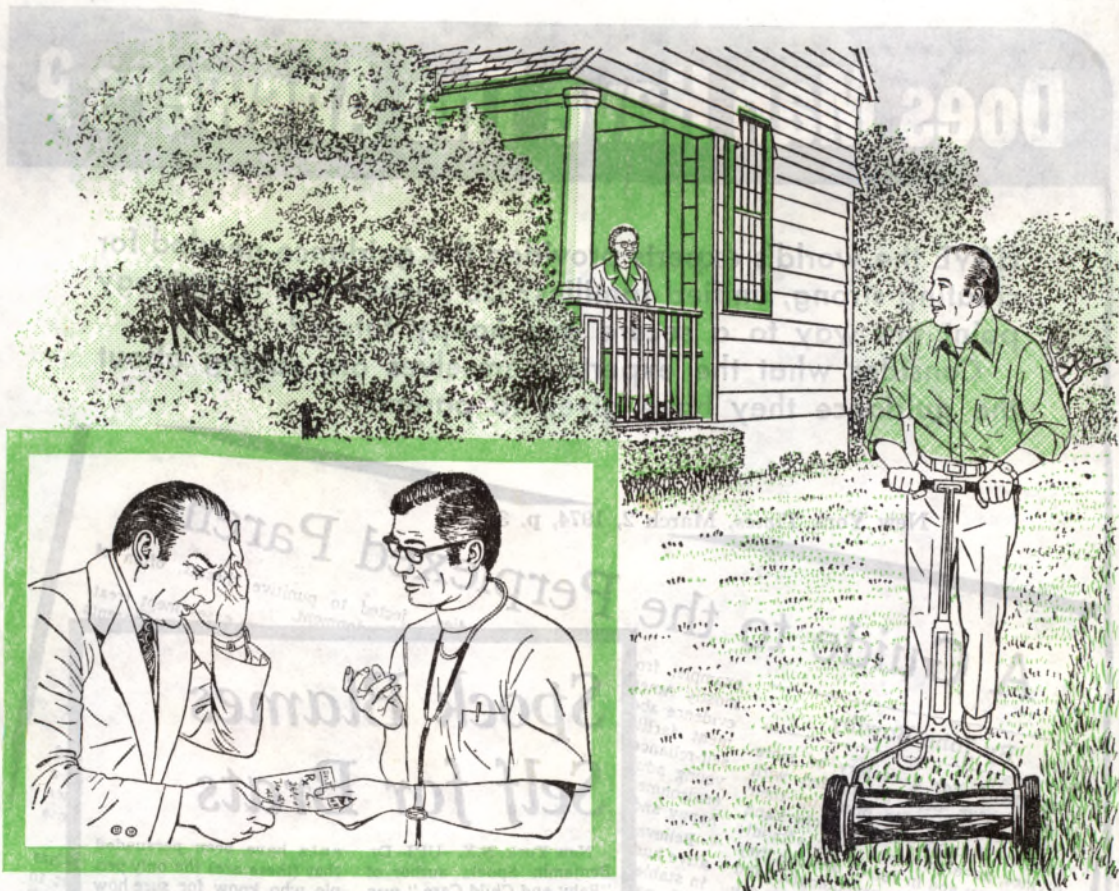
STRONG, UNIFIED FAMILIES

Why are strong, unified families important? "Entire civilizations have survived or disappeared, depending on whether family life was strong or weak."—"World Book Encyclopedia," Vol. 7, p. 24.

Selfishness, bitter quarreling, lack of communication, and suspicion undermine a family's strength. What should sound guidance do for a family? It should lead a family away from these weakening influences. It should encourage, instead, unselfishness, deep affection and trust among all family members. Following a dependable guide should, therefore, be expected to produce better husbands and wives, better fathers and mothers, and better sons and daughters. Yes, the result should be unified families—families in which each member is concerned, not primarily about himself, but about what will be in the best interests of all.

Sound guidance should also aid people to avoid or minimize stress that can be destructive to personal security, good health and fine relations with fellowmen.

Neurologists recognize that stress can bring about changes in a person's



FROM THIS . . .

TO THIS

system that may damage his health and jeopardize his life. A person who becomes physically ill due to frustrations, anxiety over making a living, or poor relations with fellowmen may regain his health if he can be helped to change his attitude and outlook. Hence, proper guidance should also serve as a preventive measure, contributing to a person's enjoying the best from life under the present circumstances. What kind of guidance, then, is needed?

Man needs guidance that would lead him away from becoming too attached to material things and that would give him assurance that he will not be reduced to a hopeless state. Such guidance should also aid him to overcome jealousies, hatreds, prejudices and suspicions. It should move him to shun habits that are physically and emotionally harmful.

Can any man or group of men provide the fine guidance that points to a secure and happy future for you and your loved ones?

Does Man Have The Answers?

HAVE the world's experts provided the guidance needed for creating strong, unified families? Do science and technology point the way to a secure and happy future?

Consider what the experts themselves are saying about the guidance they have given to parents:

New York Times, March 2, 1974, p. 31

A Guide to the Perplexed Parent

By John Bowlby

LONDON—For a century or more parents have been bombarded with advice about how to bring up their children. Doctors, nurses, teachers and divines have purveyed their admonitory wares; and in recent decades they have been joined by psychologists and psychoanalysts. But were we to collect all this good advice and inspect it, what should we find? Little more, I'm afraid, than a cacophony of contradiction. To every thesis there would be antithesis.

Pity, therefore, the poor parent. The more conscientious he or, more commonly, she is in seeking advice, the more confused she is likely to become. And the more confused the more anxious, and the more anxious the less happiness and enjoyment she will get. That's very sad, because caring for children means a lot of hard work and the only payment parents will ever receive is the enjoyment of their children's company and pride in seeing them turn out well. Anxiety and foreboding make a poor beginning.

example, from mostly American evidence about self-reliance in young adults, happy and

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Spock Blames Self for Brats

New York, N.Y. —UPI—Dr. Benjamin Spock, author of "Baby and Child Care," was ready to admit Monday that he must share part of the blame for the brattiness of some of today's children.

"Inability to be firm is . . . the commonest problem of parents in America today," says Spock, writing in the February issue of Redbook magazine.

And he blames at least part of the resulting brattiness of America's children on the experts — "the child psychiatrists, psychologists, teachers, social workers and pediatricians like myself. He writes:

"In the 20th century, par-

ents have been persuaded that (these are) the only people who know for sure how children should be managed. "This is a cruel deprivation that we professionals have imposed on mothers and fathers. Of course, we did it with the best of intentions. . . . We didn't realize, until it was too late, how our knowledge all attitude was undermining the self-assurance of parents."

jected to punitive threats, often of studies, punishment. cases inept treatment. parents

has rt to will

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As a result, says Spock, parents who are afraid of alienating their children are letting them get away with not coming in for lunch on time, not wearing snowsuits when they should and eating candy when they shouldn't.

The Milwaukee Journal, January 22, 1974, p. 2, part 1

Do not these admissions show that the experts cannot be depended upon for supplying the right kind of guidance for successful family living?

Is Science the Answer?

What about science and technology? At the close of the nineteenth century people were enthused about the marvels they thought science and technology would bring about in the future.

"Scientific American," in its issue of July 1899, looked ahead optimistically to the impact the automobile would have on city life. This publication envisioned "light rubber-tired vehicles moving swiftly and noiselessly" over "clean, dustless and odorless" streets, eliminating much of the "nervousness, distraction, and strain of modern metropolitan life." What a far cry this is from the actual situation today—noisy streets clogged with cars, buses and trucks, spewing deadly gases into the air.

True, science and technology have produced more laborsaving devices, made possible more leisure time for many and given people greater mobility. But, sadly, all this has been accompanied by additional pressures that fragment families, lead to frustrations, ruin the health of many and, in fact, threaten human existence.

Writing in the New York "Times" of January 7, 1975, René Dubos, scientist and author, observed:

"In the United States, the average consumption of energy per person is today approximately double what it was thirty years ago and double also what it is now in Europe. Does anyone really believe that this difference is reflected in more happiness, less suffering, greater longevity among present-day Americans, or in a more rapid progress of American civilization toward more desirable goals? A recent study based on measurements of various social indicators in 55 countries failed to reveal any beneficial effect of increased energy use on the quality of life; if there was a correlation, it was that the greater

the energy consumption, the larger the percentages of divorces and suicides!

"An abundant supply of energy is, of course, essential for the production of more and more industrial goods, but this is not all that there is to happiness and civilization. . . .

"I shall go even further and claim that in the highly industrialized parts of the world a decrease in energy use could have a multiplicity of beneficial effects in the long run. These would include improvements in physical and mental health, sounder agricultural practices based on ecological principles, architectural styles more interesting because they are better adapted to local conditions, policies of rural and urban planning that would favor a revival of community spirit—and of course a less disturbed global ecology."

Regarding the dangerous situation in which man finds himself, Barry Commoner, in his book "Science and Survival" (p. 126), writes:

"Despite the dazzling successes of modern technology and the unprecedented power of modern military systems, they suffer from a common and catastrophic fault. While providing us with a bountiful supply of food, with great industrial plants, with high-speed transportation, and with military weapons of unprecedented power, they threaten our very survival."

Obviously, the problems facing mankind, in many cases, stem from things that were viewed as promising a better world. There can be no question about the fact that shifting and conflicting opinions of men cannot be depended upon to lead the way out of the present bad situation. Does this not suggest the need for a guide from a source higher than man? Moreover, since many people do things that they know to be wrong and harmful to themselves and others, such a guide must also provide incentive for them to change their ways. It must give them a real purpose in life. Does such a guide exist?

Does A DEPENDABLE GUIDE Exist?

FOR a guide to be dependable and truly helpful to mankind it must meet certain requirements: It must be simple, frank and understandable. It must lift the level of man's thinking and give him encouragement and hope. It must be practical, applicable in all ages and societies, and available to all people.

The Bible is a book making that claim. It holds itself forth as a communication from the Creator. It claims to be a lamp to guide one's path.—Ps. 119:105.

Some have criticized the Bible because of its antiquity, saying that in these modern times man has advanced beyond the Bible's scope. Is this criticism valid? True, since the beginning, human society has undergone changes, and today we are in a technological age. But as humans are we not the same as ever? Have not the loves, hopes and basic desires of mankind been the same from the start?

Moreover, where do we find most of the problems today? In the family circle and in relations with one another. Technology has merely intensified the problems and brought them more quickly to the fore. Having a purpose in living, enjoying security and happiness are as important as ever, and the needs of mankind have really not changed from what they were thousands of years ago.

Since basic human needs have not changed with the passing of centuries, would not a guide that has an ancient history be more valuable than one that has not endured the test of time? Would not a guide that draws on the experiences of many generations instead of just one give

a more complete picture of matters that it considers? So, then, rather than being a weakness, would not the Bible's antiquity be a factor supporting its claim to be a dependable guide?

True, there are other very ancient writings. But none of these can point to origins as old as that of the Bible. Though Bible writing began about 3,500 years ago, its beginning as God's spoken word was far earlier, for the record shows that God spoke to the first man Adam. After that, he had communication with man down to the Noachian flood, so that men using his word as a guide were able to 'walk with God' and be found righteous by Him.—Gen. 1:28; 6:9; 7:1.

Is the Bible the Product of Mere Men?

'But the Bible was written by mere men,' some will say. Does that make it any less authoritative or effective? God could have handed a complete book to men, just as he wrote the Ten Commandments on stone tablets for Moses. But would that have made the book more acceptable to people today than a book written by men who acknowledged their being inspired of God? How could anyone today prove that a book now in existence came directly from man's Maker thousands of years ago? Would not such an unprovable claim be an obstacle

to the book's being accepted as a reliable guide? On the other hand, no one can deny the Bible's claim to be a book written by men. And the person reading the Bible can see for himself whether what it contains agrees with the claim: "All Scripture is inspired of God and beneficial for teaching, for reproving, for setting things straight, for disciplining in righteousness, that the man of God may be fully competent, completely equipped for every good work."—2 Tim. 3:16, 17.

Furthermore, when truthful and God-fearing men wrote from the depths of their heart what God revealed to them, the record thus produced contained a warmth that would not have been there if it had simply been an objective account, lacking the human element. Yes, the expressions recorded by men who had the same experiences, emotions, problems and trials that we undergo have heart appeal.

The most remarkable proof of the Bible's being written by men who were inspired of God is provided by the many prophecies it contains. It foretold the permanent desolation of such mighty cities as ancient Nineveh and Babylon. (Isa. 13:19, 20; Zeph. 2:13, 14) Even the name of the conqueror of Babylon, Cyrus, was set forth years before his birth. (Isa. 45:1, 2) The very conditions that have marked the present century are vividly portrayed. For example, at 2 Timothy 3:1-5, we read: "Know this, that in the last days critical times hard to deal with will be here. For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, self-assuming, haughty, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, disloyal, having no natural affection, not open to any agreement, slanderers, without self-control, fierce, without love of goodness, betrayers, headstrong, puffed up with pride, lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God, having a form of godly devotion but proving false to its power." But

the Bible does not leave matters there. It points beyond the "last days" to a time when this earth will be a secure home for man and shows what we should do to be among those to enjoy it. (Rev. 21:3, 4) Do you know of any other book that contains such accurate and encouraging information?

Enduring Value

The Bible's value is also revealed in its endurance through the stiffest opposition and attempts to destroy it. As one writer noted:

"No other human possession has been so cherished and condemned as the Bible. It has been ridiculed, banned and burned. But it also has been treasured and safeguarded. And it has endured.

"Many have died defending it. Others have kept it hidden to prevent its seizure by police. Men have been executed for translating it into common languages. . . .

"About two centuries ago Voltaire declared that 'it took 12 men to establish Christianity. I will show the world that one man can pull it to pieces. In one hundred years, the Bible will become an obsolete book, to be relegated to the dusty shelves of the antiquarian.'"—George W. Cornell, AP writer in the *Montreal Star*, December 22, 1973.

The contentions of Voltaire and others like him have proved to be unfounded. History has well demonstrated the Bible truth that "all flesh is like grass, and all its glory is like a blossom of grass; the grass becomes withered, and the flower falls off, but the saying of Jehovah [God] endures forever." (1 Pet. 1:24, 25) Yes, God's "saying" as set forth in the Bible has survived, whereas many who attacked it have long ago returned to the lifeless dust.

Consequently, would you not say that the Bible is deserving of a thorough examination on your part? Such an effort, we believe, will convince you that "all Scripture is inspired of God and beneficial."—2 Tim. 3:16.

A Book of Myths

or

A MISREPRESENTED GUIDE?

A BOOK filled with myths could hardly be a dependable guide. Yet many ideas that are commonly attributed to the Bible are definitely not sound. Why is this? Is the Bible actually in error? Or, might it be that, while the Bible is a factual, dependable guide, many popular beliefs about its teachings are nothing but myths? Consider:

What People Have Attributed to the Bible



God created the earth and all life on it in six twenty-four-hour days. Do you believe this?



The undying souls of bad people go to hell, a place of eternal fiery torment.

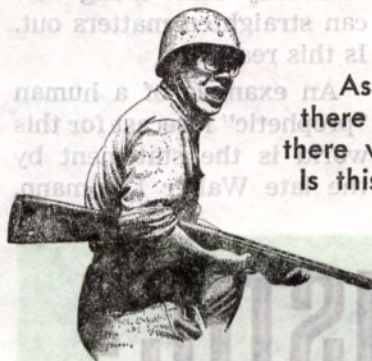
What the Bible Says

The Bible does not define the creative days as periods of twenty-four hours each. Regarding God's view of time, it says: "A thousand years are in your eyes but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch during the night." (Ps. 90:4) "One day is with Jehovah as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day." —2 Pet. 3:8.

"All the souls—to me they belong. As the soul of the father so likewise the soul of the son—to me they belong. The soul that is sinning—it itself will die." (Ezek. 18:4) "The wages sin pays is death, but the gift God gives is everlasting life by Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. 6:23) "As for the dead, they are conscious of nothing at all." (Eccl. 9:5) "All that your hand finds to do, do with your very power, for there is no work nor devising nor knowledge nor wisdom in Sheol [hell, "Douay Version"], the place to which you are going."—Eccl. 9:10.



Some people say,
'God cursed
the black race.'



As long as
there are people
there will be wars.
Is this really so?



The earth will
one day
be burned up.

So what does a comparison of some commonly held beliefs with the Bible reveal? That the Bible has been misrepresented. Do not, therefore, allow yourself to be prejudiced against the Bible on the basis of what others say about it or how those professing to follow it act. Why not see for yourself whether its guidance can point you to a happier life now and to a marvelous future?

The man Noah pronounced a prophetic curse on his grandson Canaan, but no divine curse was ever pronounced upon the black race. (Gen. 9:25) The Bible opposes feelings of tribal, national and racial superiority. It says: "God is not partial, but in every nation the man that fears him and works righteousness is acceptable to him." (Acts 10:34, 35) "He made out of one man every nation of men."—Acts 17:26.

"[God] will certainly render judgment among the nations and set matters straight respecting many peoples. And they will have to beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning shears. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, neither will they learn war anymore." (Isa. 2:4) "Glory in the heights above to God, and upon earth peace among men of goodwill."—Luke 2:14.

"This is what Jehovah has said, the Creator of the heavens, He the true God, the Former of the earth and the Maker of it, He the One who firmly established it, who did not create it simply for nothing, who formed it even to be inhabited." (Isa. 45:18) God will "bring to ruin those ruining the earth." (Rev. 11:18) "The heavens and the earth that are now are stored up for fire and are being reserved to the day of judgment and of destruction of the ungodly men."—2 Pet. 3:7.

FOR a guide to be realistic, not only must it be free of myths or false concepts, but it must also provide sound thinking on the affairs and problems we face. On this point, let us compare what people think and forecast for the future with what the Bible says.

Despite threats of continuing inflation, unemployment and numerous international problems, many people believe that things will get better. They see long-range solutions to political differences, racial and nationalistic disputes, food shortages and the energy crisis. They believe that the world is on the threshold of peace and security.

A national magazine recently expressed the opinion that "all in all, it's a hopeful outlook for [the] U.S. as it enters a period of peace. . . . History suggests [that the] stage is being set for economic growth, happier times for the country. [The] U.S. has come out of troubles stronger in the past, will again."

Of the world outlook, George W. Shepherd, Jr., writes in *The Christian Century*: "The real world . . . is one in which peace can be built, painfully, only on the basis of international agreement, giving full recognition to the rights and interests of the majority of the nations, in particular those of the Third World. The only framework we have within which such an agreement can possibly be made to work is the United Nations. That is why we are seeing a revival of that body, along with the development of what might be called new 'pacific action' measures for peace."

But what appeal do we see world leaders making to maintain the people's hope

for a continuation of present systems or a "better world"? Do they not make the same promises that have been made for centuries? Has not every past world power called attention to its glory and power, leading the people to feel that it was the hope of the world? But where is the glory of those powers now? Is not the same appeal made today? And even though many people have lost faith in their lead-

ers, for lack of a better hope they feel that somehow a man may come along who can straighten matters out. Is this realistic?

An example of a human "prophetic" forecast for this world is the statement by the late Walter Lippmann,

IS THE



REALISTIC?

as recorded in *The World Book Encyclopedia*: "When we look beneath the surface, we shall see that there is underway what we may call the Great Revolution, and it is upon this Great Revolution that we must rely to bring about peace and stability on which eventually the universal society can flourish.

" . . . What is the Great Revolution? It is a radical change in the human condition. It is a product of man's advancing knowledge, his knowledge of how to control the material conditions of his life on earth."

However, there are some persons who see such "prophecies" as only a dream. *U.S. News & World Report* of May 5, 1975, said: "You hear less and less talk these days of 'a new world order.' Hardly sur-

prising. More and more, the world seems to be limited to regional groupings, often competitive, seldom co-operative. Even these appear increasingly troubled, torn by nationalism, insecure."

The Bible's Viewpoint—Is It Realistic?

The Bible's viewpoint, on the other hand, is not confusing or vacillating. It points out why man's plans fail and why each decade brings more severe problems. As God's inspired Word, it tells us that humanity's distress is due to imperfection on the part of all mankind. (Rom. 5:12) The Bible says: "It does not belong to man who is walking even to direct his step." (Jer. 10:23) Also the Bible informs us that God's guidance could help right now, even in this imperfect world, if men would follow it. (Prov. 2:6-9) But men, particularly world leaders, refuse to conform their course to Bible principles, and as a consequence they reap disorder and corruption. Why? Basically, because they want sovereignty independent of God. They do not want to acknowledge God as supreme Counselor and King.—Acts 4:24-26; Rev. 17:12-14.

Yes, the Bible realistically gets at the root of mankind's problems. It gives a sound view of the present condition and why it exists. What about the future? Does the Bible prophesy doomsday for mankind, or does it hold out a cheerful hope?

A Realistic View of the Future?

For answer, let us look at the prophecy that Jesus gave his disciples who had asked: "What will be the sign of your presence and of the conclusion of the system of things?" (Matt. 24:3) Jesus, by inspiration, accurately described our present time, saying: "Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom, and there will be food shortages and earth-

quakes in one place after another. All these things are a beginning of pangs of distress."—Matt. 24:7, 8.

People living in this generation have seen the fulfillment of this prophecy, since 1914. Did not this year mark a "beginning of pangs of distress" different from past wars and food shortages? James Cameron, in his book entitled "1914," says: "In the year 1914 the world, as it was known and accepted then, came to an end. Far more than any year before or since was this the punctuation-mark of the twentieth century."

How was this so? Because the wars this generation has seen were not ordinary wars. They have been well labeled "World Wars." Also Jesus said, additionally, that nations would be 'in anguish, not knowing the way out' and that men would 'become faint out of fear and expectation of the things coming on the inhabited earth.' These and many other things that Jesus prophesied in Matthew chapter 24, Mark chapter 13, and Luke chapters 17 and 21 *are happening*, and *they are peculiar to our generation*. Jesus also foretold that "this generation [experiencing these things] will by no means pass away until all things occur."—Luke 21:32.

What are the "all things" that are to occur in the one generation? These include the end of this present man-made system of things, not the literal earth and all mankind upon it. It means deliverance from the corrupt, oppressive, polluted condition in which mankind now finds itself. Jesus said to those who want to do the right thing and who look with faith into the Bible: "As these things start to occur, raise yourselves erect and lift your heads up, because your deliverance is getting near." (Luke 21:28) The Bible, therefore, does not have a gloomy "doomsday" outlook but a bright one, for those who desire righteousness and peace. It foretells gloom

only for those who selfishly hold on to the corrupt things of this failing system, and who refuse to recognize God's sovereignty. —2 Thess. 1:6-8.

Aside from these evidences—the anguish of nations and the fear of the things coming upon the earth that world leaders are suffering, and the increase in crime, pollution, immorality and danger of nuclear warfare—what proof do we have that the end of this system of things is near? How can we know that it cannot be much longer, or that it will not be put off into future centuries, as some say?

Final World Power Now in Existence

The Bible gives us a record, either actual or prophetic, of seven world powers during mankind's history. These are not small, insignificant powers, but *powers that had the greatest influence* during their term of existence. Each, during its time, was the Number One Power with which the nations had to reckon. These were: Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome and the Anglo-American World Power. The prophecy of the Bible book of Daniel accurately spoke of the powers of Daniel's own day, namely, Babylon and Medo-Persia, then foretold the three to follow. The prophecy called the Medo-Persian and the Grecian World Powers by name and described the following two. What did Daniel's prophecy have to say about them?

In the vision that God gave him, Daniel saw four huge beasts, representing or picturing "kings." (Dan. 7:17) These symbolic beasts were a lion (Babylon), a bear (Medo-Persia) and a leopard (Greece), followed by a fearsome beast with teeth of iron, different from all the others, and having ten horns. Out of this beast another "king," a small horn, grew to become prominent, speaking grandiose words. This

final horn faced judgment, not inflicted by another world power, but a judgment directly administered by the Almighty God. The terrible beast was the Roman World Power and the horn growing out of it was the Seventh World Power, which would constitute the *last one on earth*. That is the Anglo-American World Power. —Dan. 7:2-12; compare Daniel 8:20-22.

If we truly are at the time of the end of this system of things, it is of the utmost importance and urgency. It means that we are at the time for the rule of the Messianic kingdom over this earth. So that we may have ample proof, with no doubts, God has provided for us, in the last book of the Bible, full assurance of the truthfulness of Daniel's prophecy and the nearness of Messiah's millennial rule of righteousness over the earth. The apostle John, who lived during the rule of the Sixth World Power, the Roman Empire, records the vision that God gave him. He writes: "There are seven kings: five have fallen [before John's time], one is [the Roman], the other has not yet arrived, but when he does arrive he must remain a short while."—Rev. 17:10.

The American part of the Seventh World Power has remained only about 200 years—a short time in world history. Intensifying the nearness of the end, John also speaks of an EIGHTH king. But this king is of very short duration, 'springing from the seven' and being concurrent with the Seventh World Power. This "king" would be a composite government made up of features of the seven world powers—a world alliance. It "goes off into destruction" along with the Seventh World Power. The Bible, therefore, lists no world power as surviving the seventh. It is the end. —Rev. 17:11.

Is the Bible realistic, then, when it foretold world conditions exactly as we see them today, when it enables us to locate

where we are in the stream of history—when it helps us to see that a time of deliverance is near? Certainly the Bible is frank in its identification of the world powers. And it shows us that the efforts of men cannot solve the problems the world now faces, so as to bring happiness to the people. The Bible is realistic also in saying that the cry of “peace and security” by men’s efforts is a false comfort that will

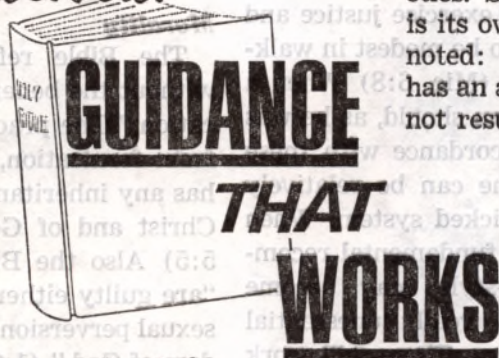
immediately precede the destruction of man-made systems.—1 Thess. 5:3.

Yes, the Bible is more realistic than the promises of politicians, economic experts or even clergymen. It shows why the world’s problems exist and what is actually ahead. But can it give advice for day-to-day living that is practical and will help people *now*? Let us examine this matter.

Practical

MANY honest-hearted people today recognize that they need help in dealing with their problems. A prominent Florida medical doctor who also is a psychiatrist said: “A high percentage of people are suffering from emotional disturbance as a result of the modern life-style. They think they can deal with drugs, sexual promiscuity, pressures from living beyond their means, changing moral values and the breakdown in family life. But they can’t handle it.” Where, then, can people find the guidance that they so much need?

Noting the practicality of the Bible, statesman Bernard Baruch once observed: “The Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount are still our best guides.” Why did he say that? Let us consider briefly some principles stated in the famous Sermon on the Mount. Jesus there said of man’s needs: “Never be anxious and say, ‘What are we to eat?’ or, ‘What are we to drink?’ or, ‘What are we to put on?’ . . . For your heavenly Father knows you need all these things. . . . So, never be anxious about the next day, for the next



day will have its own anxieties. Sufficient for each day is its own badness.” Later, he noted: “Even when a person has an abundance his life does not result from the things he possesses.”—Matt. 6:31-34; Luke 12:15.

Here is stressed man’s normal concern for the need of food, clothing and shelter. However, the materialistic world often emphasizes, not the *needs*, but the *wants* of man. Commercialism keeps whipping up the desire for luxuries, so that a person can never be satisfied with what he has. Contentment, therefore, does not come to those whose means are great, but to those whose desires are few. Mankind should put in proper perspective what their needs really are and appreciate the practical guidance required to achieve them.

Bible Guidance Practical Today

Although the Bible was written centuries ago, its guidance is still practical today. Time has changed many things, but human nature has not changed. Humans continue to be confronted with the same problems as their predecessors, except that today these problems are much greater,

more far-reaching. As *The World Book Encyclopedia* notes: "In spite of his scientific and technological progress, man has not been so successful in dealing with human problems." The only reliable solution to them is found in the Bible. "Who is wise? He will both observe these things and show himself attentive toward Jehovah's acts of loving-kindness."—Ps. 107:43.

A Simplified Life a Desirable Thing

Simplicity of life is what God recommends. "He has told you, O earthling man, what is good. And what is Jehovah asking back from you but to exercise justice and to love kindness and to be modest in walking with your God?" (Mic. 6:8) When a person lives as a human should, as he was created to live, in accordance with these practical guidelines, he can be relatively happy even in this wicked system. When he goes beyond these fundamental recommendations, his life-style may become complicated by many really unessential and unimportant things. These will work to his harm.

Heavy debts, desire for unnecessary things, competition for prestige or position, struggling for social status, trying to live by moral standards that violate the conscience—all these things are contributing to a "mixed-up" society that is suffering from unhappiness, frustration, strife and even suicide. Many people are seeking help from doctors or psychiatrists and are resorting to drugs to relieve tension and to counsel that many times makes the situation worse.

If there were no other proofs of its authenticity and practicality available, the Bible's righteous principles and moral standards would alone set it apart as a product of the divine mind. Its practicality extends to every phase of daily living. No

other book gives us such a rational view of the origin of all things, particularly the origin of mankind, and of the Creator's purpose toward earth and man. Note how its counsel, if applied, would be effective.

Today, there are great difficulties because of racism and nationalism. The Bible supports no such ideologies, but clearly states that God "made out of one man every nation of men, to dwell upon the entire surface of the earth." (Acts 17:26) Recognition of this fact would eliminate many serious problems.

Morality

The Bible refers to sexual relations without the benefit of marriage as "fornication." The practical guidance is to "flee from fornication," for "no fornicator . . . has any inheritance in the kingdom of the Christ and of God." (1 Cor. 6:18; Eph. 5:5) Also the Bible says that none who "are guilty either of adultery or of homosexual perversion . . . will possess the kingdom of God." (1 Cor. 6:9, 10, *New English Bible*) And how much unhappiness, hatred and disease could be eliminated by heeding this Bible advice!—Rom. 1:24-27.

Marriage and Family Life

On counsel relating to marriage, God's Word recommends: "Let wives be in subjection to their husbands as to the Lord." "Husbands ought to be loving their wives as their own bodies." "Children, be obedient to your parents in union with the Lord, for this is righteous."—Eph. 5:22, 28; 6:1.

The importance of the united family cannot be overstressed. The Bible devotes much space to counsel on the aspects of husband-wife relations, child training and discipline and family happiness. How practical is such counsel? Dr. Charles W.

Socarides, writing in an article "Homosexuality Is a Disorder, Not a Way of Life," refers to a book written by Dr. Irving Bieber entitled "Homosexuality: A Psychoanalytic Study of Male Homosexuals." In a report on 106 male homosexuals and 100 male heterosexuals, it was observed that parents of homosexuals frequently were a close-binding, overly intimate mother and a hostile, detached father.

Dr. Socarides goes on to say: "It is my conviction that homosexuality is caused by the failure of a human being to complete the separation-individuation phase of early childhood, normally achieved by age three, which is decisive for gender identity. Such failure results in a deficit in masculinity for boys, with a corresponding intensification and continuation of the primary feminine identification with the mother. Thus begins the course of homosexual development."

Homosexuality is only one of the many bad fruits partially resulting from refusal to recognize the proper places of husband and wife, father and mother, and children in the family unit. How can there be proper child guidance where family unity, trust, confidence and happiness have disappeared? Broken homes, or homes where there is no communication or loving relationship, where order and discipline are lacking, are a factor producing all forms of crime. Can anyone truly say that the ignoring of Bible instructions on family life has produced good results?

Bad Associations

Though in many cases bad tendencies find their beginning in the family background, there are, of course, other factors that cause the spread of moral perversions. Reading pornographic literature is a form

of mental association with the authors of these publications. Also actual association with others of low morals draws those not initially inclined in that direction, bringing them into the low sink of debauchery. (1 Pet. 4:4) The Bible counsels to think on good things and warns that "bad associations spoil useful habits." (1 Cor. 15:33; Phil. 4:8) We cannot avoid bad practices if we make our "friends" those who engage in bad practices and dealings. In very straightforward terms the Bible says: "He that is walking with wise persons will become wise, but he that is having dealings with the stupid ones will fare badly." (Prov. 13:20) Is this not good, sound, practical advice?

Business Dealings

The Bible gives counsel even in the field of business dealings. It states the principle: "Two sorts of weights and two sorts of ephah measures [one for buying and one for selling]—they are both of them together something detestable to Jehovah,"



**Honesty in
business dealings
makes happy customers**

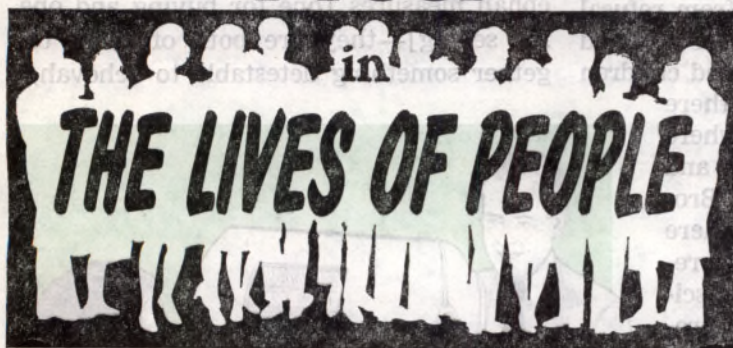
and, "Do not rob the lowly one because he is lowly." (Prov. 20:10; 22:22) Furthermore, it condemns the attitude of those who, because they do not want to work, adopt the slogan, "Soak the rich." The Bible principle is that impartiality should be practiced toward rich and poor alike: "You must not treat the lowly with partiality, and you must not prefer the person of a great one."—Lev. 19:15.

The practical instruction of the entire Bible on human relations can be summed up in Jesus' words: "All things, therefore, that you want men to do to you, you also must likewise do to them; this, in fact, is what the Law and the Prophets mean." (Matt. 7:12) If this principle were followed, think what it would mean to the world! How much happier all would be!

Guidance Essential for Happiness

It is obvious that the Bible's counsel has not been applied by the majority of people, though many possess Bibles and some read them. Merely this, or even having a religion, is not sufficient. Bible principles must be applied if a person wants happiness. And, though some may be skeptical, the Bible's counsel *can* be applied successfully despite the fact that we are living in a corrupt system of things. By doing so now, a person can be assured of improvement in the quality of his life, as the Scriptures say: "Godly devotion is beneficial for all things, as it holds promise of the life now and that which is to come." (1 Tim. 4:8) This is not mere theory, but fact, as abundant proof in the lives of people thoroughly and also convincingly demonstrates.

Proof



IN THIS mixed-up world it is difficult for a person to simplify his life and to find peace of mind and happiness. Do the Bible's principles and counsel, if put into practice, *actually accomplish* these things? Certainly if a good thing is really practiced it should produce concrete results that are satisfying. Does proof exist that the Bible can move people to make the changes necessary for a happy life? Can it help people no matter what their position

in life and their circumstances may be?

Yes, it can. There are now at least two million people in the world who really study the Bible and who do their best to apply its counsel in every phase of their lives. They have found that making the Bible their sole guide has led them into useful, productive lives. These people are known as Jehovah's witnesses. The majority among them are people who have lived normal, law-abiding lives, though some in the past lived lawlessly and immorally. There are former churchgoers and those who were not religious, people from families both united and broken. But they all had one thing in common: They felt the need of emotional security and desired to accomplish something worth while and permanent in their lives. God has regard for any who

long for a happy life, want to do what is right, to learn of him and serve him. This is proved by the following experiences.

Psychologist Sees Bible Help a Family



The Bible can accomplish much to help people, even whole families. Observing this truth in action surprised and convinced a man in the psychology field. He says:

"Encouraged by my father, I pursued a college career. Upon completing my education as a psychology major, I began working in the correctional field. This brought me a sense of fulfillment, as I felt that I was really helping people.

"After a number of years, however, I began to see that the methods used did not change youths very much. True, there were surface changes. But there was little lasting personal or social change. This disturbed me greatly. The application of what I had spent years in learning did not really have much of an impact for good."

In his capacity as supervisor of juvenile delinquents on parole, he handled one case that really caused him to think. This involved a family with three children, all of whom were in difficulty. There was a nine-month break in his caring for the case, which he considered to be hopeless. But when he again saw this family, he noted a remarkable change. The home that had been very dirty and disorderly was now neat and clean. The children were dressed presentably and seemed more secure. What had been responsible for this amazing change? The mother had begun studying the Bible with Jehovah's witnesses and was applying its principles to family life. Seeing this remarkable transformation caused him to wonder whether there was not

something that could bring better results than he could with his training.

Another factor that became of great concern to him was the deterioration in world conditions and the inability of the agency with which he was working to cope with social problems. He notes:

"The agency tried various means to bring about good results. Case loads were reduced, new methods were tried. Past techniques were revived and given new labels. But all these efforts seemed fruitless."

As a consequence, this man began to look for something better. He tried reading the Bible but did not gain much understanding. His mother, who had become one of Jehovah's witnesses when he started his college training, had tried to explain things to him previously, but he did not take a real interest in what she said. Finally, though, he went to a Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses and then began a serious study of the Bible. He also noted young people, among them some former drug users and delinquents who had changed their outlook and personality and had become responsible, moral individuals. Since that time he has come to appreciate, even in his own case, that application of Bible principles can produce real personality changes, not just surface changes.

Prisoner Changes from Violent Life



A similar case was reported in the South Middlesex (Massachusetts) *News* of May 11, 1975. Under the heading "Inmate Pays Religious Debt," the report is given of a middle-aged prisoner.

This man was placed in a cell with a prisoner who had become one of Jehovah's

witnesses. As a Catholic, the man relates: 'Everything that the Witness was saying was against whatever I'd been taught, but eventually I began to recognize that Jehovah's witnesses answer all the contradictions.' Now this former criminal says that he has been given a solid foundation and goals, "which I never had before in my life." Out on a work-release program, he has been helping the Witnesses to build a Kingdom Hall in Framingham, Massachusetts. His Bible knowledge, he says, has helped him to reverse "a whole trend of violence" in his family.

His psychologist backs him up, saying that his patient has shifted from an "amoral, destructive person, to one with a conscience." "I attribute this solely to his experience with the Witnesses, that he's made these changes. They've been responsible for a social re-education of tremendous power and impact, over the last two and a half years. There's absolutely no way this guy could have carried himself this far through therapy. I've seen him shift away from an amoral, destructive attitude to a solid sense of responsibility, which is pretty difficult."

The psychologist remarked that though people "may very well wonder if this will last," especially with a person of this man's background for whom "this is a tremendously potent type thing," he is quite sure this is a permanent change. He added: 'Of course, there is no document on this, and no guarantee, but I believe he has found a whole social reference group that has altered his life.'

Truly the Bible's admonition, when applied, can have a wholesome impact on the life of an individual regardless of his background. Even persons who have lived a good moral life and who get a measure of satisfaction from their work find that only the Bible with its better hope and high principles can give a full, happy life.

Bible Education Even Better than Public Health Education

Consider the experience of a woman in New York city. She had pursued a life of devotion to public health education, with a view to helping her fellowman. This was a commendable pursuit, and she still follows the nursing profession. Eventually, however, the time came when she began to recognize that more than her career was needed to enjoy full happiness and real satisfaction. But there were some obstacles standing in the way of her accepting the Bible as the key to finding what was missing in her life. She relates the following:

"I was not a religious person. In fact, I had serious questions about the existence of God. I just could not understand why babies died, whereas old people suffering from crippling diseases, and helpless paralytics, continued living. Still, my profession, public health nursing and education, brought me some satisfaction.

"My work required some activity in community affairs. I recall that on one occasion I visited a public school and noted the dangerous, rickety condition of the wooden steps. I represented the Public Health Nursing Service on a committee composed of business people, doctors, lawyers and teachers, organized to help the community deal with its problems. This committee drew up a letter to the Board of Education recommending that something be done to remedy this dangerous condition of the dilapidated school. Three years passed, but nothing was done. Our



committee wrote three letters during this time, in each instance receiving acknowledgment and commendation for our interest in the community. Nevertheless, the dangerous situation remained.

"I was also disgusted with the status system, based on cultural biases. When I mentioned these matters to my brother, who was one of Jehovah's witnesses, he pointed out that even the hands of officials are tied. 'The system,' he said, 'keeps them from following through on their better motives.' This got me to thinking.

"My brother gave me some Bible literature. Though I had no real interest, I began to look into it, only to find fault. At times I became upset about what I read. Then I would check the statements with my Bible and would find them to be true. So I decided that it would be better to read the Bible first before arguing.

"In time I came to appreciate that the Bible is dependable and is inspired of God. What impressed me particularly was Bible prophecy. It amazed me to see that what God had said even centuries in advance was fulfilled. Also, the meaning of the word 'sin' helped me to see just where I stood. I never thought of myself as a wicked person. I wasn't a liar, a thief or an adulteress. The label 'sinner' seemed fatal to me. But when I learned that 'sin' in the original languages of the Bible means 'to miss the mark,' I could understand. Because, like everyone else, I knew that I had shortcomings.

"Then when I learned that we are living in the last days of this old system and that our heavenly Father purposes to restore the human family to perfect health on a cleansed earth, beginning in the near future—my, this would be the best welfare program ever! Now, while still helping others physically, I can also help them spiritually."

Happiness in Marriage



The contrast between life with and without Biblical guidance and the corresponding effect on family life are well illustrated in the case of a young man who served in the United States Air Force.

While in the Air Force this man began living a life of immorality and in time felt forced to get married to a girl who was pregnant with his child. Even then he did not accept his responsibility as husband and father but sent his wife back home to her mother and did not remain faithful to her. Eventually the first marriage ended in divorce and his former wife remarried.

Upon his discharge from the military, this man returned home to live with his father, mother and brother. At the time they were studying the Bible with Jehovah's witnesses. So he, too, began to study and to progress in living by the Bible. Eventually he remarried, as he was Scripturally free to do. Contrasting the present with the past, he relates:

"In the past I lacked respect for women. By the way I lived, I brought much unhappiness to myself and others, especially to my first wife. After starting to live by the Bible, I could see that applying its principles was the best way to live. By treating my second wife in a Christian way, loving her as I do myself, I have found real happiness in marriage. Our marriage of ten years has been comparatively without problems. When consulted by others about marital problems, I direct them to what the Bible says. I know from personal experience that applying its counsel really works. On the other hand, those

who disregard it, knowingly or unknowingly, experience much unhappiness and heartache."

Saved from Suicide

The guidance provided by the Bible can even save a person from a state of utter despair and give him a life of purpose. This was the experience of a youth in the western part of the United States.



At the age of twelve this boy lost his father in death. His mother was an alcoholic and therefore unable to give him much parental guidance. This left him feeling very insecure. His association with other teen-agers led to his starting to drink heavily, to smoke marijuana and eventually to take barbiturates. All of this contributed to increased depression. He developed an inferiority complex and found life very difficult.

Then, at the age of seventeen, he began seeking help through religion. During the vacation period he would go to the Catholic church morning, noon and night, spending several hours there each day. He prayed extensively and started reading the Bible. He found the Psalms and the book of Proverbs very helpful and refreshing. Nevertheless, despite his earnest efforts and prayer, he felt that he was making little headway.

One night when he was walking home from church, he was extremely depressed. He prayed and then, at about 11:30 p.m., called his sister-in-law, telling her that he was so depressed that he was ready to take his life. Not knowing just what to say, his sister-in-law told him to wait and she would call back. She quickly phoned a fellow worker, one of Jehovah's witnesses,

who had been very helpful to her in coping with problems.

This Witness then called him up and arrangements were made that very night to get together with him at the home of his sister-in-law. About 11:45 p.m. the Witness and her teen-age son arrived to pick him up by car. The apparent closeness of the mother and son as well as their conduct impressed him very much. For three hours thereafter they discussed such questions as, Where are the dead? and, Why has God permitted wickedness? The youth was encouraged to learn that, according to Bible prophecy, the present system is in its "last days" and will soon be replaced by a righteous new system. He was thrilled to know that there was a possibility of his not having to wait to grow old and die before being reunited with his father. He might actually have the opportunity of surviving the end of this system and being able to welcome back his father from the dead.

Asked whether he would like to study the Bible, he thought for a moment. What he had heard had really helped him. So he agreed, feeling that even greater good would result from a regular Bible study. That indeed proved to be the case. Study of the Scriptures and applying them gave him a goal in life and a solid hope for the future. He was able to change his whole way of thinking. His spirit changed from that of sadness and depression to deep-seated joy. Today he uses his time wisely in aiding others to learn about the excellent guidance the Bible contains.

As in the above experiences, Jehovah's witnesses in all parts of the earth have found that, to the extent that they have followed the Bible, their lives have been happy. There are problems, of course, not all perfectly solvable. But the Bible's counsel enables one to cope with the problems so that one's life is not upset.

AN APPEAL

BEYOND THE HERE AND NOW

WHAT benefit do I get now? This is often the response when a person is presented a new idea. And it is indeed natural to desire good things now. At the same time we cannot afford to ignore the future. Certainly a guide to life would be sadly lacking if it did not hold out a hope or goal for the future. For, regardless of what a person has now, his outlook on the future has a strong influence on his present course.

The Bible does provide a sound hope for the future, a goal toward which to work. The apostle Paul, after nearly thirty years of living by Christian principles, said: "Godly devotion is beneficial for all things, as it holds promise of the life now and *that which is to come.*"—1 Tim. 4:8.

In the preceding article you have read the experiences of people who are getting benefits now because they changed their way of living. Did they do this by merely deciding to change and then following through? No. They saw that what they were doing was not good or was not bringing them the satisfactory life that they desired. They wanted some kind of change. But they did not know what adjustments they had to make, or how to make them. In some instances they observed Jehovah's witnesses and saw that the Witnesses were happy and had altered their lives in a way that was beneficial. But they were unable to make such adjustments by their own

will and strength. They had to study the Bible and see God's purpose toward humankind. They needed help from God and from other Christians in order to understand in their hearts *why* they should make changes and to realize that they would receive God's help to do so. They saw also that there were real benefits for themselves and their families. They needed a purpose in life, and learned that this purpose had to be patterned according to God's purpose.

Yes, these sincere persons found that the things they needed to do for a better life now meant learning to live as the Creator made man to live—in peace with his family and with his neighbor, fearing and serving God, who only can guide one in the right way. The Bible says: "He has told you, O earthling man, what is good. And what is Jehovah asking back from you but to exercise justice and to love kindness and to be modest in walking with your God?" (Mic. 6:8) Also they saw that godly devotion holds promise of the life "*which is to come.*"

Health Needed for Complete Happiness

What do we need in order to be happy in a life ahead? Probably you will think first of good health. Without it, there is no enjoyment. How will this be provided in 'the life to come'?

The Bible gives us assurance that good

health will be the happy lot of the people when God's kingdom alone rules the earth. Even now, obedience to God's principles and commands helps a person to avoid many tensions and diseases that tear down one's health. The Bible's good sayings "are life to those finding them and health to all their flesh." (Prov. 4:22) The Bible's teachings are "healthful words," not only in a spiritual sense, but also physically, because spiritual welfare is essential to physical health.—2 Tim. 1:13; 4:3.

But humans also need actual *physical healing* before they can come to perfection of health and vigor. Right living in itself will not bring such a curing of the body. Something more is needed. How will this healing be provided?

Man cannot heal himself, because he is imperfect by inheritance. (Ps. 51:5) He does things that are not right, especially when he is under pressure. This is because all are sinners, even those who do not want to do wrong. The Bible word used for sin actually means "to miss the mark." Man cannot lift himself by his own bootstraps. Nor can one man rescue another, because all are in the same "mire" of imperfection that eventually results in death. The psalmist wrote that, regardless of a person's status—rich, wise or powerful—"not one of them can by any means redeem even a brother, nor give to God a ransom for him; . . . that he should still live forever and not see the pit."—Ps. 49:6-9.

Therefore, help has to come from God. Sickness is linked, in the Bible, with sin, and healing is related to forgiveness. King David realized mankind's situation and he wrote to Israel: "Bless Jehovah, O my soul, and do not forget all his doings, him who is forgiving all your error, who is healing all your maladies." (Ps. 103:2, 3; compare

Luke 5:18-25.) We have to wait on this help if we wish to live in perfect health. When will this healing come? During the thousand-year reign of God's Son, Jesus Christ. All evidences indicate that the beginning of this reign is very near at hand.—Matt. 24:32-34.

This is something to look forward to—a real goal for our lives—a real incentive to learn about God's will for us and to follow it. But, you may ask, what guarantee do we have that God will do these things for us? Note, now, how thoroughly the Bible explains, as a solid basis for our faith, how carefully God has arranged for the healing and rehabilitation of mankind.

How God Arranged for Mankind's Healing

Jehovah God loves that which he has created, just as a father loves his sons. Jesus, when on earth, said: "God loved the world so much that he gave his only-begotten Son, in order that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) This Son originally lived with his Father in heaven from a time before the earth was created. (John 1:1; Rev. 3:14) When he was on earth he alluded to his prehuman existence when he asked God in prayer: "Father, glorify me alongside yourself with the glory that I had alongside you before the world was."—John 17:5.

Think what it cost God to send his Son to earth, transferring his life to the womb of a Jewish girl, so that he would be born a man, to live among an imperfect, sinful people! And think of the obedience of the Son of God and his love for God in giving up heavenly riches, to be treated on earth worse than a slave and finally to die an

ignominious death. (1 Pet. 2:21-25) The apostle Paul wrote about what Jesus did: "Although he was existing in God's form, [he] gave no consideration to a seizure, namely, that he should be equal to God. No, but he emptied himself and took a slave's form and came to be in the likeness of men. More than that, when he found himself in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient as far as death, yes, death on a torture stake." —Phil. 2:6-8.

Why was his death necessary as the means to deliver mankind from death? Because, not being the father of the human race, he was not the head of the human family. Neither was he the owner of humankind. The human race belonged to Jehovah God. God, in maintaining his own righteous sovereign rule over the universe, could not condone sin or overlook it. He could not, as many governments and judges do today, be letting criminals "get by" with their crimes, thereby weakening the moral fiber of the nation. There had to be a sacrifice, a ransom payment as a purchase price. That price had to be a perfect human life, just as mankind's forefather Adam had had life but had forfeited it by sinning. His offspring were sold, without their consent, into slavery to sin and death. (Rom. 7:14; 8:20) Jesus Christ, becoming a man, had that necessary purchase price, which he gave. Jesus therefore had to be-

come a second or "last Adam," so that he could rightly and legally become a life-giver to them. (1 Cor. 15:45) Thus the scales of justice were balanced. God maintained perfect justice and righteousness in government while providing mercy and opportunity for helpless humankind.—Rom. 3:23-26.

Jesus Christ is now mankind's Purchaser. Every one of the human race belongs to him, to be dealt with according to the will of God. To Christ, who bought all persons with his own lifeblood, all are precious. Though a person may feel insignificant, his life is very important in Christ's eyes. He will not allow one deserving person to lose out on life. Therefore we can be assured of the kindest, most fatherly treatment under his Kingdom rule. (1 Pet. 1:18, 19; compare Luke 15:4-10.) You can, accordingly, be absolutely sure of receiving right,



God guarantees that the entire earth will become a paradise. Is this not incentive for you to learn about God's will and purpose?

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- **What Is This Thing Called Death?**
- **Games Animals Play.**
- **What Honor Is Due Parents?**

just, merciful help, including healing of all your sicknesses, if you accept and abide by God's universal principles of love and obedience to him and love for your fellowman.—Matt. 22:37-40; Rom. 13:8-10.

How do we know that Christ can do this? Well, first, he is again alive, having been resurrected by his Father, Jehovah God. (Acts 2:32) And not only does he own the human race by right of purchase, but also he has the power to do everything necessary for them—things that he could not do while remaining on earth. The apostle Paul writes: "For this very reason [his obedience to death] . . . God exalted him to a superior position and kindly gave him the name that is above every other name, so that in the name of Jesus every knee should bend of those in heaven and those on earth and those under the ground." —Phil. 2:9, 10.

Christ's resurrection is therefore a foundation for faith—a guarantee that we will get help. More than that, it is also a guarantee that "those under the ground," those dead in their graves, will receive a resurrection. (Acts 17:31) Whether their past life was good or bad, they will have opportunity to learn of the ransom provision, to take hold of it and be obedient during the righteous rule of the Kingdom. (Acts 24:15) They can eventually reach perfection

and, as with the rest of obedient mankind, become members of the family of God. —Rom. 8:21.

A Righteous "New Earth"

Perhaps we cannot fully grasp what it would mean to become children of God. Nevertheless, we find enough in the Bible to give us a glimpse of how grand this will be. Think of living on a beautified earth free of pollution, sickness, crime, hatred, racial tension and wars. Imagine the unadulterated enjoyment of the beauties of earth—majestic mountains, cool, refreshing forests, flower-decked gardens, sparkling streams and rivers and unpoluted oceans. These, the Holy Scriptures assure us, will constitute our permanent home.

But even more enjoyable will be the people—healthy, radiant, rehabilitated to perfection of mind, heart and body. To be happy, you will also need work for both your mind and your body. This means that the paradise earth will not be free from challenges to be met, though all anxieties and oppressive situations will be things of the past.

Men and women will carry out the command that was originally given to mankind, but which they failed to do. What was that? To "subdue" the earth and have in subjection the entire animal creation, on land and in the sea and air. In doing this, problems will be met that will tax and exercise their ability and ingenuity.

Animal and plant husbandry will delight many. Doing for others things that one has the talent and ability to do will be a delight. The earth is a tremendous scientific "laboratory," with enough secrets to keep men occupied in study and research

forever. Each discovery opens up new doorways, new vistas, with benefits for mankind. So from Jehovah God, the never-diminishing source of energy and wisdom, will come everlasting joyful occupation for men and women. (Isa. 40:28, 29) Life will really have purpose. And nothing will mar the security of that world, to dull the luster of living. As to the unpleasantness of the past, God's Word says: "The former things will not be called to mind, neither will they come up into the heart."—Isa. 65:17.

These descriptions are not merely hopeful dreams. The promises of these things are set down in the Bible, the Word of a God who "cannot lie." (Titus 1:2; Heb. 6:18) When Jesus was on earth he gave ample assurance that he can and will heal and bless mankind. (Mark 1:40, 41) He performed innumerable cures of *all* kinds of diseases. This he did, not dependent on the individual's faith, but by his own power and because of his love for men. His cures were instantaneous, not gradual treatment by medical means nor requiring special diets, surgery and hospitalization. Those healed were made "sound in health," able to work.—John 5:9.

Some were resurrected by Jesus, even though, in at least one case, bodily decomposition had set in. (John 11:38-44; Luke 7:11-17; Matt. 9:18-26) All these cured and resurrected people died, however. Their healing was not to perfection of body. Why? Because it was not yet time for Christ's kingdom to rule and to remove this present system of things. This must be done first. Otherwise the old system would be an obstacle to health, security, happy family life and peace. Christ's rule as with an iron rod will remove this system in what will be a "great tribulation" for this world. (Matt. 24:21) This

system of things, together with its injustices and oppressions, must pass off the scene altogether. This will clear the way for the uninterrupted rule of righteousness. Those truly living according to the Bible's guidance will survive. (Rev. 7:9, 14, 15) Accordingly, we should not fear this event, but look to it as deliverance for us.—1 John 2:17.

Then, as the closing chapters of the Bible tell us, the "river of water of life" will begin to flow to humankind. Drinking of this "water," which symbolizes God's provision for life through Christ, and eating "fruit" from the "trees" lining its banks, employing the "leaves of the trees . . . for the curing of the nations," the inhabitants of the earthly paradise will be raised up to perfection. (Rev. 22:1, 2; 7:15-17) Through this arrangement God "will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away." —Rev. 21:3, 4.

Even the very best, happiest, most productive life you could live now would be far short of life in God's new order. That life will last, not a mere seventy years, nor even a hundred or a thousand, but *forever*. Certainly godly devotion today has also an appeal for the future, holding a "promise of the life now and that which is to come." (1 Tim. 4:8) Only an almighty, all-wise and loving Creator could provide this. Jehovah God and his Son look forward with great anticipation to the time that He will do this. Does not this knowledge of God's good purpose toward mankind motivate you to adjust your life in harmony with the Bible, the guide that God has provided? If so, you, too, can be in eager expectation of the millennial rule of God's kingdom over the earth.

WHAT WILL YOU CHOOSE?

HISTORY testifies to the fact that the ideas and theories of men are always changing. What men say, therefore, simply cannot be depended upon to provide sound guidance for living. On the other hand, the Bible, as demonstrated during a period of many centuries, has provided safe guidance to those who have really followed it. In view of this, by which guide do you wish to live—by the Bible or by the changeable opinions and philosophies of men?

Do not allow yourself to become discouraged by the fact that few people today live by the Bible. Their failure is not due to its being too hard to follow the Bible's guidance. Note, for example, what God, through Moses, said to the Israelites about the Law given to them: "This commandment that I am commanding you today is not too difficult for you, nor is it far away. It is not in the heavens, so as to result in saying, 'Who will ascend for us into the heavens and get it for us, that he may let us hear it that we may do it?' Neither is it on the other side of the sea, so as to result in saying, 'Who will pass over for us to the other side of the sea and get it for us, that he may let us hear it that we may do it?' For the word is very near you, in your own mouth and in your own heart, that you may do it." —Deut. 30:11-14.

Not knowing the prophetic meaning that the Christian apostle Paul gives to those words of Moses at Romans 10:5-8, the Jews may have thought that all that was meant was this: The commandment was not beyond their ability to keep, so as to gain thereby God's mercy. By means of the commandment they could readily

understand what to do. For the Jews to learn what God wanted did not require scaling some heaven-high mountain, there to consult a representative of Jehovah God. No one had to travel to a distant land on the "other side" of the vast sea, perhaps to sit at the feet of some other man of God and take in instruction from him. The Law had been committed to writing and had been read in its entirety to the Israelites. Hence, it could be spoken of as being in their mouth and in their heart. The Israelites were able to make it a subject of their conversation, examination, reflection and heartfelt consideration.

Today, also, what God requires is not out of anyone's reach. There is no need to undertake an expensive journey with a view to receiving special training in making the best of life now. The guidance needed for happy family life and for maintaining good relationships with fellowmen may, in fact, be right in your own home in the form of a copy of the Bible. If you do not have a Bible, doubtless you would have no difficulty in getting a copy in a language that you can read. Translations of the Bible, the whole or in part, are available in languages spoken by 97 percent of earth's inhabitants.

If you are among the millions who have at least read parts of the Bible, you may, however, feel that it is not always easy to understand. This is true of some parts of the Holy Scriptures. But when the Bible deals with matters of daily living, it is clear and straightforward.

Nevertheless, a person should not limit himself to the portions of the Bible that

are easy to understand. Since, not just part, but all of it is "inspired of God and beneficial," a person certainly should want to understand as much of the Bible as he can.—2 Tim. 3:16.

Perhaps you, too, would like to understand the Holy Scriptures better. Your attitude may be like that of the educated official serving in the court of the Ethiopian queen Candace. While this official was reading from the Bible book of Isaiah, the Christian evangelizer Philip approached him and asked, "Do you really grasp what you are reading?" "How can I," the man replied, "unless someone explains it to me?"—Acts 8:30, 31, *New American Bible*.

If you feel this way, Jehovah's Christian witnesses in your area will be pleased to give the kind of help Philip gave to the Ethiopian official. At a time convenient to you, they will gladly study the Bible with you for about one hour each week, without any financial cost to you. Among the subjects you could consider are: "Who Is God?" "Why We Grow Old and Die," "Where Are the Dead?" "Why Has God Permitted Wickedness Until Our Day?" "How to Pray and Be Heard by God" and "Building a Happy Family Life." Might not a consideration of such subjects along with your Bible be of great help to you in gaining the benefits of a close relationship with God? Each year tens of thousands have been aided to do just that through weekly Bible discussions. Additionally, they have been enabled to find answers to problems that once perplexed them and to see that life can have real meaning and purpose.

As you grow in Bible knowledge, you will find that you can cope much better with problems that come up in life. In your own case you will see the fulfillment of the following words from the Bible: "If any one of you is lacking in wisdom, let him keep on asking God, for he gives generously to all and without reproaching; and it will be given him."—Jas. 1:5.

God-given wisdom to cope with trials and problems successfully is truly something desirable. Is that not the kind of wisdom you would like to have?

So if you are not presently studying the Bible with Jehovah's Christian witnesses, why not do that and find out what a marvelous guide for living the Holy Scriptures provide? We are confident that you, like millions of others—young and old, single people, married couples and family groups—will be glad that you acted on this encouragement. Please get in touch with Jehovah's Christian witnesses locally or write to the publishers of this magazine, expressing your wish to have a Bible study in your home or at another convenient location. Arrangements will then be made for someone to call on you.



Knowledge gained through Bible study can help you to cope with life's problems successfully



Vietnam's Catholics

◆ "Our country now is completely free and liberated . . . For the reunification of our country, I ask that you play your part." The urgings of a Vietnamese Communist? No, those of Bishop Khuat Van Tao of Haiphong in a letter to his people, as reported in the *Catholic Herald Citizen* of Superior, Wisconsin. "It is possible that a Catholic could become a minister in the government, for that is part of the ordinary life of a citizen," declares Archbishop Joseph Marie Trinh Van Can of Hanoi, the North Vietnamese delegate to Rome's 1974 Synod of Bishops. Archbishop Philippe Nguyen Kim Dien of Hue adds: "Peace has been established through bloodshed after 30 years of war against the invaders . . . We are sure that we can transform our country into a prosperous and happy one under the leadership of the Provisional Revolutionary Administration . . . The noble mission of Catholics is to cooperate with all people of good will to build a new world of fraternity and prosperity so as to make ready a new heaven and earth when Christ comes."

Greatest Empire

◆ Now that Portugal has relinquished most of her overseas landholdings, who has

the greatest "empire"? Denmark now has that distinction, though she "doesn't like moving into the number one imperial position just vacated," observes C. L. Sulzberger of the *New York Times*. The Danes control the Faroe Islands and earth's largest island, Greenland (almost 840,000 square miles). However, only about 50,000 persons inhabit Greenland.

Best for Babies

◆ One way that new mothers can cut costs in these hard economic times is to breast-feed the infant. *The Wall Street Journal* cites a recent study that "finds that bottle-feeding costs 50 cents to 75 cents a day, versus 17 cents to 21 cents to buy extra food for a lactating mother." Additionally, a British study found that four times as many bottle-fed babies as breast-fed ones were overweight. The mother's natural immunity to certain diseases, particularly diarrhea, is said to be transferred through her milk, and, in turn, "breast feeding may protect women against later breast cancer," notes the *Journal*.

Perilous Pilgrimage

◆ The traditional Hajj, or pilgrimage to Mecca, by Nigeria's Moslems is proving fatal for many. The Lagos *Daily Times* reports that "last year, 985

Nigerians were officially declared dead in Saudi Arabia." Poor accommodations, exposure, starvation and inadequate medical facilities were said to be responsible for many of the deaths. The *Daily Times* also blamed unscrupulous practices by some so-called "pilgrims' agents."

Earth Cooling?

◆ Recently there has been much discussion of earth's "cooling trend" since 1940. Some even speculate that a new "ice age" may be descending. However, two New Zealand scientists have raised a question seemingly omitted from most scientific reckoning on the subject: What about the southern hemisphere? They note that temperature trends there have been directly opposite to those in the northern hemisphere. New Zealand, for example, now enjoys the warmest period ever recorded. In the past forty years, her finest glaciers have receded many miles into the mountains.

The "Average Citizen"

◆ The vacation season traditionally leaves hotel keepers minus many of their furnishings. "People will steal anything, whether it's bolted down or not," complained a Western hotel official recently. An estimated three out of five patrons are guilty of theft, and "women are the absolute worst offenders," says one general manager. A maid remarked that "all too often, it's the harmless little gray-haired grandmothers who turn out to be the first-class scavengers." "There is no foreseeable solution," summarizes another disgusted innkeeper, "unless the honesty and integrity of the average citizen take a drastic jump."

Nonviolent Birth

◆ To enter the world as a kicking, screaming infant is not healthy emotionally, ac-

cording to French obstetrician Frederick Leboyer. He asserts that the screams are cries of terror. Glaring lights, loud voices, a jerk aloft by the feet and a slap on the bottom really shock a newborn baby emerging from the protective womb, declares Leboyer's book *Birth Without Violence*. He recommends complete silence in the delivery room, as well as darkness except for a small night-light. Resting the infant on mother's abdomen for several minutes as soon as it emerges is said to ease adjustment to the new environment. The umbilical cord is allowed to supply necessary oxygen until the newborn begins breathing normally without the customary slap. Then the cord can be cut, followed by a gentle rinse in body-temperature water, reportedly producing a relaxed, sometimes even smiling baby. Of

course, opinions vary on such matters.

"Empty Mouthing"

◆ When a member of Israel's Chief Rabbinate recently was offended by another rabbi during a parliamentary debate, the Rabbinate retaliated with a proclamation of *niddui*, or ostracism, against the offender. The "whole house of Israel" was ordered not to eat, drink, talk or pray with the exiled cleric. "But far from being ostracized," reports *Time* magazine, "he was soon receiving a stream of well-wishers." A member of parliament observed: "Declaring someone ostracized today is just empty mouthing."

Insect Amplifiers

◆ Have you ever wondered how the little tree cricket can pierce the air with such a loud sound? Four South African re-

searchers believe that they have discovered the secret. They observed a number of crickets "singing" with their bodies protruding through holes that they had gnawed in leaves. Apparently they were using the leaves as a sounding board for amplification, as the noise level was far lower when they "sang" without the leaves.

Highest Mountain

◆ Is Everest the highest mountain? Measured from sea level, yes. But recent satellite data calculations indicate that, measured from the center of the earth, Mt. Chimborazo of Ecuador is more than a mile higher—topping Everest by 7,058 feet. How so? The earth bulges several miles at its equator, boosting 20,556-foot Chimborazo higher above earth's center than 29,031-foot Everest, which lies quite a distance from the equator.

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