The WATCHTOWER

Announcing JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

FEBRUARY 15, 1963
Semimonthly

WALKING WITH GOD

TALKING WITH GOD

WHAT IS REQUIRED TO SURVIVE ARMAGEDDON?

CARRY YOUR OWN LOAD OF RESPONSIBILITY

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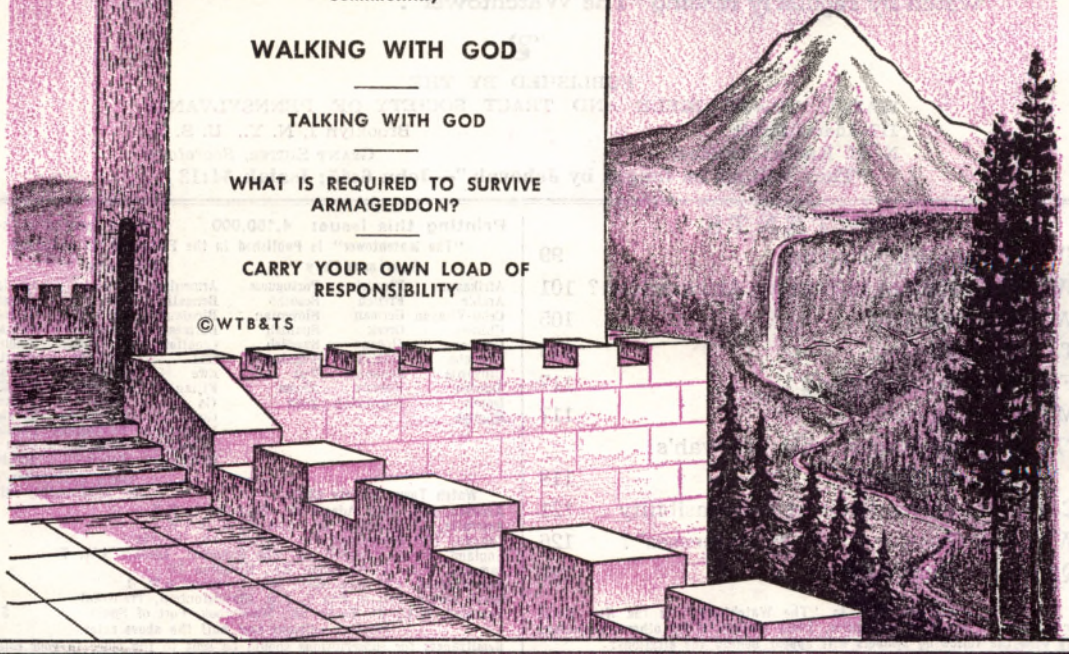

"YOU ARE MY WITNESSES," SAYS JEHOVAH.—Isa. 43:12

THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER"

Literal towers in Bible times were elevated vantage points from which watchmen could observe happenings, warn of danger, or announce good news. Our magazine figuratively occupies such a vantage point, for it is founded on the very pinnacle of wisdom, God's Word. That elevates it above racial, national and political propagandas and prejudices, frees it from selfish bias. It is not bound by any traditional creed, but its message advances as the light on God's purposes and works increases.—Habakkuk 2:1-3.

It sees things Scripturally. When it observes this generation afflicted with greed, delinquency, hypocrisy, atheism, war, famine, pestilence, perplexity and fear, and persecution of unpopular minorities, it does not parrot the old fable about history repeating itself. Informed by Bible prophecy, it sees in these things the sign of the world's time of the end. But with bright hope it also sees opening up for us just beyond these woes the portals of a new world.

Thus viewed, "The Watchtower" stands as a watchman atop a tower, alert to what is going on, awake to note signs of danger, faithful to point out the way of escape. It announces Jehovah's kingdom established by Christ's enthronement in heaven, feeds his kingdom joint-heirs with spiritual food, cheers men of good will with glorious prospects of eternal life in a paradise earth, comforts us with the resurrection promise for the dead.

It is not dogmatic, but has a confident ring in its voice, because it is based on God's Word. It does not privately interpret prophecy, but calls attention to physical facts, sets them alongside prophecy, and you see for yourself how well the two match, how accurately Jehovah interprets his own prophecy. In the interests of our salvation, it keeps sharp and faithful focus on Bible truth, and views religious news generally.

'Be watchful in these perilous times,' God admonishes. So keep on the watch by regularly reading "The Watchtower".

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"They will all be taught by Jehovah."—John 6:45; Isaiah 54:13

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AV – Authorized Version (1611)
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Dy – Catholic Douay version
ED – The Emphatic Diaglott
JP – Jewish Publication Soc.
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SHOW LOVE —BE TRUSTING

LOVE manifests itself in many happifying ways. One of these is by being trusting. As long ago written in that fine essay on love by the apostle Paul: "Love . . . believes all things." That is, it believes all God says in his Word, though one may not be able fully to grasp all of it and at times it may sound impossible because at present men do not know all the facts and have no scientific explanation for certain things. Paul's words, however, also state a basic principle, that by nature love is trusting; it is not unduly suspicious of others.—1 Cor. 13:4, 7.

Since God is love, he is also trusting. Certainly he has trusted his angelic hosts through all the aeons of time since their creation. Likewise God trusted the first human pair, Adam and Eve. He could have looked into the future and seen what they would do, but he did not; he had neither the need nor the desire to do so. Rather, he showered his blessings upon them and gave them the opportunity to express appreciation or ingratitude.—1 John 4:8.

How true this also was of God's dealings with the nation of Israel! How generous, how trusting he was! Time and again he forgave them and gave them another opportunity to prove themselves. In particular did God show loving trustfulness in the case of Job. God was not quick to believe the Devil's slanderous charges; he did not attribute ulterior motives to Job's serving him as did Satan. Lovingly God believed Job to be a keeper of integrity, and the Devil was unable to prove Job otherwise.—Job 1:1, 8; 2:10.

Second only to the example set by God himself is that given by his Son, Jesus Christ. He showed his love for his heavenly Father by wholly trusting him, even to the extent of being willing to die; trusting his Father to resurrect him. Jesus also showed a loving trust in his dealings with his fellowman. He did not suspiciously demand that those coming to him go to great lengths to prove their belief in him before he cured them. Nor did he eye all his twelve apostles with suspicion just because he knew that one of them was destined to betray him.—John 6:64; 12:4-6; 17:12.

Love will likewise cause you to trust your heavenly Father, even as a child trusts its parent. It will cause you to take him at his Word and to show this by your course of action. Then you too will put faith in his Word, the Bible, even though you may not fully understand everything you read and even though so-called science, on the basis of incomplete knowledge or

wrong reasoning, may call it into question. —Deut. 7:9; Mark 11:22; John 17:17.

As for trusting your neighbor, why, even the "golden rule" indicates that you should trust him, for do you not want him to trust you? Yes, "just as you want men to do to you, do the same way to them." —Luke 6:31.

In fact, to trust others shows not only love for them but also love for ourselves. How so? Because trusting is a form of generosity, and generosity makes for happiness. As Jesus said on one occasion, "There is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving."—Acts 20:35.

Especially do members of a family, such as husband and wife, need to show love by being trusting. Love takes faithfulness for granted and is not unduly jealous. It does not make mountains out of molehills. To be distrustful, to be unduly suspicious, is unloving, unkind; it discourages the other person and creates friction. All make slips from time to time, so be generous and give the other the benefit of the doubt, and extend mercy if the other actually is at fault. —Col. 3:12-14.

Remember, the course of being unduly suspicious is the course of Satan himself. He has staked everything on proving that man is not what he claims to be, that God's servants serve him only for what they get out of it. He holds that no one can be trusted. Surely, he is not the one to imitate! —Job 1:9-11; Rev. 12:10.

A notable example in history of one who did imitate Satan in these respects was none other than the American humorist Mark Twain, deceased now some fifty years. In a volume of his works, *Letters from the Earth,* recently published for the first time, he uses Satan to heap scorn, contempt and slander upon God and the human race. This volume also contains his estimate of the Bible: "It is full of interest. It has some noble poetry in it; and some clever fables; and some blood-drenched history; and some good morals; and a wealth of obscenity; and upwards of a thousand lies." Unduly suspicious, he read into the Bible what is not there and failed to see in it what actually is.

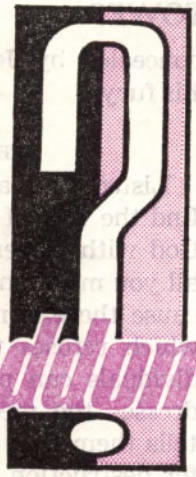
He reacted in the same suspicious way toward his fellowman: "Everyone is a moon and has a dark side which he never shows to anybody." No wonder this great humorist lost his humor and complained, "Be good and you will be lonesome like me." But not so. Jesus was good, if any man ever was, yet, far from his being lonesome, he could not get away from the crowds, and not just because of his miracles but also because of his words of life. —Mark 6:30-34; Luke 21:37, 38.

Not having any faith in God, Mark Twain let the death of two of his daughters and his wife make him even more bitter and so he "relieved his feelings with scathing articles on public affairs," according to *The Encyclopedia Americana.* He had sown suspicion and reaped loneliness, even as Jesus said: "Practice giving, and people will give to you," and that in like measure. —Luke 6:38; Gal. 6:7.

However, the fact that love is trusting does not mean that you should be gullible, naïve. Not at all, for God's Word also says: "Anyone inexperienced puts faith in every word, but the shrewd one considers his steps."—Prov. 14:15.

Then how can you strike a balance between trust and caution? By loving your neighbor *as* yourself; not more, by being naïve and simple; and not less, by being unduly suspicious.—Mark 12:31.

What is required to Survive Armageddon?



There is only one way to find concealment during God's war. His Holy Word makes clear this way of survival.

THIS world is face to face with its worst calamity. Not because of a third world war is this the case but because of the certainty of the universal war of Armageddon. This will be the "war of the great day of God the Almighty"; hence, not a single nation of this world can escape the coming wrath of the Almighty God, as the prophet Jeremiah's words so emphatically declare:

"'A noise will certainly come clear to the farthest part of the earth, for there is a controversy that Jehovah has with the nations. He must personally put himself in judgment with all flesh. As regards the wicked ones, he must give them to the sword,' is the utterance of Jehovah. This is what Jehovah of armies has said, 'Look! A calamity is going forth from nation to nation, and a great tempest itself will be roused up from the remotest parts of the earth. And those slain by Jehovah will certainly come to be in that day from one end of the earth clear to the other end of the earth.'"—Jer. 25:31-33.

This earth-wide slaughter of the wicked will in nowise violate God's righteousness, as Jeremiah himself states: "Jehovah of armies is judging with righteousness." Thus Armageddon will be an expression of God's righteousness, since "his judgments are true and righteous."—Jer. 11:20; Rev. 19:2.

Seeing this is the case, we can expect the righteous God to provide some way for lovers of righteousness to survive the coming destruction of the nations. Indeed, the Almighty has marked out a way of escape. This is found in the Bible. The prophet Zephaniah spells out the course of action one must take to find concealment during the time of divine anger:

"Gather yourselves together, yes, do the gathering, O nation not paling in shame. Before the statute gives birth to anything, before the day has passed by just like chaff, before there comes upon you people the burning anger of Jehovah, before there comes upon you the day of Jehovah's anger, seek Jehovah, all you meek ones of the earth, who have practiced His own judicial decision. Seek righteousness, seek meekness. Probably you may be concealed in the day of Jehovah's anger."—Zeph. 2:1-3.

CHRISTENDOM NO PLACE OF CONCEALMENT

Zephaniah's prophecy is having its grand fulfillment in our day, as we behold Christendom not paling in shame at her hypocritical, unrighteous ways, her unchristian course that resulted in two world wars. Christendom is like the ancient nation of Judah, with its capital in Jerusalem. The Bible tells us that the inhabitants of Judah were proud and haughty; they went after false gods, not even "paling in shame" at their unrighteous ways. Jehovah sent his prophets such as Zephaniah and Jeremiah to warn the people, but most of them refused to heed the warning: "I kept sending to you all my servants the prophets, daily getting up early and sending them. But they did not listen to me, and they did not

incline their ear, but they kept hardening their neck." (Jer. 7:25, 26) God told the Israelites through Zephaniah that if they would repent, turn around and seek Jehovah, seek righteousness and seek meekness, instead of being arrogant and self-opinionated, there was an opportunity to survive the coming destruction; not for the city of Jerusalem, but there was hope for some individuals to survive. Because the Israelites as a nation did not pale in shame but continued in their way of false religion and faithlessness, God determined to bring destruction on Jerusalem and eventually upon the surrounding heathen nations.

Today Christendom does not pale in shame, but there are individuals in Christendom, just as there were in Jerusalem, who try to live by God's righteous laws. Though these cannot avert God's declared purpose to destroy Christendom at Armageddon, along with all the nations of the earth, yet these individuals can take a course of action that will result in their survival. Such individual seekers of Jehovah in ancient Judah were concealed through the destructive judgment God brought upon Jerusalem. Zephaniah's words about how to find concealment are today addressed to those professed Christians in the modern counterpart of ancient Judah, namely Christendom.

Each informed person is thus faced with the need to make a decision; the right one means survival, the wrong one destruction. He cannot look to Christendom for help; not even all its gold and silver will save her, for "neither their silver nor their gold will be able to deliver them in the day of Jehovah's fury." (Zeph. 1:18) Do not, then, try to hide in Christendom; she is no safe place of concealment. Rather, take to heart the words of Zephaniah, whose name means "concealed by Jehovah" and whose inspired words point out the way to be concealed by Jehovah during the day of his fury.

SEEKING JEHOVAH

Listed first among the things to do to find the way of escape is to search for the God with power to save: "Seek Jehovah, all you meek ones of the earth." Why? Because there is no help from Christendom, which refuses to pale in shame. But individuals can pale in shame. So God addresses the meek ones of the earth and tells them that if they do not want to suffer destruction at Armageddon, then they must seek Jehovah and be humble, and they will gain by it, since "the result of humility and the fear of Jehovah is riches and glory and life." (Prov. 22:4) It is the meek ones who will seek Jehovah.

What does it mean to "seek Jehovah"? It means to take in knowledge of Jehovah God, who himself says through his prophet: "I have taken delight . . . in the knowledge of God rather than in whole burnt offerings." One must learn about Jehovah, then, studying his marvelous qualities and his laws. To seek Jehovah one must also put faith in him, since "without faith it is impossible to please him well, for he that approaches God must believe that he is and that he becomes the rewarder of those earnestly seeking him." Those earnestly seeking Jehovah put faith in him and come to love him, in harmony with what the Lord Jesus said in answer to the question as to what was the greatest commandment: " 'You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment."—Hos. 6:6; Heb. 11:6; Matt. 22:36-38.

The one earnestly seeking Jehovah must keep on loving Jehovah, putting that love foremost in his life so that neither his enemies nor "friends" can turn him aside

from his love for God. It is this kind of love that brings the reward, as the inspired writer James says: "Happy is the man that keeps on enduring trial, because on becoming approved he will receive the crown of life, which Jehovah promised to those who continue loving him."—Jas. 1:12.

Seeking Jehovah today means more than it did in Zephaniah's day, for the sincere worshiper must take steps to come into harmony with God's Son, Jesus Christ, who is now the enthroned King. Hence the seeker of Jehovah must take in knowledge of Jesus Christ, must learn what he taught and obey his commandments. He will also pray as Jesus directed: "Our Father in the heavens, let your name be sanctified. Let your kingdom come." The one who earnestly seeks Jehovah, then, will not only pray for that kingdom but do as Jesus said: "Seek continually his kingdom." He will always recognize the need to sanctify the divine name Jehovah.—Matt. 6:9; Luke 12:31.

Sanctifying the divine name requires that one make it known to others, for if persons do not know his name, how can they call upon it? Thus the apostle Paul wrote to the Christians in Rome: " 'Everyone who calls on the name of Jehovah will be saved.' However, how will they call on him in whom they have not put faith? How, in turn, will they put faith in him of whom they have not heard? How, in turn, will they hear without someone to preach?" (Rom. 10:13, 14) This shows that those who seek Jehovah must do so unselfishly, being willing to make God's name known to others, that they, too, may call upon it "before the coming of the great and fear-inspiring day of Jehovah." —Joel 2:31.

Right after speaking about the coming of the "fear-inspiring day of Jehovah," the prophet Joel said: "It must occur that everyone who calls on the name of Jehovah will get away safe; for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will prove to be the escaped ones, just as Jehovah has said, and in among the survivors, whom Jehovah is calling." (Joel 2:32) God would hardly make this statement about getting away safe by calling on his name and then cause his name to be concealed to men. Therefore, in the days of Jesus and his apostles, God caused his name to be made known by preaching, even from house to house. So today God is having his name proclaimed throughout the earth, that the meek of the earth might call on it through Jesus Christ. This is not an isolated calling but a united calling, because Joel foretold that all the "escaped ones" will come to Mount Zion and Jerusalem, symbols for God's kingdom, and that "the survivors" will go there in unity. Hence, to seek Jehovah today one must gather around the kingdom of God, doing it unitedly with all his Kingdom witnesses.

What does Zephaniah's stressing of the need for seeking Jehovah indicate, then? That only by doing so can one find concealment during Armageddon. It also indicates that living a clean life, living by the "golden rule," is not in itself enough. Mere moral living does not meet the first requirement for survival—seeking Jehovah.

SEEKING RIGHTEOUSNESS

Not that a righteous way of life is not required; it is, but it must accompany this matter of first of all seeking Jehovah. Said Zephaniah: "Seek righteousness." The true worshiper of Jehovah must do that, living in harmony with God's standard of righteousness. No longer can he go on practicing his own version of what is right, since "there exists a way that is upright before a man, but the ways of death are the end of it afterward." (Prov. 16:25) Thus try-

ing to live righteously by our own ideas could lead us to disaster and away from Jehovah, just as in the case of those Jews of whom the apostle Paul wrote: "Because of not knowing the righteousness of God but seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God."—Rom. 10:3.

So it is God's righteousness that we have to seek, just as Jesus Christ expressed it: "Keep on, then, seeking first the kingdom and his righteousness." (Matt. 6:33) This indicates we cannot merely seek Jehovah and his kingdom, all the while ignoring his righteousness. No, but we must familiarize ourselves with the Standard Jehovah has given us by which to judge all our actions and conduct—that is, the Holy Bible. We must do this because "all Scripture is inspired of God and beneficial for teaching, for reproving, for setting things straight, for disciplining in righteousness." Let God through his Word discipline you in the way of divine righteousness.—2 Tim. 3:16.

SEEKING MEEKNESS

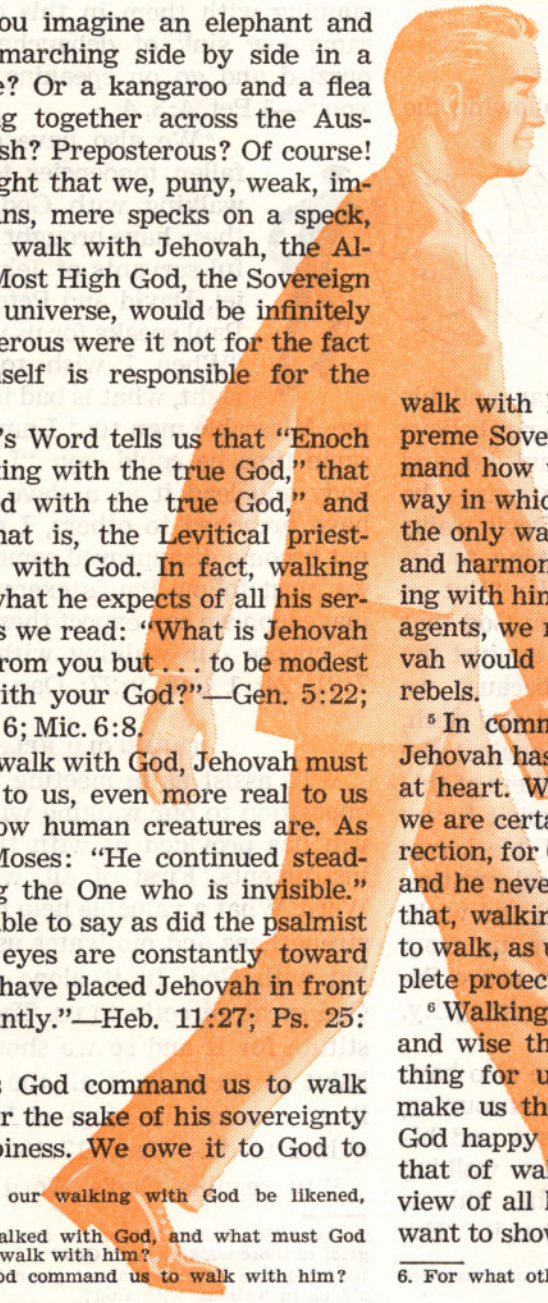
The need to seek meekness is listed third by Zephaniah, but not because it is unimportant. Indeed, so necessary is this quality that Zephaniah coupled it with the need to seek Jehovah: "Seek Jehovah, all you meek ones of the earth." The fact that the prophet brings it up again and says, "Seek meekness," stresses the need for it, showing that we must give continued attention to meekness. If we are seeking meekness, we will have the right mental disposition; we will be mild-tempered and willing to be disciplined by God, we will be willing to tell others the requirements for surviving Armageddon.

One shows meekness today, then, by becoming a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, who himself set the example in meekness: "Take my yoke upon you and become my disciples, for I am mild-tempered and lowly in heart, and you will find refreshment for your souls." (Matt. 11:29) Let Jesus be your Example. Imitate him in all things, for he set the perfect example in how to seek Jehovah, to seek righteousness and to seek meekness. Jesus himself humbly did the work given him by God, making known Jehovah's judgments to men. So the meek ones of the earth, following his example, will warn others of the coming execution of God's judgments by the King Jesus Christ, at Armageddon.

If we do these things, really seeking Jehovah through knowledge, faith and love and calling on his name through Jesus Christ; and if we truly seek righteousness, along with God's kingdom, doing so with meekness, then, Zephaniah says, "probably you may be concealed in the day of Jehovah's anger."—Zeph. 2:3.

Though Armageddon is to come upon this generation, some, because of age or illness, may die before that time; yet they may be hid by dying in God's favor: "Precious in the eyes of Jehovah is the death of his loyal ones." (Ps. 116:15) Such loyal ones will be assured of a resurrection to life. And for all those of this generation who are alive when the great fear-inspiring day of Jehovah breaks out, there is every probability of being concealed by God if they have earnestly followed the requirements for survival that Zephaniah made so clear. The "probability" does not lie with God but with us. Jehovah will prove faithful, but will we? Jehovah, who searches men's hearts, knows whether we are truly seeking him and his righteousness and showing meekness. Prove loyal to God and he will prove his faithfulness by concealing you through the world-shaking calamity just ahead.

Walking with God



"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.

COULD you imagine an elephant and an ant marching side by side in a circus parade? Or a kangaroo and a flea hopping along together across the Australian outbush? Preposterous? Of course! Yet the thought that we, puny, weak, imperfect humans, mere specks on a speck, can and may walk with Jehovah, the Almighty, the Most High God, the Sovereign of the whole universe, would be infinitely more preposterous were it not for the fact that he himself is responsible for the thought.

[2] Thus God's Word tells us that "Enoch went on walking with the true God," that "Noah walked with the true God," and that Levi, that is, the Levitical priesthood, walked with God. In fact, walking with God is what he expects of all his servants, even as we read: "What is Jehovah asking back from you but . . . to be modest in walking with your God?"—Gen. 5:22; 6:9; Mal. 2:4, 6; Mic. 6:8.

[3] For us to walk with God, Jehovah must be very real to us, even more real to us than our fellow human creatures are. As we read of Moses: "He continued steadfast as seeing the One who is invisible." We must be able to say as did the psalmist David: "My eyes are constantly toward Jehovah." "I have placed Jehovah in front of me constantly."—Heb. 11:27; Ps. 25:15; 16:8.

[4] Why does God command us to walk with him? For the sake of his sovereignty and our happiness. We owe it to God to walk with him. As our Creator and Supreme Sovereign he has the right to command how we should walk. It is the only way in which his purposes can be realized, the only way by which there can be peace and harmony in his domains, by all walking with him. If, because we are free moral agents, we refuse to walk with him, Jehovah would be obligated to destroy us as rebels.

[5] In commanding us to walk with him Jehovah has our highest and best interests at heart. When we are walking with God we are certain to be going in the right direction, for God is omniscient, all-knowing, and he never makes a mistake. More than that, walking with God is the safest way to walk, as under his shadow there is complete protection.—Prov. 2:6-9; Ps. 91:1.

[6] Walking with God is not only the right and wise thing to do but also the loving thing for us to do, the thing that will make us the most happy. It even makes God happy to see us take a wise course, that of walking with him. Certainly in view of all he has done for us we should want to show love and appreciation by try-

1. To what may our walking with God be likened, and why?
2, 3. Who have walked with God, and what must God be to us for us to walk with him?
4, 5. Why does God command us to walk with him?
6. For what other reasons should we walk with God?

ing to please him. Further, even as we like to walk with one whom we love, we enjoy being in that one's presence, so if we love our heavenly Father Jehovah God we will want to be in his presence, ever walking with him.—Prov. 27:11.

OPPOSITION ENCOUNTERED

[7] Walking with God is not following the lines of least resistance. Far from it. Rather, in walking with God we meet up with opposition from three quarters. First, there is the opposition of Satan and his demons. But you may say, 'I do not believe there is a Devil!' Peter and Paul did, and Peter wrote this: "Keep your senses, be watchful. Your adversary, the Devil, walks about like a roaring lion, seeking to devour someone." Paul wrote this: "Put on the complete suit of armor from God that you may be able to stand firm against the machinations of the Devil; because we have a fight, not against blood and flesh, but against the governments, against the authorities, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the wicked spirit forces in the heavenly places." The Bible leaves no doubt as to these being real entities, invisible personalities, powerful and wicked, and determined to swerve us from walking with God, in order to prove Satan's boast that no man can keep integrity. —1 Pet. 5:8; Eph. 6:11, 12.

[8] In our walking with God we also have the opposition of the world to encounter, even as did Enoch, Noah, Jesus and his apostles. The world resents our walking with God because, among other things, our very course of action rebukes it: "For the time that has passed by is sufficient for you to have worked out the will of the nations when you proceeded in deeds of loose conduct, lusts, excesses with wine, revelries . . . Because you do not continue running with them in this course to the same low sink of debauchery, they are puzzled and go on speaking abusively of you."—1 Pet. 4:3, 4.

[9] We also have our inherited fallen tendencies to oppose our walking with God. What grief these have brought to such faithful servants of Jehovah as Daniel, David and Peter! How truly Paul speaks for us when he says: "When I wish to do what is right, what is bad is present with me. Miserable man that I am!" Still at the same time he could say: "I browbeat my body and lead it as a slave, that, after I have preached to others, I myself should not become disapproved somehow." In this we must follow Paul's example. Until Armageddon we can expect these three forces to oppose our walking with God.—Rom. 7:21, 24; 1 Cor. 9:27; Dan. 9:4-13.

THREEFOLD HELP

[10] To assist us in meeting this threefold opposition to our walking with God, Jehovah has provided us with three powerful instruments. First of all, we have God's Word. What a valuable help it is! It guides, strengthens and motivates us in our walking with God. In it alone does Jehovah God speak directly to us. There is no substitute for it and so we should make it a habit to "read in it all the days" of our lives; even as the kings of Israel were required to do.—Deut. 17:19.

[11] In reading God's Word let us make

7. What powerful invisible opposition do we encounter as we walk with God?
8. Why does the world oppose our walking with God?
9. Opposition from what source has repeatedly brought grief to those walking with God?
10. Obedience to what counsel given Israel's kings will aid us in walking with God?
11, 12. How can we benefit most from Bible reading?

certain that we get the sense of what we are reading, if not of every word, at least the general sense, at the same time reading with the thought of applying it to ourselves, to our conduct and to our ministry. We should identify ourselves with or see ourselves in the ones who walked with God and resolve to follow their example. In these days of great wickedness the book of Proverbs is of particular value, helping us to walk uprightly. Even when reading the Psalms let us not be content with merely enjoying their beautiful strains of praise to Jehovah, but let us note how much admonition they contain, both implied and direct. Thus the very first psalm, by telling us of the happiness of the man that keeps integrity, admonishes us to imitate him.

12 Included in the psalms' direct admonition are, of course, the appeals to praise Jehovah. But that is not all. Note the commands given to the rulers of the world at Psalm 2:10-12, and that given to God's people at Psalm 4:4: "Be agitated, but do not sin. Have your say in your heart, upon your bed, and keep silent." Such kind of Bible reading will truly enlighten, strengthen and motivate us as we keep on walking with God.

13 To help us walk with him God has also provided a visible earthly organization, "the faithful and discreet slave," or "remnant," whom Jesus Christ has placed in charge of all his goods, even as he foretold. This "slave" provides leadership and spiritual food by means of appointed servants, meetings of various kinds and printed publications. The servants in the congregation as well as all serving as overseers provide help by means of counsel and exemplary action: "Remember those who are taking the lead among you, who have spoken the word of God to you, and as you contemplate how their conduct turns out imitate their faith."—Matt. 24:45-47; Heb. 13:7.

14 Therefore take advantage of the help they can give you. Respect them and cooperate with them. That, of course, requires our "not forsaking the gathering of ourselves together." How often have we had this admonition called to our attention! And still what happens to meeting attendance when the weather suddenly turns bad? And that even in large cities with adequate transportation. Think of our brothers behind the Iron Curtain who risk their freedom and the support of their families every time they come together. And yet some stay away because of snow or rain. Truly, brothers, these things ought not to be!—Heb. 10:25.

15 Walking with God also requires us to be organization-minded in our reading habits. God's visible channel provides us with ever so much reading matter, all of which should be a MUST for Christians. Some imagine they do not have time to read through each issue of *The Watchtower,* yet the president and vice-president of the Watch Tower Society do. Are you busier or do you have more important work than they do? Or is it a matter of selectivity? Are we wasting time reading other things or watching television when we could be buying out the opportune time reading *The Watchtower?* Much valuable information and admonition is contained in the so-called "secondary" articles of *The Watchtower* that help the Christian to

13, 14. What further aid has God provided, and for it to help us to walk with God what must we do?

15, 16. To what extent should we appreciate the Watch Tower publications?

walk in the right way and to "be fully competent, completely equipped for every good work."—2 Tim. 3:17.

16 The same also applies to the *Awake!* magazine. Reading each issue from cover to cover will not only broaden your mental horizon but also help you to view all things from God's standpoint. And what about the *Yearbook?* Do you take time each day to consider the daily text? Are you reading its stimulating and encouraging reports? Doing so will help you in your walking with God.

17 In addition to his Word and his visible organization, Jehovah God has also provided us with his holy spirit or active force. While today its operation is not as obvious to the natural eye as it was in the days of ancient Israel and in apostolic times, its operation can be clearly seen by the eye of faith. In fact, the great change it works in persons and the great work accomplished in the world today by reason of it can be seen by all even though they do not recognize the cause, the holy spirit. This spirit, however, we do not receive apart from God's Word, association with his organization and prayer; apart from "a hearing by faith."—Gal. 3:2.

18 Clearly, not all dedicated and even mature Christians possess the holy spirit to the same measure. There is no doubt that unselfishness, depth of devotion, self-control, humility, mildness of spirit, studiousness as regards God's Word and zeal in God's service have a bearing on how much of the holy spirit we have. It also appears that inherited qualities have no small bearing on the extent to which we permit the holy spirit to have a free flow in our lives or tend to obstruct its activity. Thus the more colorful the personality the more difficult for the holy spirit to saturate it fully. The colorful personality has more need of self-control and must in particular guard against the snare of creature worship. Richness of personality seems to work against spiritual-mindedness, as the colorful person tends to lean more on himself, even as those who are rich in material things tend to put their trust in them instead of Jehovah God.—Ps. 52:7.

17, 18. What can be said about the value and the working of the holy spirit in our walking with God?

EXCLUSIVE DEVOTION

19 Before we can even begin to walk with God we need faith. We must believe that he exists and that he will reward those who do walk with him. We prove that we do have faith when we dedicate ourselves to do God's will and to follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ, thereby taking the very first step of walking with our God. As we read: "Will two walk together unless they have met by appointment?" For us to walk with God we must first meet him by appointment, by dedicating ourselves to him and being baptized in water, thus making public confession of our dedication to Jehovah. As has been stressed time and again in this publication, our dedication is not to an impersonal cause, nor even to a society of people, but to a person, the supreme Person of the universe, Jehovah God.—Amos 3:3.

20 From now on we must follow God's leadership, we must go in the same direction as he is going, his goal must be our goal. And what is his goal? The vindication of himself and his name and his word by means of his kingdom, of course. "Jehovah is exclusively devoted to his name. He is a God exacting [the same] exclusive devotion [of others]." "You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your

19. What are the very first steps in our walking with God?

20. What goal of Jehovah must be our goal for us to walk with him?

whole mind and with your whole strength." That is why Jesus commanded his followers: "Keep on, then, seeking first the kingdom and his righteousness."—Ex. 34:14 (edition of 1953); Mark 12:30; Matt. 6:33.

[21] Even as Jesus walked with God by putting first in his life God's name and kingdom, so must we. We must obey the prophetic commands recorded at Isaiah 43:10-12 and Matthew 24:14. As opportunity affords we must go from house to house and stand on street corners advertising Jehovah's name and kingdom, making return visits and conducting Bible studies with those conscious of their spiritual need. Exclusive devotion requires us to be alert to opportunities of witnessing wherever we may happen to be.

[22] Is Jehovah's service indeed the most important thing in our lives? If so, then we will not content ourselves with merely token witnessing but will strive to reach at least the minimum requirements of the congregation quotas. We want the consuming zeal that Jesus had and so will do all we possibly can. Remember, "everyone to whom much was given, much will be demanded of him; and the one whom people put in charge of much, they will demand more than usual of him." So let us not content ourselves with doing as little as possible to be a Christian.—Luke 12:48.

[23] As time goes on we should be increasing in zeal. If that is not true in our case, could it be that materialism or something else is making inroads? Some may have become television addicts. If one's television set is causing one to stumble as regards one's worship of Jehovah; if watching it is making inroads on one's personal study, one's meeting attendance and one's field ministry, then let one get rid of it. Better to enter the new world without a television set than risking missing out on the new world because of watching television!—Mark 9:45.

[24] The same must also be said of other forms of entertainment. Have we got in such a rut of craving pleasure that moving pictures, parties or dancing are a "must" on Saturday nights? How can we do justice to Sunday's field ministry, public talk and *Watchtower* study if we fail to get a good night's rest? True, relaxation is necessary, but let us control it, not let it control us! Walking with God, giving him exclusive devotion, putting first his kingdom, demands of us that we do!

"EXERCISE JUSTICE"

[25] To be walking with God further means for us to be guided by his righteous principles. "What is Jehovah asking back from you but to exercise justice." "You must be holy, because I am holy." "You must accordingly be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." Just as the tiny atom obeys the same divine laws that govern the mighty stellar galaxies of the universe, so, regardless of how insignificant and finite we are as compared with Jehovah God, we can and must be guided by his righteous principles, we must "exercise justice."—Mic. 6:8; 1 Pet. 1:16; Matt. 5:48.

[26] To exercise justice we must not only love what is just and right but hate, abhor, what is bad. Jehovah does: "I, Jehovah, am loving justice, hating . . . unrighteousness." And of Jesus it was written: "You have loved righteousness and you hate wickedness." So we are com-

21. What does exclusive devotion require of us?
22. What does the principle stated at Luke 12:48 require of us?
23, 24. What are some of the snares we must guard against if we would give Jehovah exclusive devotion?
25. To be guided by Jehovah's righteous principles, what scriptures must we obey?
26-28. Besides loving righteousness what else is commanded, and why?

manded: "O you lovers of Jehovah, hate what is bad." "Abhor what is wicked, cling to what is good."—Isa. 61:8; Ps. 45:7; 97:10; Rom. 12:9.

[27] We all must be careful that we keep on walking with God by exercising justice, not only loving what is right, but also hating what is bad, what is wicked. At times what is bad may be very temptingly presented to us, even as was the forbidden fruit to Eve; and so unless we have cultivated a loathing for what is bad, an abhorrence and hatred for it, in a moment of weakness we may succumb to temptation, to our lasting shame and regret. No one may take for granted that because of his many years as a dedicated Christian he has a firm position. Not even the apostle Paul had such confidence in himself! —1 Cor. 9:27; 10:12.

[28] We know what our individual weaknesses are. We may not pamper ourselves but must manifest a righteous zeal in opposing them at all times. If love of money is our chief weakness, we dare not indulge in sharp practices, for sooner or later we will go too far and come in for punishment. If we are fond of alcoholic beverages to the extent of not being able to control that fondness, we must exercise a tight rein when in the presence of those indulging in them, preferably staying away from such places, or we may bring dishonor to the Christian congregation and deserve to be chastised. If our weakness is along the lines of sex, whether married or single, then we must wage a strong fight against that weakness, avoiding unclean thoughts, pornographic literature and sensual moving pictures. Remember, "there is nothing . . . secret that will not become known." We must keep "bringing every thought into captivity to make it obedient to the Christ." We must 'keep ourselves clean as carriers of Jehovah's utensils' if we would keep on walking with God, 'exercising justice.'—Matt. 10:26; 2 Cor. 10:5; Isa. 52:11.

"LOVE KINDNESS"

[29] To walk with God we must also "love kindness," as Micah 6:8 goes on to say. The Hebrew word here rendered "kindness" is the same that is elsewhere translated "loving-kindness." Time and again we read of Jehovah's loving-kindness. "How precious your loving-kindness is, O God!" "I am Jehovah, the One exercising loving-kindness." "It is the acts of loving-kindness of Jehovah that we have not come to our finish, because his mercies will certainly not come to an end. They are new each morning. Your faithfulness is abundant." "Jehovah is very tender in affection and merciful."—Ps. 36:7; Jer. 9:24; Lam. 3:22, 23; Jas. 5:11.

[30] Kindness is a fruitage of the spirit. Loving-kindness will make us understanding, considerate, gentle and helpful. To be kind we must have empathy. Empathy goes farther than sympathy, for in empathy we put ourselves in the other's place, we actually feel what he feels. Jehovah God, great as he is, is not beyond exercising empathy regarding his creatures. He not only has pity, compassion, sympathy for us, remembering that we are but dust, but he puts himself in our place so that what hurts us hurts him. Thus we read regarding his nation of Israel: "During all their distress it was distressing to him." Yes, when they suffered, he suffered.—Isa. 63:9.

[31] Jesus Christ also had empathy, not only when upon earth, but also since his return to heaven. When Saul of Tarsus was

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29. Why does walking with God also require us to love kindness?
30. What does it mean to have empathy, and how did Jehovah manifest it?
31. What examples of empathy did Jesus and Paul give?

persecuting the Christians Jesus said to him: "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting." Jesus Christ, now the exact representation of God's very being, put himself in the place of his followers; what hurt them hurt him. And once becoming a follower of Jesus Christ himself, Paul also imitated his Master in this matter of empathy. He put himself in the others' place, that he might win them to Christ: To the Jew he became as a Jew, to those under the law, as under the law, to those without the law, as without law. "To the weak I became weak, that I might gain the weak. I have become all things to people of all sorts . . . for the sake of the good news." And once these had become his brothers Paul continued to manifest empathy: "Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is stumbled, and I am not incensed?"—Acts 9:5; 1 Cor. 9:20-23; 2 Cor. 11:29.

[32] In going from house to house with the good news of God's kingdom, empathy will make us considerate, tactful, patient, kind and effective ministers. Empathy will make husbands and wives appreciative, understanding and loving mates. Empathy will enable children to appreciate their parents' viewpoint and position, even as it will make parents loving and understanding, not irritating their children, appreciating how they look at things, while not surrendering their authority.—Eph. 5:33–6:4.

[33] Empathy will make for peace and unity in the Christian congregation. It helps us to make allowances for the other's shortcomings and weaknesses. Empathy will make the theocratic ministry school instructor kind in his counsel, putting himself in the student's place. Especially do the overseers need empathy for them to do the most good. For you to be truly helpful, you overseers must establish communication by understanding; try to comprehend the other person's feelings. This requires sensitive mental discernment, patience and slowness to anger. That is why Paul counsels you: "Brothers, even though a man takes some false step before he is aware of it, . . . try to restore such a man in a spirit of mildness, as you each keep an eye on yourself, for fear you also may be tempted."—Gal. 6:1.

32. Empathy will cause us to act how?
33. Who in particular need to manifest empathy, and why?

"BE MODEST"

[34] And lastly, God's prophet, at Micah 6:8, tells us "to be modest in walking with your God." Jehovah God is willing to so humble himself as to let us walk with him; surely we should be willing to humble ourselves and to walk modestly with our God. To be modest in walking with our God means to be submissive to him, his principles and his agencies. That is a lesson we need to learn from birth onward. Time and again an infant's or young child's crying is not due to discomfort or pain but due to anger, hurt pride, frustration, rebellion or rage. Infants and children can be taught to sit quietly at the meetings if sufficient love and firmness are shown in their rearing the rest of the week at home; they can be taught to be submissive.

[35] The same applies to adults. When we have difficulty in submitting we should ask ourselves to what extent it is due to the circumstances and to what extent we are to blame. Modesty keeps us from feeling self-important. Humility helps us to submit to those bearing rule over us, be it a husband, a study conductor, a ministerial assistant or an overseer. Suppose we do have better judgment than the one to whom we are required to submit. Are we as well qualified in other respects? Then, too, we might be mistaken. Besides, time

34. What requirement in walking with God do we need to have taught us from birth onward?
35, 36. What can be said in favor of being submissive?

and again what seemed to us to be the wisest course does not work out, while what seemed to be not so wise turns out just fine. Jehovah can and often does direct the outcome so that it is for the best after all. He works in all things for good to those that love him.—Rom. 8:28.

[36] Let us never forget that it is far more important that there be peace, unity, harmony and cooperation among us than that everything be done the best possible way. Exercising submissiveness merely puts a premium on wisdom and patience. If we are convinced that we have a suggestion that will be for the improvement of the work, let us not force it but wait for the right time and then in the right manner present it to those who can do something about it. Remember Queen Esther? She did not dare tell her husband what to do and yet she got all her wish.

ARTICLES IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- The General Priesthood—Christendom's Forgotten Doctrine.
- The General Priesthood Today.
- Give Christian Counsel Skillfully.
- Guard Against Abusive Speech and Obscene Jesting.

[37] Perhaps one of the most difficult situations in which to be submissive to theocratic rule is when one falls in love, romantic love, the *eros* of the Greeks. Suppose some of you young folks or some not so young fall in love with someone not a dedicated Christian or one who is lacking in zeal for Jehovah and his service and therefore would be a hindrance rather than a help. Christlike submission would require us to break off such an attachment instead of cultivating it, regardless of how pleasant the arrangement may seem to be because of the attraction of the sexes and also regardless of what suffering it might cause now. Is it not far better to suffer a little now, by falling out of love again and ending the relationship, than to suffer the rest of your life or until Armageddon relieves you of your onerous burden? Surely! —1 Cor. 7:39.

[38] Truly, much is involved in our walking with God. It might also be likened to a little girl hanging on to the hand of her strong and robust father as they wend their way home in a snowstorm. Were she to let go of her father's hand because of carelessness or because she disagreed with him as to the course they were taking, she would get lost in the storm and perish. Wisely, therefore, she hangs on for dear life. So if we want to reach "home," the post-Armageddon new world of righteousness, we dare not let go of our heavenly Father's hand, but must hang on tightly.

[39] That means accepting his leadership, being exclusively devoted to him, making his goal, the vindication of his name, our goal. It means endeavoring to imitate him in the exercise of justice, hating what is bad. It means loving kindness, having empathy; it means being modest and humble, submissive, to all his visible arrangements.

[40] To walk with God is indeed the wise, the right and the loving thing to do. It is not easy, however, in view of the opposition of Satan and his demons, and Satan's visible organization and our fallen tendencies. Still it is not too difficult, for Jehovah has wisely and lovingly provided us with three valuable aids, his Word, his visible organization and his holy spirit. Nor would we overlook the precious privilege of prayer, of talking with our God.

37. In what other situation is submissiveness the course of wisdom?

38. How else can walking with God be illustrated?
39, 40. How may walking with God be summarized?

Talking with God

"PERSEVERE IN PRAYER." —Rom. 12:12.

TALKING with each other is a basic requirement of friendship. Not that friends have to be talking all the time, but there has to be communication. The same is true regarding the members of a family. To keep good relations between them it is imperative that they keep on talking with each other. Failure to do so would mean that they were drifting apart, even though sharing the same roof, bed and meals. Talking things over with each other results in understanding, trust and affection. Then each knows what is on the other's mind and heart, and what his cares, needs and aspirations are. Thus their mutual appreciation increases as they communicate with each other, sharing what the vicissitudes of life bring. And as has well been said, griefs shared are halved, joys shared are doubled.

[2] Due to our having made a dedication to Jehovah God we belong to him, being either his adopted sons or prospective grandsons. Jehovah God and we have mutual interests, chief of which is the vindication of Jehovah's name, and, secondary, our own salvation. We are concerned with God's vindication and he with our salvation. However, Jehovah God quite easily can get along without us, for if we fail him someone else will replace us. But we cannot get along without God, not if we want happiness and everlasting life. We are wholly dependent upon him and therefore always want to have the best relations with him. He is our indispensable Master, while we are his good-for-nothing slaves. —Luke 17:10.

[3] Jehovah God himself is not a silent heavenly Father or Master. Not by any means! He is ready to speak to us at all times by means of sixty-six books, little in size, some consisting of only a single page, but weighty in contents. These enable us to appreciate just how God views matters, what he is thinking about and what we must do to please him. Thus we read that "the Lord Jehovah will not do a thing unless he has revealed his confidential matter to his servants the prophets." In a similar vein Jesus said to his apostles: "I have called you friends, because all the things I have heard from my Father I have made known to you." —Amos 3:7; John 15:15.

[4] By means of his Word Jehovah God communicates to us not only his will and purposes but also his love and affection for us. "Like a man whom his own mother keeps comforting, so I myself shall keep comforting you people." "With a love to time indefinite I have loved you. That is why I have drawn you with loving-kindness." "The Father himself has affection for you." Even when his creatures take an unwise course and suffer as a result, God feels regrets and is hurt at heart. On the other hand, it makes Jehovah's heart glad when we take a wise course. So by continually letting God talk to us by means of his Word we become ever better acquainted with his will and purposes and

1. What is the value of talking to those close to us?
2. What is our relationship to Jehovah?

3, 4. By what means does God talk to us, and what does he tell us therein?

may bask in his love.—Isa. 66:13; Jer. 31:3; John 16:27; Judg. 10:16; Prov. 27:11.

[5] Not that God's talking to us is limited to our reading his Word. Every time we call to mind portions of it in our memories we are listening to Jehovah talk to us. We do not always have access to his written Word and we may even be deprived of it, as some have been in Communist labor camps. What a powerful reason for committing to memory as much of God's Word as we possibly can so that at all times and under any circumstances Jehovah God can talk to us at length! Additionally, as we engage in the Christian ministry we want to lean heavily on God's Word, for we cannot do better than let God talk to our listeners.

THE NEED TO TALK TO GOD

[6] It is in the very nature of things that we should talk to God. Do we have any doubt about his existence, about his being the Giver of "every good gift and every perfect present"? Of course not! Then, even as a child at the dinner table is taught to ask for food and to say "Please," and after receiving it to say "Thank you," so with us. We may not take God's goodness for granted. We must ask him for what we need and then express appreciation for what we receive.—Jas. 1:17.

[7] But more than that, in our prayers we reach a degree of appreciation, earnestness, devotion, gratitude and regrets, repentance, that we are not likely to feel otherwise. It strengthens our feelings, our gratitude or repentance, when we seek to clothe them in words. Consider for a moment how easy it is for a young man to think regarding a young lady, "I love you!" and yet how hard it is for him to bring himself to say this in so many words! Or how prone we are to express our apology for having offended by a subdued manner or some gift, rather than to put it into words! So coming to God in prayer, speaking to him what is in our hearts and minds strengthens our gratitude or repentance, as the case may be.

[8] In fact, unless we talk to God in prayer it could not be said that we are walking with God. Our conduct may be upright and we may be busy in his service; but unless God is so real to us that we keep on talking to him, something is wrong. Then we betray that we are dedicated to a work, a cause or an organization instead of to a Personality, to our loving heavenly Father. If a husband and father worked hard to support his family but never spoke to them any more than he had to and never gave them expressions of endearment, his family might well conclude that his motive was sheer unpleasant duty instead of love. And so with us.

[9] So we are commanded, "Persevere in prayer." "With every form of prayer and supplication you carry on prayer on every occasion in spirit." To underscore the need for us "always to pray and not to give up," Jesus gave us the illustration of the widow who kept on importuning a judge until she obtained justice.—Rom. 12:12; Eph. 6:18; Luke 18:1-8.

[10] If we appreciate the privilege of prayer we will pray not only at regular times but also "incidentally," as opportunity affords. And so many opportunities present themselves if only we are "vigilant with a view to prayers." Such times as upon rising and before retiring, at mealtimes, at congregational meetings and in connection with the field ministry are taken for granted. And it is quite easy to think of turning to God when we have

5. Of what value is it to commit to memory portions of God's Word?
6. For what reasons should we talk with God?
7. What further benefit comes from clothing our sentiments in thoughts and words?
8. Failure to talk to God would indicate what?
9-11. (a) What commands do we have regarding prayer? (b) How can these be carried out?

need of special wisdom and strength, or when we receive special blessings. But, in addition, we should cultivate a proneness to prayer, so that our hearts are like the needle of a compass that, while temporarily deflected by outside influences, always reverts to pointing north. Then we will be making prayer a habit, heeding the command to "pray incessantly."—1 Pet. 4:7; 1 Thess. 5:17.

[11] But more than that, we will not only repeatedly turn to God but delight to linger in prayer, even as two friends enjoy each other's company and delay parting. We will come not merely with petitions but with praise and thanksgiving. As the apostle Paul admonishes: "Be persevering in prayer, remaining awake in it with thanksgiving." Then we will not be placing Jehovah God in the role of a policeman, doctor or lawyer, one merely to be consulted when in trouble, but will consider him our dearest and truest friend, to whom we enjoy talking as we walk with him. —Col. 4:2.

CONDITIONS

[12] Among the misconceptions prevalent in the world regarding prayer is that anyone may pray with the expectation of being heard. But not so. The privilege of prayer is only for those who have, upon the basis of accurate knowledge, made a dedication of themselves to do Jehovah's will. It is only for those who walk with God, having met him by appointment. (Amos 3:3) But even these cannot expect to be heard unless they approach God through the only channel and ask in faith. Jesus said: "I chose you, . . . in order that no matter what you ask the Father in my name he might give it to you." "According to your faith let it happen to you."—John 15:16; Matt. 9:29.

12. For whom only is the privilege of prayer, and upon meeting what basic conditions?

[13] Another vital condition in our coming to God in prayer is a clear conscience. Note how earnestly King David pleaded on the basis of this before making requests for his people and his son Solomon: "I well know, O my God, that you are an examiner of the heart, and that it is in rectitude that you take pleasure. I . . . in the uprightness of my heart have voluntarily offered all these things." (The value of what David offered was over $140,980,800.)* Note also how Paul ties in the clear conscience with prayer: "Carry on prayer for us, for we trust we have an honest conscience, as we wish to conduct ourselves honestly in all things." Yes, only "the prayer of the upright ones is a pleasure to" Jehovah.—1 Chron. 29:17; Heb. 13:18; Prov. 15:8.

[14] Since in our talking to God we have need to plead for his mercy and forgiveness, he justly requires that we exercise forgiveness ourselves. Jesus illustrated the importance of this in his illustration of a king who, in settling accounts with his slaves, forgave one who owed him over $10 million. But the slave then refused to forgive one who owed him but $17. This caused the king to cancel his forgiveness and put the unmerciful slave in prison until he had fully paid his debt. "In like manner my heavenly Father will also deal with you if you do not forgive each one his brother from your hearts."—Matt. 18: 23-35.

[15] Jesus made the same point when he said: "If, then, you are bringing your gift to the altar and you there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar, and go away; first make your peace with

* See 1 Chronicles 29:3, 4, 7 and the footnotes thereon in the *New World Translation of the Hebrew Scriptures*, Volume 2, of the year 1955.

13. What further condition of prayer did David and Paul stress?

14-16. What other quality is needed for our prayers to be heard?

your brother, and then, when you have come back, offer up your gift." Among the gifts we can offer today is "the fruit of lips."—Matt. 5:23, 24; Heb. 13:15.

16 The apostle Peter touches on this same subject in counseling husbands to be considerate in dealing with their wives as the weaker vessel. Failure to do so would cause the prayers of the husbands to be hindered. There must be love and unity in the marital relationship, even as in the Christian congregation, for God to hear and answer prayers.—1 Pet. 3:7.

17 Nor would we overlook the condition of acting in harmony with our prayers. How, indeed, could God answer our prayers if we acted contrary to them? Do we pray for a safe arrival and then break speed laws, take needless chances or drive after we have been drinking liquor? Do we pray for wisdom and then neglect personal study, meetings and assemblies? Do we pray for the unity and peace of Jerusalem, at the same time acting tactless, harsh or perverse in our dealings with our brothers? Then we talk to God in vain. Yes, we must do our part if we expect God to do his part.

SUBSTANCE OF OUR PRAYERS

18 We know what we can pray for—anything in harmony with Jehovah's will, even as Jesus showed in his model prayer. Everything that concerns us, spiritually and physically or materially, may be the subject of our petitions: "In everything by prayer and supplication . . . let your petitions be made known to God." True, we may not pray for divine healing, for that is not in harmony with God's will for us today, but we may pray for God's holy spirit of wisdom and power so as to take the wisest course and have the strength to endure whatever God may permit. —Phil. 4:6; Luke 11:13.

19 Since we pray regularly, we must exercise care that we do not get into a rut with our expressions. "When praying," Jesus said, "do not say the same things over and over again." How mechanical the doorstep sermons of Christian ministers would sound if they used the same ones year after year! Yet unless we give it thought we may be guilty of the very same thing in regard to our personal prayers, and what a loss in blessing that would mean! Even as Jehovah God gives us endless variety in his Word and in nature, so let us exercise care that in talking to God we do not mechanically repeat ourselves but vary the thought content of our prayers, in line with immediate circumstances, the day's text, and so forth. —Matt. 6:7.

20 Especially if ours is the privilege of publicly representing others in prayer should we give thought to such things, taking note, for example, of the theme of the congregation meeting. A little thoughtfulness by advising beforehand the one who is to enjoy this privilege will aid in having public prayer fluent, coherent, earnest, rich in thought content and apropos to the particular meeting. Such prayers should avoid both extremes as regards length; some clergymen have been known to pray as long as two hours!

21 So that all may fully benefit from congregational prayer, the one chosen to represent the congregation should be able to express himself with sufficient volume, coherently and distinctly. The purpose of praying is not to encourage the one praying or to give him experience in public praying but to represent others properly before Jehovah's throne of undeserved

17. For God to answer our prayers what must our actions be?
18. For what may we pray?
19. How may we avoid getting in a rut with our prayers?
20, 21. What factors should be given consideration in congregational prayer?

kindness. Let it be noted that congregational prayer is not a mere formalism, such as is the saying of mass in a foreign tongue. Each one therefore should listen to it carefully, and it should be given in a way that would compel each listener to utter a fervent "Amen!" at its close.

[22] Since public prayers are not practice sessions, children should not be asked to represent adults in prayer. The place for young children to learn to pray is at a parent's knee. You parents, take time and thought to teach your children how they should pray and what their prayers should include. Impress upon their young minds that they are talking to God and therefore are to address him with reverence, sincerity and childlike simplicity.

[23] Respect for the precious privilege of prayer dictates that prayers should not be given as a part of a demonstration. That is why a male servant who accompanies a sister to her home Bible studies lets her conduct for the purpose of his offering counsel if need be, but he offers the opening and closing prayer, for prayer is never offered for the purpose of its being counseled.

[24] Truly, it is a great condescension on God's part for him to let us walk and talk with him. And as we walk with him let us ever be alert to hear and heed what he has to say to us, as we ourselves keep talking with him, incessantly, persevering therein with thanksgiving as we make known our petitions. At the same time let us exercise care to conduct ourselves in line with our petitions and to keep the thought content of our prayers ever fitting to the occasion and to avoid getting in a rut. Doing so we will share in the vindication of Jehovah's name, make his heart glad and assure ourselves much joy now and in Jehovah's endless new world of righteousness.

22. How and where should children be taught to pray?
23. Respect for the privilege of prayer dictates what?
24. How may our privilege of talking with God be summarized?

Finding Out for Himself

In Arkansas a Witness placed some Bible literature with a Baptist minister and later called back. "I quickly began to marvel at his meekness and humility," reports the Witness. "When he learned something new he was quick to acknowledge it. We discussed Bible manuscripts and translations, and I made comparisons using the *New World Translation;* he ordered a copy. Later he ordered the *Diaglott.* Recently he told me why he started to study with the Witnesses. He had heard so many bad things he just wanted to see if they were true. He confessed that he now knew they were not true. One time he told me about his sermon at his church. He said he told his congregation that most people thought some were to be teachers and preachers and others were only supposed to listen. But, as he told them, this is not true: All of you should be witnesses! He said the congregation looked at one another, then at him. . . . He grinned at me."

Making Progress

A Witness called at the home of a clergyman in Virginia and was invited to return. The back-call included a discussion of the doctrines of hell, trinity and what would happen to the earth. He agreed that the Witnesses taught the truth. After several discussions, a study was started in the *Paradise* book. During a period of bad weather, the Witness did not go to the clergyman's home for a study. The clergyman thereupon came to see the Witness and informed him that he had left his book *"Make Sure of All Things"* at the clergyman's home the last time he called. This turned out to be of great benefit to the clergyman, since he read it and now agrees on two subjects that he could not see before; namely, that the soul is not immortal and that Jehovah is using only one organization. One day the clergyman said: "I'm coming, it's slow but I'm coming. The Bible says, 'Make sure of all things.' "

"In Pleasant Places"

with JEHOVAH'S ORGANIZATION

As told by Ewart Chitty

HOW can one get the right viewpoint on important questions and problems, so as to make right decisions? I have found that it is by heeding the published word of Jehovah's organization, which directs one in harmony with the Scriptures. Truly I can say that this has been the practical means time and time again that has caused the curtain never to drop in heavy folds around me, but to rise ever higher on new delightful vistas of Kingdom truths and Kingdom service.

THE CURTAIN RISES

My mother came to appreciate God's truth in 1912, and I remember that she tried to interest me in spiritual things. But at the age of fourteen it made no appeal, except that I realized she had got hold of something that meant everything to her. Two years later World War I started, and it was not long before the young men of Britain had to take life seriously. With an older brother and a boy friend I attended some talks being given by the Bible Students, as Jehovah's witnesses were then known. All of us accepted the understanding of the fundamental Bible truths then being taught. As far as my own outlook was concerned, it could be said the curtain began to rise.

The question of dedication, of course, had arisen. I knew it meant giving my whole life to God to do his will, and I knew it was a privilege and a step I ought to take. But I also realized that, once taken, it could never be recalled. What was it that helped and prompted me to make the decision?

It was the organization that provided the needed help, Jehovah's organization. I was then working in a big insurance office, traveling to and fro by underground train. I was young and my sight was good, and I used to do a lot of reading while traveling. Very distinctly I recall I was reading one morning in Volume III of *Studies in the Scriptures* about the urgency of taking the desired step. I could turn to the page now, yes, there it is on page 225, where it says: "If any have but recently come to know and love our Lord, and desire to serve him and his truth, let not such be discouraged. . . . If you see the 'door' of opportunity for sacrifice and service open before you, enter it. But enter quickly."

That decided it for me. That was the moment. Without exaggeration, for me that meant the curtain was rising on a new life. It was a moment of supreme happiness, and I felt very grateful to Jehovah for providing through the publications of the Watch Tower Society just the encouraging word I needed. I am highlighting this point in my life story because I feel

it is so vital. I know it is. Not only in my own life, but in the lives of many others personally known to me, I can see that heeding the voice of Jehovah's organization has often been the determining factor as to the course taken. It has been the crucial test. The currently speaking voice of God's organization can be a test and it can just as well point out just how Jehovah is to be served, giving detailed guidance and encouragement and warning. This can be a searching test as to whether, or how much, self comes into the picture.

It was the voice of the organization that caused me to take the next big step in my life. At a certain meeting of the congregation, we were encouraged to enter more fully into Jehovah's service and, if interested, to make inquiries about it. I decided to do so, and, as a result, was invited into Bethel, the Watch Tower Society's branch office in London. I gladly accepted the invitation that year, in 1921. I was given work in the office.

BLESSINGS OF BETHEL SERVICE

Do not get the impression that Bethel life is humdrum. There is a regularity, a schedule of work and of meals, more strictly adhered to and timed than is generally experienced in most homes. However, one soon accustoms himself to this, and I have found it a great advantage, both as regards health and in getting work done. Serving Jehovah at Bethel is serving "in pleasant places" with his organization because of the manifold blessings.—Ps. 16:6.

One big advantage in Bethel life is the education and training it affords. It has always been true that in Bethel one gets the closer and more constant upbuilding counsel and good example that help so much in preparing for the ministry in all its aspects. As with many other members of the Bethel family, this has opened the way for me to visit and serve different congregations on certain weekends, also sharing in various assemblies and conventions, including the three big international gatherings at New York city, in 1950, 1953 and 1958.

Another advantage of Bethel service is the benefit and pleasure of visiting various congregations. It generally means staying in the homes of the brothers, enjoying their hospitality and pleasant fellowship and really getting to know them and making lasting friends. It is just as Jesus said: "Everyone that has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or lands [the good things of ordinary home life] for the sake of my name will receive many times more and will inherit everlasting life."—Matt. 19:29.

Then, too, in Bethel itself there is the opportunity of entering into a real friendship. Maybe, like myself, some persons have what is considered the customary British reserve and are not always easy to get to know, but I can definitely say that staying in the homes of the brothers, or in a Bethel home under such an organizational arrangement, makes those relationships possible that, besides being very pleasurable, can prove to be a source of strength, helping one to keep a good balance in difficult times.

Then there is the matter of outlook. I recall very well the outlook I had in those early years before entering Bethel, in common, I think, with many others. Entering Bethel meant a broader and fuller life, and I learned how to be content and happy with having plenty to do in full-time service. We knew we had to "Advertise the King and the Kingdom," but there was no conception then of the tremendous educational work and the ingathering of a "great crowd" of "other sheep" before Armageddon; no, not even the clear identification of such a group. Gradually, how-

ever, the curtain rose, revealing an ever-widening horizon. How did it come about?

Looking back, I can see that every time it was through the organization, through the organized "faithful and discreet slave" class, appointed over all the Lord's belongings. (Matt. 24:45-47) I have always looked forward to the conventions, for invariably it was then that further enlightenment was given, or a further feature of Kingdom service opened up, always based on the Scriptures.

One of the most striking occasions when the voice of the organization meant a great deal to me was during the dark war years of World War II. To be living in London then was, humanly speaking, a grim experience. We did not know how long it would last or the immediate outcome. I recall that in the period of growing suspense before war broke out, with Hitler's screaming voice relayed every now and again over the wireless, our attitude toward the people in the door-to-door work was that this was likely to be the last time around the territory and they must make up their mind what they were going to be, "sheep" or "goats."

Yes, humanly speaking, I felt the outlook was dark and uncertain. Would it end in Armageddon? Then, with the war still on, word came through that the Society was planning to establish on "Kingdom Farm" in New York State a school for training missionaries to serve in foreign fields. That spoke volumes to me. It was the voice of hope and promise of Jehovah's organization indicating what was ahead. It was a sudden rising of the curtain.

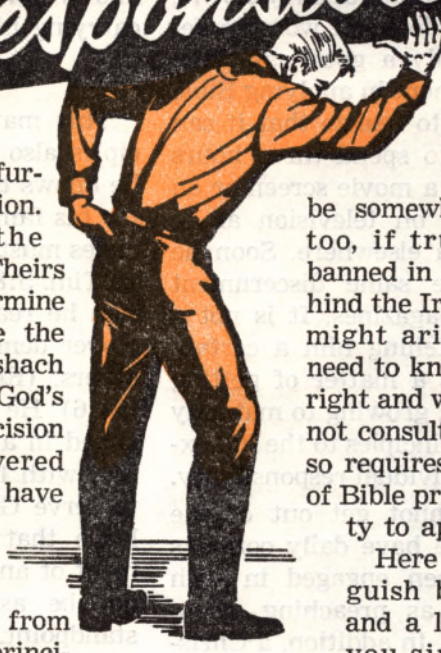
So figuratively and spiritually the curtain has risen, enabling me to share in the spiritual restored paradise foretold at Isaiah 55:12: "With rejoicing you people will go forth, and with peace you will be brought in. The mountains and the hills themselves will become cheerful before you with a joyful outcry, and the very trees of the field will all clap their hands." What a pleasant position in which to be!

This spiritual paradise has been manifest in tangible ways. If I had been told in the early nineteen twenties that in forty years' time I would be living and serving in a fine and spacious new Bethel home, well, I might well have laughed as Abraham and Sarah did when told what seemed impossible. (Gen. 17:17; 18:12) I am still working in the office, but what an office! We have a large office with windows all along one side giving a view of a wide expanse of sky and trees, with a grand old cedar close by. What a pleasant place in which to work! As our zone servant, Brother Hoffmann, said to me not long ago: "It is like living in a restored paradise."

Then, too, I have had the same friend and roommate for the past thirty years or more, Brother Edgar Clay, whose life story you may have already read; but now we share a lovely room, a most pleasant home with a fine view facing south, and an extra window looking out to rising fields and trees and the setting sun in all its glory.

Because of heeding the voice of God's organization, I can say, along with thousands of my Christian brothers, that, in the words of the psalmist David, "the measuring lines themselves have fallen for me in pleasant places."—Ps. 16:6.

Carry YOUR OWN LOAD of Responsibility



IN ANCIENT Babylon when three Hebrews were ordered to fall down and worship an image or be thrown into a burning furnace, they had to make a decision. They had no time to ask the prophet Daniel what to do. Theirs was the responsibility to determine the course to follow. Despite the danger of death, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego refused to break God's law against idolatry. Their decision was right and Jehovah delivered them. (Daniel 3) Would you have been able to carry their load of responsibility?

Not every Christian is mature enough to choose right from wrong on the basis of Bible principles. Some lack sufficient knowledge, others fail to employ their thinking ability. One might ask others to make important decisions for him because of laziness or the desire to have someone else share the responsibility. Perhaps he really would like to take a certain course of action and hopes the other person's conscience will approve it, even if his own does not. Whatever the reason, failure to carry your own load of responsibility is to your disadvantage.

For one thing, the habit of getting others to do your thinking leaves your own perceptive powers untrained and weak. Answers obtained simply by asking someone else are not likely to make a deep impression, certainly not as deep as when you do the research yourself. There is also the possibility that a friend's impromptu answer may be somewhat incorrect. Then, too, if true worship is ever banned in your land, as it is behind the Iron Curtain, occasions might arise when you would need to know how to determine right and wrong when you could not consult someone else. To do so requires accurate knowledge of Bible principles and the ability to apply them.

Here it is well to distinguish between a principle and a law. A law asks that you simply obey. A principle asks that you do your own thinking and apply or extend the principle to your own case. This calls to mind Paul's words at Hebrews 5:14: "Solid food belongs to mature people, to those who through use have their perceptive powers trained to distinguish both right and wrong." To carry our load of responsibility more capably, let us examine some areas where mature application of Bible principles is involved.

ASSOCIATIONS

When one first comes to a knowledge of the truth he may take a bold stand for Bible principles, such as separateness from the world and seeking right associations. (John 15:19; Jas. 4:4; 1 John 2:15; 1 Cor.

15:33) He sees the obvious need to have no fellowship with fornicators, thieves and the like. Later on he appreciates more fully the ramifications of those principles. He sees that the whole world is under Satan's influence, not just its baser elements. (1 John 5:19) He comes to appreciate that, even though an acquaintance may not be immoral, if that one does not worship Jehovah he is not really a good associate. Likewise his discernment in applying Bible principles helps him to realize that it can be just as harmful to spend three hours with an adulterer on a movie screen or an evening with killers on television as to fellowship with them elsewhere. Soon he begins to apply the same discernment toward books and magazines. It is not a matter of someone telling him a certain thing is wrong. It is a matter of getting God's mind on things, growing to maturity and applying Bible principles to the full extent, which is our individual responsibility.

Of course, we cannot get out of the world altogether. We have daily contacts with unbelievers when engaged in such necessary activities as preaching, shopping or secular work. In addition, a Christian wife whose husband is an unbeliever may be required to make more worldly contacts than others do. But all mature Christians are living for the new world, not cultivating ties with the old world. A mature Christian recognizes the difference between going to school for an education, for example, and participation in school sports, dances or other activities that are not compulsory. The Christian appreciates that he must be employed to make a living, but this does not require him to attend dinners and parties with worldly employers or fellow employees. He realizes that even though such worldly persons may not have lost all moral sense, they are not the associates for a worshiper of Jehovah to seek. As he gets God's mind on things he sees how Bible principles extend into many areas that he did not think about at first. When he becomes mature he would not want such worldly associations even if someone else did tell him that he thought it was all right. As a mature Christian he knows how to apply Christian principles, carrying his own load of responsibility.

EMPLOYMENT

This mature application of Bible principles also affects his employment. While he knows that God expects him to provide for his family, he realizes that Bible principles must be applied to the work he does. (1 Tim. 5:8) So when he becomes a Christian he readily sees that, even if his employer demands it, he cannot lie or cheat others. (Rev. 21:8; Eph. 4:28; Deut. 25: 13-16) He may even find that he is engaged in a business that is in direct conflict with the Word of God; so to be able to serve God acceptably he may have to leave that occupation and seek employment of another kind, even though it may not be as rewarding from a financial standpoint.

Others may find that, while their work is generally not out of harmony with Bible principles, there are certain things that they are expected to do that give rise to a conflict of conscience. They may at first reason that they are not advocating these things, that they are only supplying goods or services that others request. But as one grows to maturity and applies Bible principles to their full measure one may find greater happiness by arranging to shift one's work to some other branch of his profession or by seeking work elsewhere. (1 Tim. 1:18, 19; 1 Pet. 3:21) Who is to decide? Neither the Watch Tower Society nor others of his Christian brothers can decide for him. It is his load of responsi-

bility, and he should be allowed to carry that load free from criticism.

HEADSHIP

Other responsibilities must be faced at home. In many parts of the world people are inclined to be very independent. Wives have worldly attitudes about women's rights, children are disrespectful of their parents and bossy husbands are not too inclined to do what the Bible says. Things change when the family gets a knowledge of Jehovah God. The husband sees that he must submit to the headship of Christ and do a preaching work. (1 Cor. 11:3) But at first other Bible counsel on headship may seem to escape his notice or he may regard home affairs as his personal business. He may listen when Jesus says, 'Go preach,' but not when the Scriptures say, 'Love your wife as your own self.' He needs to accept the responsibility of applying Bible principles in every aspect of his life.—Eph. 5:28-30; Col. 3:12-14, 19; 1 Pet. 3:7.

A similar thing may take place with his wife. On becoming a Christian she realizes that she must be in subjection to her husband and she submits in many matters. (Eph. 5:22-24) But one day the husband may make a major decision without asking her opinion. He simply announces that the family is going to move. Now a test develops. She does not agree with him; her relatives live nearby. Will she still apply the Bible principle of subjection, carrying her load of responsibility, or will she try to take over her husband's load? If she lacks maturity she may stage an emotional demonstration to win her way or simply refuse to submit to her husband's decision. But one who is mature in the application of Bible principles does not discard them even when others fail to do what may seem right.

Sometimes youngsters come to know Jehovah ahead of their parents, who strongly object to the children's new religion. The parents order them to stop preaching from house to house and attending meetings. Shall the youngsters become rebellious? Not if they apply the Bible principle of honoring their father and mother. Although they will not quit worshiping Jehovah God, they will continue subject to their parents, doing what they can do to advance true worship. As they grow in love of God they will realize that what Jehovah says is best. They will rely patiently on him until they come of age or until their parents gain an understanding of Jehovah's will. In fact, by continuing in subjection they may bring about that happy result sooner than they would by taking things into their own hands.—Eph. 6:1-3.

MISUSE OF BLOOD

Another field in which decisions must be made involves the misuse of blood. Today the world misuses blood in so many ways that it is not always easy to discern what products contain it. The Christian may feel that it would be fine if the Watch Tower Society would make up a list of all the food products and medical preparations that contain blood. But the Society has not done so for good reasons. There are many substances found in blood that are also found elsewhere. This is to be expected, since human and animal bodies are not the only creations produced from the earth. For example, while lecithin is found in blood, it is also derived from soybeans, which happen to be the common commercial source of most lecithin. If there is doubt about a product, it is up to the individual to investigate by inquiring of the manufacturer. He cannot expect a brother in the congregation to rule on the matter for him; the brother did not make the product and neither did the Society. The

substance may have been derived from blood or it may not. He must bear his own load of responsibility.

As to blood transfusions, he knows from his study of the Bible and the publications of the Watch Tower Society that this is an unscriptural practice. (Gen. 9:4; Acts 15:28, 29) Now it is up to him to carry his own load of responsibility in applying what the Scriptures have to say on this matter. One day he may go to the hospital for surgery. There he explains his position to the doctor. "All right," the doctor says, "then we will use plasma." Or the doctor may tell him, "What you need is red cells to carry oxygen. We have red cells that we can use. How about that?" The Christian may not be well versed in medical matters. Shall he call his congregation servant or the Society? That should not be necessary if he is prepared to carry his own load of responsibility. He need only ask the doctor: "From what was the plasma taken?" "How are the red cells obtained?" "Where did you get this substance?" If the answer is "Blood," he knows what course to take, for it is not just whole blood but anything that is derived from blood and used to sustain life or strengthen one that comes under this principle.

Someone may argue with you that the Scriptures are referring to the "eating" of blood but that blood is not taken into the digestive system during a transfusion. True, but the fact is that by a direct route the blood serves the same purpose as food when taken into the stomach, namely, strengthening the body or sustaining life. It is not the same as a vaccine given to a healthy person to ward off a disease. Blood is given to a weak or sick person to build him up, just as food is given to nourish him.

To carry this load of responsibility that goes with respect for the sanctity of life, it is important for one to think out the matter in all its aspects before a crisis arises. When one has been in an accident and is weak from loss of blood, this is no time to be making decisions that should have been made when one could think clearly and had time to ascertain the Bible principles involved. A mature person makes it a practice to meditate when he studies, considering the application of the information at hand to his own life even though he may not at the moment be faced with the circumstance under discussion. In this way he knows what course to take when confronted with an urgent situation and he has clearly in mind the governing principles from the Scriptures.

SEEKING GODLY WISDOM

Being a Christian involves everything one does in life. It is not just a matter of believing and preaching certain doctrines and cherishing certain hopes. At first one who is learning the truths from God's Word may be particularly concerned with doctrinal matters, because he finds that what the Bible says exposes false religious teachings that he had been taught from childhood. But as he grows in knowledge and appreciation, he sees that what the Bible outlines is more than a set of doctrines; it is a way of life. Now he begins to grasp what the scripture means when it says: "Trust in Jehovah with all your heart and do not lean upon your own understanding. In all your ways take notice of him, and he himself will make your paths straight."—Prov. 3:5, 6.

As a result, no matter what the problem with which he is faced, he first endeavors to ascertain the Bible principles involved and lets them guide his course. Even when deep emotional problems arise, he does not turn for counsel to men who may be highly educated in worldly psychology but who lack true faith in Jeho-

vah God. He does as counseled at James 5:13: "Is there anyone suffering evil among you? Let him carry on prayer." Yes, he turns to God, regularly communing with him in prayer and taking time to meditate on the portions of his Word that help him to get his problem in proper perspective. If necessary, he may also talk to the overseer of his congregation or some other mature Christian to make sure that he is taking into consideration all the scriptures that bear on his situation. But then, bearing his own load of responsibility, he does not ask someone else to make his decisions for him. He faces up to the situation, determining which course he as a dedicated Christian ought to pursue. Then, trusting in Jehovah to uphold him, he courageously walks in the way that will keep him close to God.

DISCERNMENT, NOT FANATICISM

All such fine application of Bible principles is a matter of discernment, not fanaticism. At Proverbs chapter 2 Jehovah promises to give us discernment and wisdom if we hunt for it as we would for hid treasure. Through his "faithful and discreet slave" organization God has provided rich spiritual food, and we should regularly use the publications that contain that food. (Matt. 24:45-47) It is recommended that every Christian household have its own reference library containing Bibles, each year's copies of the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines, the Watch Tower Society's current bound books, and other such information as is provided for those who are regularly engaging in the ministry. It might also be helpful to have a good dictionary, a Bible concordance and perhaps a Bible dictionary. Also on hand should be the *Watch Tower Publications Index* and its annual supplements. These are basic tools for seeking wisdom and discernment from God's Word.

When a question or problem arises, get in the habit of carrying your own load of responsibility. Turn to your *Index* or the index contained in the back of others of the Society's publications and locate the subject or text involved. If you do not have a certain publication to which you are referred, put forth the effort to locate it in the local Kingdom Hall library or at the home of a friend.

Do your research and come to the best conclusion that you are able to reach. Youths should check their conclusions with their parents. Wives may verify their findings by asking their dedicated husbands. Anyone can check an important matter with his congregation overseer. While offering the needed help, the overseer will also do well to inquire if the individual has done any research and thinking of his own on the question. At times it may be necessary to write to the Society about a matter if it is important in one's ministry. But all are urged to learn to discern the Bible principles involved in a matter just as the Society would.—Ps. 119:105.

By carrying your own load of responsibility you will enjoy greater use of your perceptive powers as you grow to maturity and in usefulness to Jehovah God and his organization. In time of crisis you will be able to determine what God's will for you is, just as Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego did in their own case. And, like them, you will find Jehovah's protection and favor in faithfully carrying your own load of responsibility.—Gal. 6:5.

WHY "SO GREAT A CLOUD OF WITNESSES"?

AT HEBREWS 12:1 we read: "So, then, because we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also put off every weight and the sin that easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us."

The question has been asked, Why did the writer of Hebrews speak of "so great a *cloud* of witnesses" instead of so great a *crowd* of witnesses?

By saying, "So, then," the writer of Hebrews is referring back to the previous chapter where, after having first given a definition of faith, he starts out to list the men of faith, from Abel on down through the patriarchs, Moses, the judges and on to the prophets, which reach to the time of Christ, as John the Baptist was the last of the old Hebrew prophets. The writer could have referred to these all by the ordinary Greek word *okhlos,* meaning "a crowd," but because he wanted to make his point as forceful as possible he used a metaphor, and spoke of them as a "cloud." In modern English a great swarm of locusts that covers the sky is referred to as a cloud of locusts.

His objective is especially clear from the fact that here he did not even use the usual Greek word for cloud, *nephe'lē,* from which comes the English word nebulae, referring to a cloud. This word *nephe'lē* occurs upward of twenty-five times in the Christian Greek Scriptures in its singular or plural form. For example: "They will see the Son of man coming in a cloud." (Luke 21:27) "A cloud caught him up." (Acts 1:9) "They will see the Son of man coming on the clouds of heaven." (Matt. 24:30) "Look! He is coming with the clouds."—Rev. 1:7.

Instead of using this word, the writer of Hebrews used *néphos,* the only occurrence of it in the entire Christian Greek Scriptures. This is a word that is often used in a metaphorical sense by both Greek and Latin writers as "a dense cloud of shields," "a cloud of spearmen." Concerning this use of *néphos* Professor Wuest states in *Hebrews in the Greek New Testament:*

"The word 'cloud' here is not *nephele* which is a detached and sharply outlined cloud, but *nephos,* a great mass of cloud covering the entire visible space of the heavens, and therefore without definite form, or a single large mass in which outlines are not emphasized or distinguished. The use of 'cloud' for a mass of living beings is familiar in poetry. Homer speaks of 'a cloud of footmen, a cloud of Trojans.' Themistocles, addressing the Athenians, says of the host of Xerxes, 'we have had the fortune to save both ourselves and Greece by repelling *so great a cloud of men.*'"

The distinction between *néphos,* "a cloud-mass," and *nephe'lē,* "a cloud," is similar to the distinction made between *petra,* a rock-mass, and *Petros,* referring to a single rock, used as a proper noun.

Thus we see that the writer of Hebrews here carefully chose an unusual word, *néphos,* or cloud-mass to stress the great number of witnesses, in keeping with his observation: "And what more shall I say? For the time will fail me if I go on to relate about Gideon," and so forth. Yes, there were so many that there was no recounting them all; they were not just a crowd but like a cloud-mass.—Heb. 11:32.

The foregoing is of more than mere academic interest to Christians; it means more to them than merely a fine point of language. By the use of this word *néphos* we have driven home to us how great indeed was the number of those who witnessed faithfully to Jehovah God, how many were shining examples of faith, even though those named in the Scriptures may be said to be comparatively few. Thus when Elijah thought that he was the only one that had been jealous for Jehovah's name, Jehovah assured him that He had in Israel seven thousand that had not bowed their knees to Baal. (1 Ki. 19:18) Since we as Christians are surrounded by "so great a cloud of witnesses" (*martýrōn,* "martyrs"), not observers, we can take courage that we also can prove faithful as we seek to follow the "Perfecter of our faith, Jesus."—Heb. 12:2.

Also worthy of note is the care with which the writer of Hebrews chose his words, making use of an unusual expressive metaphor to drive home his point. His example in this is one that all ministers who would influence others by word of mouth or pen would do well to follow so as to do the greatest possible good. "A word at its right time is O how good!"—Prov. 15:23.

● How many times does the word "sheol" occur in the *New World Translation of the Hebrew Scriptures?*—S. J. D., United States.

The word "Sheol" occurs sixty-six times in the New World Translation of the inspired Hebrew Scriptures, instead of sixty-five times, this being because it occurs in the English translation of Isaiah 7:11, where the *King James Version* uses the expression "ask" instead of Sheol.

However, strictly speaking, it still remains true, what is stated on page 409 of the appendix of Volume 5 of the *New World Translation of the Hebrew Scriptures* under the heading "1 Samuel 2:6—'Sheol,'" namely, "The Hebrew word שְׁאוֹל (*Sheʾol*), which we have transliterated in all cases as "She'ol," occurs 65 times in the Hebrew text from Genesis to Malachi. This word, which refers to gravedom or the general realm of the dead, is to be distinguished from the Hebrew word *qeb'er,* which means a burial place (as in Genesis 23:4), and from *qᵉbu·rah',* which means a grave (as in Genesis 35:20)." How is this?

In Isaiah 7:11 the Masoretic text vowel points as *sheálah* the Hebrew expression שְׁאֵלָה (*sh'lh*) that the *New World Translation* renders as "as Sheol." This Hebrew expression *sh'lh* occurs only once in the Hebrew text. This expression with its final "h" in the Hebrew word has been interpreted by Bible translators as being the imperative form of the Hebrew verb *shaál* with an emphatic final "h" and meaning "do ask." Hence, Dr. Young's literal Bible translation renders the line: "Make deep the request, or make it high upwards," whereas Rotherham's *Emphasised Bible* renders the line: "Go down deep for a request, or ascend on high!" The *King James Version* rendering and other version renderings are in harmony with that.

However, there are textual critics who believe that the Hebrew expression was wrongly vowel pointed and that instead of reading *sheálah,* as in the current Masoretic text, it should read *sheólah.* In this latter case the Hebrew expression would not be the imperative of the Hebrew verb *shaál* but it would be the Hebrew noun *Sheol* with a final "h" paragogic, or a final "h" that indicates direction of movement. Hence, the thought of the Hebrew would be to make it deep "to sheol" or "sheolward." That is why the *New World Translation* renders the line: "Making it as deep as Sheol or making it high as the upper regions." *An American Translation* reads similarly, rendering the line: "Make it deep as Sheol, or high as the heavens!" The *Revised Standard Version* of 1952 likewise reads similarly, rendering the line: "Let it be deep as Sheol or high as heaven." Dr. James Moffatt's Bible translation may possibly be following the same line when it renders the verse: "Ask the Eternal your God for an omen—from the deep underworld or from high heaven." It is interesting to note that the Latin *Vulgate* reads *"profundum inferni"* and hence the Roman Catholic *Douay* version renders the verse: "Ask thee a sign of the Lord thy God, either unto the depth of hell, or unto the height above."

It is interesting to note that the Hebrew German-English Lexicon, known as Koehler and Baumgartner's *Lexicon of the Old Testament Books,* prints the conjecture that the Hebrew expression *sheálah* should read *sheólah* and hence it also lists the Hebrew expression under the general heading of *Sheol.* Likewise Rudolf Kittel's *Standard Hebrew Text* has the Hebrew expression *sheálah* in the main text, but in the footnote it says: "Read with Aquila, Symmachus and Theodotion, *sheólah* (*unto hádēs*)." Thus these three ancient translators of the Hebrew text into Greek read the Hebrew expression as *sheólah* instead of *sheálah.*

Even the French Jerusalem Bible translation reads like the Latin *Vulgate* and *Douay* versions and uses the word Sheol. The French Monks of Maredsous Bible translation reads similarly but uses the expression "from the depths of the abode of the dead." Cardinal Lienart's French Bible has "down there in *le scheol.*" The Torres Amat Spanish Bible has *"profundo del infierno." Bover-Cantera* (Spanish) has *"profundo del seol."*

In view of this difference of opinion or of construction placed upon the correct vowel pointing of the Hebrew text it is more strictly

true that the Hebrew text contains the word Sheol for only 65 times that we can be sure of, but the case in Isaiah 7:11 may be similar to the Hebrew expression that occurs in Genesis 37:35; 42:38; 44:29; 44:31; Numbers 16:30; 16:33; Ezekiel 31:15; 31:16; 31:17, where *sheólah* does occur in the Hebrew text. But whereas we are only sure of 65 occurrences of Sheol in the old Hebrew text, we are obliged to say that in the *New World Translation* and other modern English translations the word Sheol occurs, not 65 times, but 66 times.

● According to the Bible record, Ishmael was well along in his teens when Abraham sent his mother Hagar and Ishmael away because of Ishmael's poking fun at Isaac. In view of this fact, how are we to understand the words found at Genesis 21:14, 15?—G. M., United States.

The texts in question read: "So Abraham got up early in the morning and took bread and a skin water bottle and gave it to Hagar, setting it upon her shoulder, and the child, and then dismissed her. And she went her way and wandered about in the wilderness of Beersheba. Finally the water became exhausted in the skin bottle and she threw the child under one of the bushes."

That Ishmael was well along in his teens at this time is apparent when we note that Abraham his father was eighty-six years old when Ishmael was born and a hundred years old when Isaac was born, and it was some years later that Isaac was weaned, at which time Ishmael poked fun at the child Isaac. —Gen. 16:16; 21:5, 8, 9.

Of course, from the record we cannot tell just what was the physical stature or strength of Ishmael. He may have been of slight build and weak by nature and may have given out first because of this, necessitating his mother's lifting him up and carrying him. Women in those days were accustomed to carrying heavy burdens in everyday life, especially a slave woman such as was Hagar, so this would not be inconceivable. But it appears that in time Hagar also gave out, making it necessary for her to deposit him, perhaps unceremoniously, under the nearest sheltering bush.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FIELD MINISTRY

Everyone who has a knowledge of God's Word has the responsibility to share its message with others. During February Jehovah's witnesses will carry out that responsibility by offering to all persons a subscription for *The Watchtower*, with three booklets, for $1.

WHOSE WILL WILL WIN OUT?

Since the days of Jesus Christians have prayed, "Thy will be done on earth." But today, it would seem that many have completely forgotten the meaning of those words. The individual will of men and nations seems far more important to most persons, especially to those who have to do with shaping the future of men's affairs. In these days of struggle for supremacy of will, this prayer of sincere Christians is not forgotten, and God's Word reveals God's purpose to make his own will known in this generation. How is it to be done? Read *"Your Will Be Done on Earth."* It is a fascinating book of history in the making, based on Bible prophecy. Send only 50c.

LORD'S EVENING MEAL

The date for observing the Lord's evening meal in 1963 is Monday, April 8, after 6 p.m. Standard Time. Each congregation should start now to make arrangements so that all of Jehovah's witnesses and other persons of goodwill can gather together for this occasion. A qualified speaker, one of the remnant of Christ's anointed followers, if available and capable, should be assigned to deliver the discourse.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

March 31: Walking with God, ¶1-33. Page 105.
April 7: Walking with God, ¶34-40, and Talking with God. Page 111.