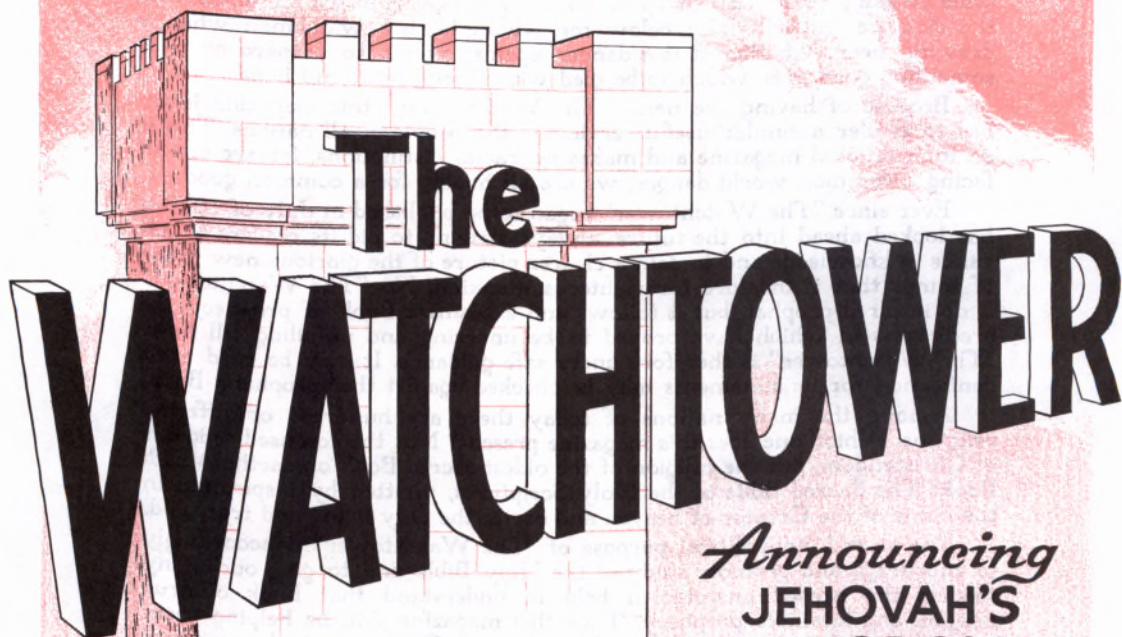




The WATCHTOWER

Announcing
**JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM**

JUNE 15, 1964

Semimonthly

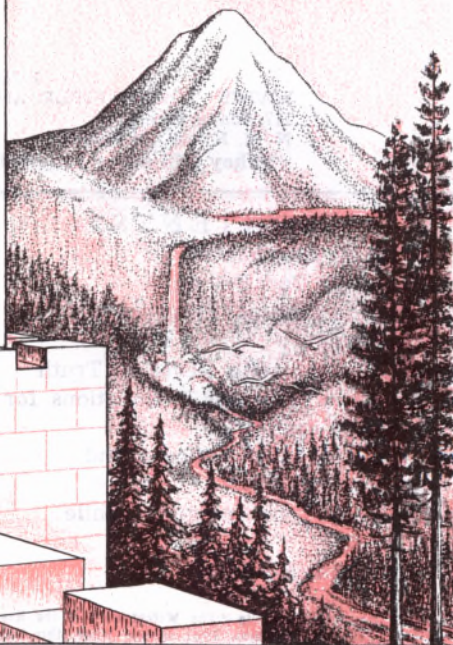
**JEHOVAH, THE GOD OF
PROGRESSIVE REVELATION**

**KEEPING ABREAST WITH REVEALED
TRUTH**

TO WHOM DO YOU BELONG?

**YOUTHS, KEEP YOUR INTEGRITY
WHILE AT SCHOOL**

©WTB&TS



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

THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER"

Every watchtower has its purpose. It serves as an elevated place for a wide-awake person with sharp vision. It enables him to see far ahead into the distance and tell those below for whom he is a watchman what is drawing near, whether it is a danger against which to prepare or it is something good over which to be glad with strong faith and hope.

Because of having the name "The Watchtower" this magazine justly has to render a similar useful service to the people of all nations. This is an international magazine and makes no racial distinctions, for we are all facing a common world danger; we are all hoping for a common good.

Ever since "The Watchtower" began to be published in July of 1879 it has looked ahead into the future, always striving to aid its readers to advance in knowledge and to gain a clearer picture of the glorious new order of things that is in store for righteous mankind. No, "The Watchtower" is no inspired prophet, but it follows and explains a Book of prophecy the predictions in which have proved to be unerring and unfailing till now. "The Watchtower" is therefore under safe guidance. It may be read with confidence, for its statements may be checked against that prophetic Book.

Among the many nations of today there are hundreds of differing religions. Which one does this magazine present? Not the confused religions of Christendom, but the religion of the oldest sacred Book on earth. Which Book? The Sacred Bible of the Holy Scriptures, written by inspiration in the name of the Creator of heaven and earth, the only living and true God.

The sacred, nonpolitical purpose of "The Watchtower" is accordingly to encourage and promote study of the Holy Bible and to give our many readers the needed unsectarian help to understand that Book of true religion and infallible prophecy. Thus this magazine will be helping them to prove worthy of perfect life and happiness in God's promised new order under His everlasting kingdom of righteousness.



PUBLISHED BY THE
WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA
117 Adams Street
N. H. KNORR, *President*
Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201, U.S.A.
GRANT SUITER, *Secretary*
"They will all be taught by Jehovah."—John 6: 45; Isaiah 54: 13

CONTENTS

Strive to Be Consistent	355
To Whom Do You Belong?	357
Jehovah, the God of Progressive Revelation	360
Keeping Abreast with Revealed Truth	366
Babylon Lays Religious Foundations for World Deception	372
Plain Speaking About Nicaea and the Trinity	376
Youths, Keep Your Integrity While at School	377
Questions from Readers	383

The Bible translation used in "The Watchtower" is the New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures, 1961 edition. When other translations are used the following symbols will appear behind the citations:

<p>AS - American Standard Version AT - An American Translation AV - Authorized Version (1611) Dy - Catholic Douay version JP - Jewish Publication Soc.</p>	<p>Le - Isaac Leeser's version Mo - James Moffatt's version Ro - J. B. Rotherham's version RS - Revised Standard Version Yg - Robert Young's version</p>
--	--

Printing this issue: 4,300,000 Five cents a copy

"The Watchtower" is Published in the Following 66 Languages

Semimonthly	Monthly	Monthly
Afrikaans	Finnish	Portuguese
Arabic	French	Sesotho
Cebu-Visayan	German	Slovenian
Chinese	Greek	Spanish
Chibona	Ilocano	Swedish
Cibemba	Italian	Tagalog
Cinyanja	Japanese	Twi
Danish	Korean	Xhosa
Dutch	Norwegian	Zulu
English		
	Armenian	Ibanag
	Bengali	Ibo
	Bicolano	Icelandic
	Burmese	Kanarese
	Croatian	Malayalam
	Edik	Marathi
	Ewe	Melanesian
	Fijian	Pidgin
	Ga	Motu
	Gun	Pampango
	Hebrew	Pangasinan
	Hiligaynon	Papiamento
	Visayan	Polish
	Hungarian	Yoruba

Watch Tower Society offices
America, U.S., 117 Adams St., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201
Australia, 11 Beresford Rd., Strathfield, N.S.W.
Canada, 150 Bridgeland Ave., Toronto 19, Ontario
England, Watch Tower House, The Ridgeway, London N.W. 7
Jamaica, W.I., 41 Trafalgar Rd., Kingston 10
New Zealand, 621 New North Rd., Auckland S.W. 1
South Africa, Private Bag 2, P.O. Elandsfontein, Transvaal
Trinidad, W.I., 21 Taylor St., Woodbrook, Port of Spain

Yearly subscription rates for semimonthly editions
\$1
8/-
\$1
7/-
7/-
7/-
\$1.75

Remittances for subscriptions should be sent to the office in your country. Otherwise send your remittance to Brooklyn. Notice of expiration is sent at least two issues before subscription expires.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS should reach us thirty days before your moving date. Give us your old and new address (if possible, your old address in italics). Write Watchtower, 117 Adams St., Brooklyn, New York 11201, U.S.A.

Second-class postage paid at Brooklyn, N.Y.

Printed in U.S.A.



Announcing
JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM

Vol. LXXXV

June 15, 1964

Number 12

Strive to be **CONSISTENT**

"CONSISTENCY, you are a jewel!" That is an expression frequently heard when someone manifests inconsistency. And since we all are imperfect, we are all likely at times to be inconsistent.

But that does not mean that we should not aim for consistency. We should, for consistency means "harmony of conduct or practice with profession; persistent adherence to moral or ethical standards in thought and action." In other words, we should practice what we preach and should not be tempted from a course of right conduct. The Creator, Jehovah God, and his Son, Jesus Christ, are consistent and we should be imitators of them in this.—Matt. 5:48; Heb. 6:18; 13:8.

Inconsistency being a common human failing, it is not surprising to find that those who write on the subject frequently speak disparagingly of consistency. "Don't be 'consistent,' but be simply true," once said a noted American jurist. But did he have a point? Not according to the dictionary. And said another writer on the subject: "Consistency is the quality of a stagnant mind," as if consistency ruled out progress. It does not. And wrote a popular American essayist years ago: "With consistency a great soul has simply nothing to

do." But are not the laws of nature consistent? They are, and they are the product of the greatest Soul in the universe.—Jer. 51:14.

It may well be that some disparage consistency because they do not want to submit to its demands. Thus one historian tells that Thomas Jefferson, who by many Americans is considered to be the democratic man, the lover of freedom *par excellence*, apparently saw nothing inconsistent between his severe denunciations of slavery and his owning many slaves himself. Then again, although he preached that 'error need not be feared so long as reason is free to combat it,' yet he sought, inconsistently, to make the University of Virginia a stronghold of his Unitarian religious ideas and of his Republican political philosophy.—*Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, May 1963.

The Bible, man's only sure guide, does not gloss over inconsistency; it does not wink at it or condone it. Rather, throughout its pages it strongly condemns inconsistency. How bluntly Jesus, the Son of God, exposed the inconsistency of the religious leaders of his day! They claimed to be the children of Abraham but they were

not doing the works of Abraham. They claimed to believe in Moses; but if they had, they would have believed also in Jesus, for Moses wrote of Jesus.—John 5: 44-47; 8:39, 40.

Those men had seated themselves in Moses' seat, teaching his law, but did they practice what they preached? No, they were inconsistent. "They say but do not perform," Jesus declared. Further highlighting their inconsistency, Jesus said that they were straining out gnats while swallowing camels.—Matt. 23:2, 3, 24.

The apostle Paul, though a learned man, did not disparage consistency as modern learned men are prone to do. In imitation of Jesus he lashed out strongly at Jews who were guilty of inconsistency: "Do you, however, the one teaching someone else, not teach yourself? You, the one preaching 'Do not steal,' do you steal? You, the one saying 'Do not commit adultery,' do you commit adultery?"—Rom. 2:17, 21, 22.

Today, especially in the pulpits, there is much inconsistency. Men claim to be Christian ministers and yet they pour ridicule on the Bible accounts of creation, the flood of Noah's day, and so forth, incidents to which Jesus Christ referred as historical. Besides, did not Jesus say, "Your word is truth"? And as far as Jesus was concerned, God's written Word at that time consisted of the Hebrew Scriptures.—John 17:17; Matt. 19:3-6; 24:37-39.

Not that the requirement of consistency is flouted only by the clergy. There are ever so many people who loudly boast of their patriotism, making a show of it by waving and saluting flags, singing the national anthem and celebrating national holidays. However, their true colors are betrayed by their eagerness to cheat their country in the matter of paying taxes.

Then again, parents often come short in

the matter of consistency in dealing with their children. They warn their children that they will be punished if they do this or that, and then the children go ahead and do it anyhow and the parent ignores the disobedience. Or a parent may punish a child for doing a certain thing one day and on another day let the child get away with it. And, most serious of all, inconsistency is shown when a parent tells a child not to lie, steal, gossip, and so forth, and then the child sees and hears the parent doing those very things.

What causes people to be inconsistent? It could be simply carelessness, or it could be selfishness—most likely it is in many cases. However, it also could be due to not having or not recognizing any firm and sound standard by which to guide oneself.

The Creator of man, Jehovah God, has provided man with a sure guide, his Word, the Bible. It was given to serve as 'a lamp to our feet and a light to our roadway.' It is filled with sound counsel that covers all of life's situations and relationships. On the one hand, it shows that 'it is Jehovah God alone to whom we must render worship,' and, on the other hand, that 'all the things that we want others to do to us we should do to them.'—Ps. 119:105; Matt. 22:37-39; 4:10; 7:12.

More than that, the Bible also supplies the motivation for a consistent righteous course of action. This it does by inculcating the fear of Jehovah, which means hating what is bad and which is the beginning of wisdom. To follow the course of consistency means good relations both with one's Maker, Jehovah God, and with one's fellowman. It brings peace of mind and happiness now and will lead to endless life in the perfect new system of things so near at hand. The requirement of consistency presents a challenge, but to the extent we meet that challenge we will be happy.

To Whom

WOULD you not be angry if another man demanded that your wife totally submit to him? Would you not be incensed if he demanded that your wife give her devotion and loyalty to him instead of to you, her husband?

A man would be outraged at this invasion of his husbandly rights. A wife belongs to her husband. No other person has the right to disrupt the marriage bond. Jesus Christ gave emphasis to this when he said: "Therefore, what God has yoked together let no man put apart."—Matt. 19:6.

GOD AND THE STATE

There is a situation similar to this today. It is in connection with the demands that the political state makes on the lives of its subjects. In many countries military dictators or iron-fisted politicians rule, demanding total loyalty from the people. Communist governments that control about a third of the world's population are among those that demand such total subjection. More and more, powerful governments seek to regulate and regiment the lives of their subjects wholly. They feel that the people belong to them and must do all that the rulers ask.

Yet, God is spoken of as a husband to his people who are in covenant relationship with him. The Bible puts it this way: "I [God] myself had husbandly ownership of them." (Jer. 31:32; Isa. 54:5) Because of this relationship God has the right to require his people to observe certain things that pertain only to this close, intimate

What choice is there?
What will yours be?

Do You
Belong?

arrangement. But where the political state does not recognize this relationship, then a conflict can ensue when the State demands absolute submission of all people, including God's servants.

Many of the demands of civil authorities are right and proper. After all, Jesus Christ himself said that each person should "pay back . . . Caesar's things to Caesar." (Matt. 22:21) It is mandatory, therefore, for citizens to obey all the legitimate demands placed upon them by the government under which they live. This is also in harmony with the apostle Paul's words when he said: "Let every soul be in subjection to the superior authorities," meaning the political state, or the civil authorities.—Rom. 13:1.

Indeed, God's laws require that his people be model citizens in whatever land they live, not cheating, lying, stealing, committing immorality, never resorting to violence against another, and obeying all the various rules and regulations that the government places on them that do not conflict with God's laws. Their upright, honorable and decent course of action is an asset to any nation in which they live. No civil authority need be concerned about antisocial behavior, delinquency, or criminal activity of such people.

However, does this mean that the individual, especially one who is keenly interested in doing God's will, belongs to the State in a total or complete sense? Must his subjection be rendered even at the expense of his intimate relationship with God, who says that He is as a husband to

his people? No. While Jesus urged men to pay back to Caesar what belonged to Caesar, he also said that men should pay back "God's things to God."—Matt. 22:21.

So while certain duties must be rendered to the State because they rightly belong within its jurisdiction, there are other duties that must be rendered only to Almighty God because they belong only within his jurisdiction. They cannot be rendered to anyone else. Hence, the subjection of God-fearing persons to the political state is *relative*, not *total*, because no man or organization of men can rightfully demand what belongs to God.

The illustration of a husband and a wife can again be applied to this situation. A wife might rightfully go to work for another man at his place of business. But if her employer required that she submit totally to him, in all areas, including the intimate details pertaining to married life, then his demands would be out of order and could not be complied with. The employer would be demanding what the wife could rightly give only to her husband. Any pressure to get her to switch her loyalty and devotion from her husband would be wrong. The employer could rightly require only that she fulfill the obligations of her secular employment. He could not rightfully go beyond that, invading the area that belongs to her husband, and expect her to comply. As a devoted wife she could not do so.

This same principle applies to man's relationship with God. God is the Creator. He gave man life and provided him with the things necessary to sustain life. He rightfully can require something in return, as a husband who provides for his wife requires certain things of her. While God permits human governments to exercise a measure of control over individuals, as an employer might over a man's wife, He does not give such governments of men the

right of absolute control, requiring submission even in those areas that belong only to Him.

Those in covenant relationship with God have an intimate relationship with him. All who are dedicated to him must fulfill their obligations toward him. They appreciate that their loyalty, their integrity, their devotion and worship belong to God. So do their lives. They cannot sacrifice them for another cause. They appreciate that they must give *total* submission to God, while giving *relative* submission to organizations of men, including political governments. They cannot give their lives, loyalty and worship to another, when these belong only to God. To transfer to the political state such intimate aspects of one's relationship to God would be a violation of this relationship. It would be like a wife's agreeing to have intimate relations with another man not her husband. That would be adultery. For one of God's servants to give total loyalty and worship to the political state would likewise be adultery, spiritual adultery. It is as God himself explains in his Word: "Adulteresses, do you not know that the friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever, therefore, wants to be a friend of the world is constituting himself an enemy of God."—Jas. 4:4.

Men in positions of political control would do well to consider this: Just as a husband is angered by one who demands that his wife violate her marriage obligations, so God is angered at any who demand that his servants violate their obligations to him. When such persons go to the point of persecuting those who want to do God's will, what then? The Bible answers: "Indeed God himself will break the head of his enemies in pieces." (Ps. 68:21) God assures us that he will 'avenge the blood of his slaves.' (Rev. 19:2) "Jehovah is guarding all those loving him, but

all the wicked ones he will annihilate.”
—Ps. 145:20.

TO WHOM DO YOU BELONG?

When a person gives to the civil authority what belongs to it, and at the same time gives to God what belongs to God, then he is really God's slave, or servant. He belongs to God because he is maintaining the proper balance between the requirements of God and those of the State. But when a person gives to the civil authorities what belongs to them and at the same time also gives to those authorities what should be given only to God, then he is in fact the slave of the political authority. He belongs, not to God, but to that worldly authority.

It is not whom we *think* we are serving that matters. What matters is whom we are serving in actual fact. Jesus said: “No one can slave for two masters.” (Matt. 6:24) The apostle Paul added: “Do you not know that if you keep presenting yourselves to anyone as slaves to obey him, you are slaves of him because you obey him?” (Rom. 6:16) So while some may feel that they are not in servitude toward God and hence belong to themselves, they in reality belong to the political state, since they obey it even when it demands activity that violates God's law. It is as the Bible says: “For whoever is overcome by another is enslaved by this one.”—2 Pet. 2:19.

No one who wants to do what is right in God's sight can disregard this vital issue of belonging to one or the other. By his actions a person shows he belongs either to God or to the State. All who want God's blessings will be concerned about determining where they stand. Where do you stand?

Paul warned: “You were bought with a price; stop becoming slaves of men.” (1 Cor. 7:23) Yes, God gave his Son Jesus Christ to ransom mankind from sin and death. Therefore, whether you have the hope of heavenly life or want to live forever on the paradise earth God promises obedient ones, you should heed Paul's counsel to “stop becoming slaves of men.” You will want to be like a faithful wife who loyally sticks to her husband and who does not break her marriage vows when illegal demands are made on her.

Make sure of your position before God. Apply yourself to a diligent study of his Word, the Bible. In this way you will be able to ascertain clearly what your responsibilities are toward God and toward man. Sincerely apply yourself to living the way God wants you to live. Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, but make certain that you do something much more important, that is, give to God what belongs to him. Have the same mental attitude the apostle Paul had when he said: “For both if we live, we live to Jehovah, and if we die, we die to Jehovah. Therefore both if we live and if we die, we belong to Jehovah.”—Rom. 14:8.

If you want God's blessings, you must belong to him. You must maintain the proper balance in your relationships between God and the civil authorities. Then you can look to God for his benefits. You can say as the psalmist, who exclaimed: “O do guard my soul, for I am loyal. Save your servant—you are my God—that is trusting in you. Show me favor, O Jehovah, for to you I keep calling all day long.”—Ps. 86:2, 3.

This is what the true God, Jehovah, has said, the Creator of the heavens and the grand One stretching them out; the One laying out the earth and its produce, the One giving breath to the people on it, and spirit to those walking in it: “I am Jehovah. That is my name; and to no one else shall I give my own glory, neither my praise to graven images.”

—Isa. 42:5, 8.



Jehovah

THE GOD OF PROGRESSIVE REVELATION

JEHOVAH created man to be dependent on his Maker. While man possessed the great gift of free moral agency, he was not to be independent of Jehovah, but would need to rely on him for further instruction and guidance. Man could not successfully govern or be governed without the assistance and information that come from Jehovah. He must have God in his life in order to be truly happy and to be a blessing to others. Because man was created dependent on Jehovah, it meant that the invisible Jehovah would reveal himself to man to keep him continually informed concerning His purposes and requirements. That Jehovah does reveal himself the prophet Amos made clear when he said: "For the Lord Jehovah will not do a thing unless he has revealed his confidential matter to his servants the prophets." (Amos 3:7) His servant Daniel told King Nebuchadnezzar similarly: "However, there exists a God in the heavens who is a Revealer of secrets."—Dan. 2:28.

² This revealing of Jehovah's purposes comes in his own due time. He does not reveal his will all at once, but reveals it pro-

gressively down the stream of time, as it is needed by those affected. As Proverbs 4:18 says: "But the path of the righteous ones is like the bright light that is getting lighter and lighter until the day is firmly established."

³ Jehovah made man's mind. Since he designed it, he knows what is best for it far better than the possessor of the mind, man. Jehovah therefore recognizes man's capacity and limitation to absorb new things. Psalm 103:14 informs us: "For he himself well knows the formation of us, remembering that we are dust." Because of such limitations, including the added burden of human imperfection due to the rebellion in the garden of Eden, Jehovah provides spiritual truths as man is able to absorb them. Are we not thankful for the progressing of the seasons gradually so that our bodies are not shocked by sudden changes in temperature? Jehovah has wisely governed these seasons for man's benefit. He has made the passing of them gradual so man's body is able to adapt itself to the change. Man's mind also needs gradual feeding and changing, as too little will keep it weak spiritually, but too much will not be absorbed and can be shocking. It is like the watering of a tender plant. Too little water will not sustain it, and the plant will gradually wither away and die. Too much water will be beyond the ability of the plant to absorb, and might even hinder its growth.

1. What should man's relationship to Jehovah be, and what does Jehovah provide for this?
- 2, 3. How much does Jehovah reveal to man concerning his purposes? Why?

⁴ Since Jehovah knows we cannot grasp too much at one time, he does not reveal too much at one time, but reveals what is needed. In the days of Jesus the disciples learned that Jehovah would not give them what they could not absorb at their stage of maturity. Just before his death Jesus told his disciples: "I have many things yet to say to you, but you are not able to bear them at present." The disciples were not yet ready for the many strong truths they were to learn later. When they were ready, then Jehovah would reveal these truths to them. As Jesus promised: "However, when that one arrives, the spirit of the truth, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak of his own impulse, but what things he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things coming."—John 16:12, 13.

⁵ That the disciples had much to learn is evident from their question to Jesus after his resurrection. They asked him: "Lord, are you restoring the kingdom to Israel at this time?" (Acts 1:6) It was not until later that they fully realized there was not to be a fleshly kingdom in which they would participate. The Kingdom was to be a heavenly arrangement. We can appreciate Jehovah's loving-kindness in giving the disciples these truths gradually, since the belief of a literal king's coming to throw off the Roman yoke and set up an earthly kingdom was a deep-seated hope of the Jews at that time. Had this truth of the

Kingdom's being in heaven and not on earth been revealed at the time Jesus first called out his disciples, they might not have had the maturity to understand, appreciate, and continue following him. Strong truths given too quickly may be indigestible to the novice. The beginner, as the baby, needs milk, not strong meat. Paul later said: "I fed you milk, not something to eat, for you were not yet strong enough."—1 Cor. 3:2.

PETER'S EXPERIENCE

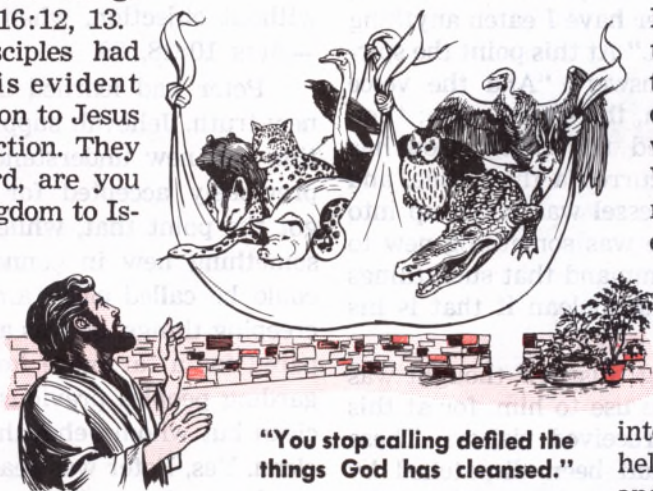
⁶ An example of how Jehovah reveals truths progressively and conditions the minds of his people for them was the preparation of Peter's mind for the work that he was to do later.

In Acts, chapter ten, we find the interesting account of the trance into which Peter fell. Verses 10 to 16 relate the experience: "But he became very hungry and wanted to eat. While they were preparing, he fell

into a trance and beheld heaven opened and some sort of ves-

sel descending like a great linen sheet being let down by its four extremities upon the earth; and in it there were all sorts of four-footed creatures and creeping things of the earth and birds of heaven. And a voice came to him: 'Rise, Peter, slaughter and eat!'"

⁷ We can imagine Peter's feelings, since the Jews were forbidden by the Mosaic law



"You stop calling defiled the things God has cleansed."

4. What did Jesus tell his disciples, to confirm this?

5. How was Jehovah's loving-kindness demonstrated in connection with knowledge of the kingdom of heaven?

6, 7. (a) Describe what Peter saw when he fell into a trance. (b) What did he already know about the things he saw?

to eat some of those things. No doubt he remembered the principles laid down in the Law, such as those of Leviticus 11: 41-43: "And every swarming creature that swarms upon the earth is a loathsome thing. It must not be eaten. As for any creature that goes upon the belly and any creature that goes on all fours or any great number of feet of all the swarming creatures that swarm upon the earth, you must not eat them, because they are a loathsome thing. Do not make your souls loathsome with any swarming creature that swarms, and you must not make yourselves unclean by them and actually get unclean by them."

⁸ What was Peter to do? Here was something new he could not quite understand. In astonishment, he replied: "Not at all, Lord, because never have I eaten anything defiled and unclean." At this point the spirit supplied the answer: "And the voice spoke again to him, the second time: 'You stop calling defiled the things God has cleansed.' This occurred a third time, and immediately the vessel was taken up into heaven." Yes, here was something new to Peter. God can command that such things no longer be called unclean if that is his will.

⁹ Peter's learning this new thought was to be of immediate use to him, for at this very moment he received visitors. These were men that had been dispatched by Cornelius, the Roman army officer. The spirit told Peter: "However, rise, go downstairs and be on your way with them, not doubting at all, because I have dispatched them." (Acts 10:20) The men told of the request Cornelius was making for Peter to come into the house of this Gentile army officer. He wanted to hear the things Peter had to say.

¹⁰ Again we can imagine the perplexity of Peter about going into the house of a Gentile. Had he not expressed horror at being asked to eat unclean things? Now he was being asked to go into the home of one considered unclean! However, Peter was better prepared now. The request to come into the Gentile's home was not as shocking as it may have been without the preparing of Peter's mind by the vision Jehovah gave him while he was in the trance. Peter later recognized that this vision had prepared him for the more important truth to come. He admitted to Cornelius and his household: "You well know how unlawful it is for a Jew to join himself to or approach a man of another race; and yet God has shown me I should call no man defiled or unclean. Hence I came, really without objection, when I was sent for." —Acts 10:28, 29.

¹¹ Peter had learned and accepted that new truth. Jehovah supplied new information and new understanding on a matter previously accepted for centuries. Peter got the point that, while he was learning something new in connection with what could be called clean among animals and creeping things, he was actually being prepared for a far more important truth regarding peoples previously considered unclean but whom Jehovah now pronounced clean. Yes, Peter was ready to use the second key and unlock the secrets concerning Jehovah's kingdom arrangement to these men of the nations. How timely was Jehovah's preparing of Peter's mind so that he could absorb these new truths!

PROGRESSIVE FROM THE BEGINNING

¹² Since the time of Adam Jehovah has revealed his truths, especially of the Kingdom, progressively to the human family.

8. (a) What was Peter's reaction? (b) How was he corrected?

9-11. (a) What new dilemma faced Peter? (b) Why was he better prepared to absorb this new requirement?

12. Why is the 'book of divine creation' not enough in understanding God's purposes?

To some extent he has used the 'book of divine creation' to do so. As Romans 1:20 states: "For his invisible qualities are clearly seen from the world's creation onward, because they are perceived by the things made, even his eternal power and Godship." However, Jehovah did not deem sufficient this means of revealing himself. As we can observe in places where men are surrounded by natural marvels, such as in the jungles of Africa and South America or in the mountainous regions of Asia, the worship of false gods is still prevalent.

¹³ So while the 'book of divine creation' is an aid to understanding Jehovah, much more important are the supernatural revelations that come from Jehovah through his "only-begotten Son," the Logos, and through the angels, all by means of his holy spirit. It is in this way that Jehovah progressively reveals the truth. The ones receiving these truths, men faithful to Jehovah's requirements, then dispense them to others of mankind. Some of these human agents have been privileged to record their inspired expressions in the Bible. But whether recorded or not, these communications from Jehovah have been received supernaturally in the form of visions, dreams, word-for-word inspiration, or by the regulation of one's thoughts. Some of those with whom Jehovah communicated to enlarge the information on his purposes were Adam (Gen. 2:16), Enoch (Gen. 5:24; Jude 14, 15), Noah (Gen. 6:9, 13), Abraham (Gen. 12:1-3), Moses (Ex. 31:18; 34:28), and the various prophets (Amos 3:7).

¹⁴ With the coming of the Messiah in 29 C.E., many new truths were revealed to mankind, especially concerning the King-

dom. Now Jehovah was speaking to man through his Son on earth, the King-Designate. "God, who long ago spoke on many occasions and in many ways to our forefathers by means of the prophets, has at the end of these days spoken to us by means of a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the systems of things." (Heb. 1:1, 2) On Pentecost the holy spirit was poured out on the new Christian congregation. This was now the agency on earth used to dispense the progressive truths of Jehovah's purposes to the human family. Paul showed that this was the case when he wrote: "Now we speak wisdom among those who are mature, but not the wisdom of this system of things nor that of the rulers of this system of things, who are to come to nothing. But we speak God's wisdom in a sacred secret, the hidden wisdom, which God foreordained before the systems of things for our glory. This wisdom not one of the rulers of this system of things came to know, for if they had known it they would not have impaled the glorious Lord. But just as it is written: 'Eye has not seen and ear has not heard, neither have there been conceived in the heart of man the things that God has prepared for those who love him.' For it is to us God has revealed them through his spirit, for the spirit searches into all things, even the deep things of God."—1 Cor. 2:6-10.

¹⁵ Many were the new truths Jehovah revealed to the first-century Christian congregation. For example, at Pentecost Peter explained the fulfillment of Joel 2:28, 29. (Acts 2:14-21) Later, he revealed that salvation was possible only through the name of Jesus. (Acts 3:13-4:12) Only a few days thence Peter and John passed on to the brothers the revelation that Christians must obey God rather than man and would receive holy spirit if they did so. (Acts

13. To understand Jehovah's purposes, what is much more important?

14, 15. (a) What new arrangements came into effect for dispensing truths in the first century? (b) What were some of these new truths?

5:29-32) Some time after that Stephen revealed, under inspiration, that he saw Jesus standing at God's right hand as proof that Jesus had indeed returned to heaven.—Acts 7:56.

¹⁶ Further clarification on the status of Gentiles was forthcoming even after Jehovah's revelation to Peter about the calling of the Gentiles into the Christian congregation. In 49 C. E., at an assembly in Jerusalem, the matter of circumcision for Gentile converts was discussed. The decision on this question was directed by Jehovah and was tied in with previously revealed truths. Here we can see the step-by-step process that Jehovah took to build up the disciples' appreciation of how to handle Gentile converts. On that occasion Peter related what had happened years earlier (36 C.E.) when he took the truth to the Gentile Cornelius. Peter said: "Brothers, you well know that from early days God made the choice among you that through my mouth people of the nations should hear the word of the good news and believe; and God, who knows the heart, bore witness by giving them the holy spirit, just as he did to us also. And he made no distinction at all between us and them, but purified their hearts by faith." (Acts 15:7-9) Then James, who was presiding, concluded the decision of the assembly by saying: "Brothers, hear me. Symeon has related thoroughly how God for the first time turned his attention to the nations to take out of them a people for his name. And with this the words of the Prophets agree, just as it is written."—Acts 15:13-15.

¹⁷ It was not just a matter of the apostles and older men deciding by a vote what should be done. It was their examining how Jehovah had been dealing with them and also their examining the testimony of the

Scriptures. So from the appeal of Peter's experience when he witnessed the spirit of Jehovah being poured out on Cornelius and his household even before their baptism, and from the appeal of the experiences of Barnabas and Paul among the Gentiles and also of the Scriptures, it was apparent that Jehovah was revealing to them the new truth that the Gentiles did not have to be circumcised. That decision was agreed upon and passed on to the congregations.

¹⁸ Then in 56-61 C.E. the apostle Paul wrote further on the matter of the Gentiles not being subject to the law of Moses. From the Scriptures he showed that God had nailed the law covenant to the torture stake of Jesus. (Rom. 6:14; 15:7-13; Col. 2:13, 14) Such revelations aided those who had formerly been of the Jewish religion to realize that Jehovah was telling them that now the Gentiles could also be called to become members of the bride of Christ without having to submit themselves to previous Jewish arrangements. In 60-61 C.E. Paul wrote to the Ephesians and said: "In other generations this secret was not made known to the sons of men as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by spirit, namely, that people of the nations should be joint heirs and fellow members of the body and partakers with us of the promise in union with Christ Jesus through the good news." (Eph. 3: 5, 6) Gradually, then, over the course of years, the attitude of former Jews to these Gentile believers was transformed. How shocking it would all have been had it come the first day Jesus began his ministry!

¹⁹ Later, in 96 C.E., the apostle John was used in a marvelous way to inform the early Christians concerning the revelation of things that would shortly take place.

16, 17. In what way was the new truth relative to circumcision ascertained?

18. What else did Paul write in regard to Gentiles?

19. How was John used in Jehovah's progressive revelation?

Writing under inspiration he revealed such new information as the number making up the Kingdom class, the number of world powers yet to come, the length of time Satan was to be abysed, and other outstanding truths. Progressively Jehovah revealed amazing new truths to sheeplike ones. It happened just as Jesus had said earlier: "I publicly praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and intellectual ones and have revealed them to babes."—Matt. 11:25.

THE KINGDOM'S ESTABLISHMENT

²⁰ Bible prophecies such as Matthew chapter 24, Mark chapter 13, Luke chapter 21 and others definitely point to the fact that God's kingdom by Christ has been established in the heavens since the year 1914. Since Jehovah revealed many truths in previous generations to aid in understanding his purpose through this kingdom, are we to expect any less revealing of truths with that kingdom fully established and his King-Son Jesus Christ installed in power? Surely not! The Kingdom's establishment was the signal for a tremendous increase of revealed truth to be dispensed to Jehovah's people on earth. With the King's enthronement came the issuing of a continuous flow of instructions to obedient subjects of that kingdom in order to clarify their understanding on doctrine and procedure. A constant supply of progressively unsealed truths was assured. This is pictured at Revelation 5:1 to 8:1.

²¹ Centuries earlier Isaiah had foretold this flow of truth: "And many peoples will certainly go and say: 'Come, you people, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will instruct us about his ways, and we

will walk in his paths.' For out of Zion law will go forth, and the word of Jehovah out of Jerusalem. And he will certainly render judgment among the nations and set matters straight respecting many peoples. . . . O men of the house of Jacob, come and let us walk in the light of Jehovah."—Isa. 2:3-5.

²² As Jehovah revealed his truths by means of the first-century Christian congregation so he does today by means of the present-day Christian congregation. Through this agency he is having carried out prophesying on an intensified and unparalleled scale. All this activity is not an accident. Jehovah is the one behind all of it. The abundance of spiritual food and the amazing details of Jehovah's purposes that have been revealed to Jehovah's anointed witnesses are clear evidence that they are the ones mentioned by Jesus when he foretold a "faithful and discreet slave" class that would be used to dispense God's progressive revelations in these last days. Of this class Jesus said: "Truly I say to you, He will appoint him over all his belongings."—Matt. 24:47.

²³ The holy spirit of Jehovah is working mightily today! How thankful we should be for the provision God has made of this slave class, the modern spiritual remnant, as they faithfully dispense the revealed truths of Jehovah! With these rich truths to light the way, Christians do not grope in this dark, jungle-like world as do the masses of people in Christendom and heathendom alike. To the contrary, Jehovah's faithful witnesses have been progressively brought to an understanding of Jehovah's purposes, which are clearer now than ever before in history. Their organization, being patterned after the first-century Christian congregation, is blessed by Jehovah. He has prospered their work of preaching "this

20. Concerning revealed truth, what was to be expected with the Kingdom's establishment?

21. What had Isaiah prophesied about this?

22. Through what earthly agency does Jehovah dispense revealed truth in these last days?

23. What evidence do we have that this is so?

good news of the kingdom" in 194 different lands to date. Each year they gather into the organization tens of thousands of new ministers, clearly a product of Jeho-

vah's spirit operating through his invisible King-Son and his angelic representatives, then through his faithful slave class on earth today.—Matt. 24:14.

KEEPING ABREAST WITH REVEALED TRUTH

MOST people keep abreast with clothing styles through the years. They take in knowledge of changes and make the required adjustments so as not to be considered out of date with their fellowman. Yet all this adds nothing to their life-span. How much more important it is to keep abreast with Jehovah and his progressively revealed truths! Here it is not just a matter of being out of date with one's fellowman, but it is a matter of being out of date with the Supreme Sovereign of the entire universe! Keeping abreast with Jehovah can add eternity to our life-span!

² To please Jehovah we must do his will. To do Jehovah's will we must know what it is. Paul admonished: "So keep strict watch that how you walk is not as unwise but as wise persons, buying out the opportune time for yourselves, because the days are wicked. On this account cease becoming unreasonable, but go on perceiving what the will of Jehovah is." (Eph. 5:15-17) To the Colossians Paul showed what was needed: "Be filled with the accurate knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual discernment, in order to walk

worthily of Jehovah to the end of fully pleasing him."—Col. 1:9, 10.

³ Since Jehovah's truths are revealed progressively, we must be progressive in taking them in. Falling behind by neglecting the knowledge Jehovah provides to keep abreast, or pushing ahead with speculations and philosophies beyond what Jehovah has provided puts our lives in jeopardy. Paul cautioned: "That is why it is necessary for us to pay more than the usual attention to the things heard by us, that we may never drift away." (Heb. 2:1) John warned: "Look out for yourselves, that you do not lose the things we have worked to produce, but that you may obtain a full reward. Everyone that pushes ahead and does not remain in the teaching of the Christ does not have God. He that does remain in this teaching is the one that has both the Father and the Son." —2 John 8, 9.

⁴ The Bible gives us ample evidence of the need to keep abreast with revealed truth. In the days of Israelite bondage in Egypt Jehovah revealed new truths about their deliverance. After Moses had deliv-

3. What dangerous courses must we avoid?

4, 5. How was life involved in keeping abreast with the new Passover truths?

1, 2. Why should we keep abreast with revealed truth?

ered the warning of the last plague to Pharaoh, Jehovah issued through Moses new instructions to the Israelites, among which was the following: "Draw out and take for yourselves small cattle according to your families, and slaughter the pass-over victim. And you must take a bunch of hyssop and dip it into the blood in a basin and strike upon the upper part of the doorway and upon the two doorposts some of the blood that is in the basin; and none of you should go out of the entrance of his house until morning. Then when Jehovah does pass through to plague the Egyptians and does see the blood upon the upper part of the doorway and upon the two doorposts, Jehovah will certainly pass over the entrance, and he will not allow the ruination to enter into your houses to plague you."—Ex. 12:21-23.

⁵ What would you have done if you had been an Israelite at that time? Would you have missed the meetings held to discuss these instructions? Would you have ignored the injunction to slaughter the Pass-over victim and sprinkle the blood upon the upper part of the doorway and upon the two doorposts? Of course not! If you had, the life of your firstborn would have been forfeited! The record tells us that the Israelites appreciated this: "Subsequently the sons of Israel went and did just as Jehovah had commanded Moses and Aaron. They did just so." (Ex. 12:28) How vital it was to keep abreast with those new Passover truths!

⁶ In later times the lives of those in Judah depended on keeping up with a new truth revealed through the prophet Jeremiah. It was at the time when the Babylonians threatened Judah. Jeremiah related Jehovah's message: "Even to Zedekiah the king of Judah I spoke according to all

these words, saying: 'Bring your necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon and serve him and his people and keep on living.'" (Jer. 27:12) That was something new! Would the Jews submit to King Nebuchadnezzar in peace? The inspired history tells us they did not. They refused to keep abreast with this newly revealed truth. As a result Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem. Many were slain by the sword. Others died of famine and pestilence. Those remaining came under the yoke of Babylon anyway.

⁷ In the first century the lives of Christians depended on their keeping abreast with a new truth revealed by Jesus when he said: "Furthermore, when you see Jerusalem surrounded by encamped armies, then know that the desolating of her has drawn near. Then let those in Judea begin fleeing to the mountains, and let those in the midst of her withdraw, and let those in the country places not enter into her." (Luke 21:20, 21) In 66 C.E. Roman armies came down against Jerusalem, but then withdrew. That was the signal! The Christians who had kept abreast with revealed truth fled across the Jordan River, clearing out of Judean territory, and preserved their lives. Jews who did not keep abreast with this new requirement perished or were enslaved when Jerusalem and Judea were devastated by the returning Roman legions under General Titus in 70 C.E.

⁸ It is likewise urgent to keep up with the flow of truths that have been revealed in our days. Soon after the Kingdom's establishment in 1914 it became evident that a great work had to be done before the end of this system of things came. In 1922 Jehovah revealed through his visible organi-

6. What new truth was revealed through Jeremiah about Babylon, and what happened when it was neglected?

7. How did life depend on the new truth Jesus revealed about Jerusalem?

8, 9. (a) What are some of the truths revealed in our time that are essential for worship? (b) How has the flow of truth improved the quality of our ministerial activity?

zation that now was the time to "advertise, advertise, advertise, the King and his kingdom." Were the lives of life seekers involved in obeying this new truth? Yes! Paul showed at Romans 10:10 that "with the heart one exercises faith for righteousness, but with the mouth one makes public declaration for salvation." If God's servants did not bear testimony their salvation would be put in jeopardy! History shows that Jehovah's faithful servants have kept abreast with that revealed truth. In 1939 the new truth of the neutrality issue was clearly revealed. Just what Jehovah's servants needed! Just in time to help them to meet that issue and maintain integrity during the turbulent worldwide conflict that began the same year! From the year 1945 especially, truths concerning blood began to be revealed and since then have served as a guide for all who have respect for God's law on the sanctity of blood. Obedience to these and many more such progressively revealed truths has enabled God's servants to worship him properly and meet his requirements for life.

⁹ Observe too how the flow of truth from Jehovah has enabled his witnesses to improve the quality of their ministerial activity. At one time they called on people in their homes with their testimony printed on a small card for the householder to read. Also, phonographs were used to give the witness. From these methods Jehovah's witnesses have advanced to the point where they now deliver excellent Bible sermons with their own mouths. Constant progress has also been made in the various meetings. Theocratic ministry schools, Kingdom Ministry Schools, Gilead School, public meetings and home Bible studies are just a few of the many progressive steps taken under Jehovah's guidance to advance the work of bearing witness before the end comes.

¹⁰ Now, in 1964, we are living in the fiftieth year of Kingdom rule. The assault of Gog of Magog, Satan the Devil, against all Christians is approaching rapidly. Has Jehovah left us unprepared? No! Ten years ago Jehovah's people were warned of this coming assault. Since that time excellent progress has been made in building the maturity of new and old alike, so when the assault comes God's servants will be able to stand firm and maintain integrity under test. That preparation continues! We need to keep on building up our faith for the difficult days ahead. This will serve as a large shield with which to quench the wicked one's burning missiles.—Ezek. 38: 14-23; Eph. 6:10-18.

¹¹ Just beyond Gog's assault lie the battle of Armageddon, the abyssing of Satan and his demons and Jehovah's new order, so this is no time to relax our efforts. Paul said: "And this is what I continue praying, that your love may abound yet more and more with accurate knowledge and full discernment; that you may make sure of the more important things, so that you may be flawless and not be stumbling others up to the day of Christ." (Phil. 1:9, 10) "Pay constant attention to yourself and to your teaching. Stay by these things, for by doing this you will save both yourself and those who listen to you." (1 Tim. 4:16) Yes, life is involved! But an even more important and compelling reason to keep abreast with revealed truth is the fact that Jehovah's name must be magnified and sanctified. That is what Jesus put first when he gave his disciples a model prayer: "Our Father in the heavens, let your name be sanctified."—Matt. 6:9.

¹² To bring honor to Jehovah's name and to continue delivering his messages against Satan's world we must keep up to date. Many more hard-hitting truths will yet be

10. What timely information was received relative to Gog of Magog?

11, 12. Why should we not relax our efforts now?

delivered to Jehovah's enemies in the near future. In order to be alert to these and to work in harmony with the visible arrangement of Jehovah, we must continually prepare ourselves. We might compare this preparation to that of a doctor. Would you trust your life in a serious operation to a doctor who had never studied surgery? No, you would want one who possessed the utmost knowledge and skill. We too must progress in knowledge and become skilled in doing Jehovah's will so we can 'fully accomplish our ministry.' —2 Tim. 4:5.

HOW TO KEEP ABREAST

¹³ God's Word the Bible is an inexhaustible source of nourishment. It never grows out of date. Critics may say it is out of date, but that is like saying eating is out of date. We have been eating for thousands of years and it is still very much in style! We would not give it up as old-fashioned and no longer beneficial. The Bible, with its supply of rich spiritual food, is even more necessary and is even more up to date. It sustains us with spiritual food vital for our everlasting welfare.

¹⁴ However, we must take in this spiritual food to have it benefit us. We must plan and set time aside for our spiritual activity as we would for our meals. In this regard, a personal schedule for the week is invaluable. Leaving things for when we have the time usually means that we will never have the time, since the old world makes many demands on us. Time needs to be scheduled and used to keep up with the truth. In planning our schedule for the week, there are three types of activity to take into consideration: (1) The things one *must* do, (2) the things one *would like* to do, and (3) the things one will do only *if time permits*. In the first category, the wise person puts matters pertaining to his

spiritual life. Time is life! Those who do not use it wisely now will not have it at all later.

¹⁵ What are some of the vital things we should schedule during the week? A fundamental activity of the Christian is his private study of the Bible and Bible helps. With time scheduled and used for this, perhaps during the evening or in the early morning, we will be doing something that deserves what Jehovah promised at 1 Chronicles 28:9: "If you search for him, he will let himself be found by you." In our private study, we should not be satisfied with a superficial reading of the material. Learn to analyze not only *what*, but *how*, *why* and *when*. Build on what you already know. Visualize the setting and details of what you are studying. Make these truths your own to use in the ministry. This will fulfill a basic purpose of study, which is to set the mind upon a subject systematically to learn about it for future use. Diligently search for truth and Jehovah will reward your efforts. "If, moreover, you call out for understanding itself and you give forth your voice for discernment itself, if you keep seeking for it as for silver, and as for hid treasures you keep searching for it, in that case you will understand the fear of Jehovah, and you will find the very knowledge of God."—Prov. 2:3-5.

¹⁶ We can build on this good foundation of private study with regular group study. "A wise person will listen and take in more instruction, and a man of understanding is the one who acquires skillful direction." (Prov. 1:5) Listening intently to comments given at the five weekly meetings of Jehovah's witnesses gives us an opportunity to compare what we hear with the information learned from our private study. We will hear discussions of points new to us and will get answers to questions that

13, 14. (a) Why is the Bible not out of date? (b) What must we do to benefit from the spiritual food contained in it?

15. How should we view private study?

16. What additional benefits are provided by the weekly meetings?

we have had difficulty with. At these meetings Jehovah's holy spirit operates as a remarkable organizational agency, helping the congregation as a whole and each of us as individuals. (Matt. 18:20) At meetings we should "hold fast the public declaration of our hope." (Heb. 10:23) Making public declaration by participating stimulates the mind much more than passive listening. Become involved by commenting when invited, taking notes on paper or in the margins of your study aids, looking up scriptures mentioned and following along in the publications being discussed. The more of our senses we use the more alert we will be and the more likely we are to retain what we learn.

¹⁷ A third way to keep abreast is suggested at Proverbs 13:20: "He that is walking with wise persons will become wise." Discussions with mature brothers after meetings or at other gatherings will add to the wisdom that comes from above. Do not isolate yourself after meetings or hurry out when they are dismissed. Remember the proverb: "One isolating himself will seek his own selfish longing; against all practical wisdom he will break forth." (Prov. 18:1) By conversing with our brothers we have further opportunity to learn and to be corrected. Also, direct conversation involves us actively and the truths we are discussing will be more deeply impressed on our minds.

¹⁸ A fourth way to keep abreast is to observe the faithful course of the brothers who are taking the lead in the ministry and to imitate it. Paul encouraged: "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." —Heb. 13:7.

¹⁹ A very important way to keep abreast

is by constantly using what we have learned. If a doctor studied medicine but never practiced it, would you feel confident to have him operate on you? Would you feel encouraged if he said: 'I've never operated before but I'd like to try on you'? Here again you no doubt would want someone who was skilled as a result of constant practice. We too will enlarge our perceptive powers by repeating what we have learned. This is where regular participation in the field ministry proves invaluable in impressing knowledge on our minds. The average person remembers more of what he does than what he hears or sees. Paul emphasized the value of using what we learn: "But solid food belongs to mature people, to those who *through use* have their perceptive powers trained to distinguish both right and wrong." —Heb. 5:14.

²⁰ Praying for assistance by the holy spirit is vital, as it helps us to keep abreast with the truth. "The eyes of Jehovah are toward the righteous ones, and his ears are toward their cry for help." (Ps. 34:15) Jesus said: "Therefore, if you, although being wicked, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more so will the Father in heaven give holy spirit to those asking him!" (Luke 11:13) We are far from being perfect and need help constantly. We should daily petition Jehovah in prayer for wisdom, for understanding and for the spiritual strength necessary to continue in the ministry. James 1:5 promises: "So, if any one of you is lacking in wisdom, let him keep on asking God, for he gives generously to all."

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

²¹ What should we do if certain obstacles arise to hinder our schedule for study and service? Because Satan will see to it that

17, 18. How can we learn from mature brothers?

19. How does using what we learn help us to keep abreast?

20. Why pray for holy spirit?

21. What is the first step we can take to overcome obstacles?

such do arise, we must discipline our minds and bodies to stick to our schedule. Imitate Paul when he said: "The way I am directing my blows is so as not to be striking the air; but I browbeat my body and lead it as a slave." (1 Cor. 9:26, 27) Let us make up our minds *in advance* that we will overcome these obstacles.

²² Sometimes as we prepare to go to meetings, unexpected guests drop in. If we stay at home and entertain them we will miss the meetings where Jehovah's spirit is. We can, instead, explain that we are occupied that evening. Invite the callers to go to the meeting with you, explaining that it is part of your regular worship. If they do not wish to accompany you, you can ask them to wait until you return, or if this is not practical, you can invite them to return another time. Let them know your schedule so that in the future they can adjust to it. Do not be held back easily because of unscheduled visits by relatives or acquaintances. Those of honest heart will have a high regard for you and for the worship you take so seriously, as shown by your determination to put first things first.

²³ Another problem for many is being tired after a hard day's work. How nice it would be to relax! For some this tiredness can be dispelled by a short 20- or 30-minute nap before the evening meal. For others this would be disastrous as it would mean falling into such a sound sleep that they could not recover in time to keep their schedule. If we are of the latter disposition it would be better to become absorbed in something else, such as preparing for the meeting. This will keep us alert and we will not be overcome by sleep.

²⁴ Does bad weather hinder you from keeping your schedule? Since bad weather

does not usually interfere with going to secular work, should it interfere with doing Jehovah's work? Mail deliverers go out in all types of weather to deliver messages of much lesser importance than the message of life with which Jehovah's witnesses are entrusted. Bad weather can be countered by determining ahead of time not to let it hinder us and then by dressing properly for it.

²⁵ At times parents hesitate to bring children to meetings during the week because of their homework. Many have solved this by scheduling homework right after school. Meeting and learning with Jehovah's people is in the field of highest education, leading to life. An additional benefit is that the training and instruction in the ministry enable the child to be a better student and to make faster progress in schoolwork. It develops good thinking and study habits. As one author said: "The more a man thinks, the better adapted he becomes to thinking, and education is nothing if it is not the methodical creation of the habit of thinking."

²⁶ Does your secular work interfere with your ministerial schedule? If it does, then your spiritual health may be endangered. Perhaps you can speak to your employer about it. Many have arranged to get time off from secular work in order to attend meetings and participate in the ministry. Or have you considered changing your job? If your secular work were a hazard to your physical health and life and your doctor ordered you to make a change or else you might die, would you not respond? Jesus promised that Jehovah would take care of our needs if we do our part. Go to God in prayer and sincerely ask him to provide work that will enable you to pursue the ministry.—Matt. 6:33.

22. How could we cope with unexpected visitors?

23. How can we combat fatigue after work?

24. Should bad weather interfere with our schedule?

25. What should be the attitude of parents in regard to scheduling Christian activities for their children?

26. What can we do if secular work interferes?

²⁷ True, all of these things require effort, but the benefits are manifold. There is great happiness in keeping abreast with revealed truth. It cultivates in us the right mental attitude, which enables us to respond more quickly to future revelations of Jehovah's will. This also increases the flow of God's holy spirit to us and its fruitage through us. The more we learn and train now, the more useful we will be in God's new order of righteousness. There will be much to do at that time. In addition to global reconstruction work, those who

27. How will keeping abreast with revealed truth now help us in the future?

BABYLON

Lays Religious Foundations for

WORLD DECEPTION

WHEN a person or a nation turns away from God and true worship as outlined in his Word the Bible, such ones inescapably turn to the worship of something else. Due to man's inborn nature he will worship or look up to something else as superior. It may be the worship of a national leader or of the State; it may be the debasing wor-



keep up with the truth will have the privilege of training not only the Armageddon survivors, but the resurrected multitudes as well. What a great educational work that will be! What a joy and great privilege it is to prepare now for that wonderful work just ahead! Yes, keep abreast with Jehovah's revealed truths progressively dispensed through his "faithful and discreet slave" class, because "happy is the man that has found wisdom, and the man that gets discernment, . . . those keeping fast hold of it are to be called happy."

—Prov. 3:13, 18.

ship of animals or inanimate things. History has shown that this gives rise to a multitude of gods, some nations today having gods almost as numerous as the population.

Along with the increase in gods a multiplication of false doctrines sets in, poisoning the minds of men more and more and binding them more tightly in fear and in slavery to their false religion. Increased wickedness and degradation are the result.

The apostle Paul describes their condition: "And just as they did not approve of holding God in accurate knowledge, God gave them up to a disapproved mental state, to do the things not fitting, filled as they were with all unrighteousness, wickedness, covetousness, injuriousness, being full of envy, murder, strife." —Rom. 1:28-32.

Since idol gods are inanimate and know nothing and the greatest of men are only flesh-and-blood mortals like their worshipers, to whom is such worship really directed? It is directed to and received by the great adversary of God, Satan the Devil. Those

who render such worship actually become servants of the Devil. Paul wrote: "Do you not know that if you keep presenting yourselves to anyone as slaves to obey him, you are slaves of him because you obey him, either of sin with death in view or of obedience with righteousness in view?" They become more and more like the god they worship. In fact, they can even be called children of the Devil. Jesus expressed this rule of spiritual relationships when he spoke to certain religious persons who were boasting of their descent from the patriarch Abraham. He said: "You are from your father the Devil, and you wish to do the desires of your father." The apostle John later wrote: "The children of God and the children of the Devil are evident by this fact: Everyone who does not carry on righteousness does not originate with God."—Rom. 6:16; John 8:38-44; 1 John 3:10; Ps. 96:5; 1 Cor. 10:20.

Babylon is an example of this course of action. More than that, she was the earthly source of such things, like a foundation on which a great false religious structure is to be built. The inhabitants of Babylon, not wanting to worship Jehovah God, turned to the worship of Nimrod. Nimrod had the spirit of that great first rebel against Jehovah God, the spirit of the Devil. He was in reality a worshiper and imitator of the Devil, who started rebellion in heaven and then spread rebellion in the earth, even in the garden of Eden. That is why the Babylonians used the name Merodach (Marduk), meaning "rebel," rather than Nimrod as the founder of their city. Nimrod can thus be identified as one of the seed of the Devil that God spoke of at Genesis 3:15. He was a false seed, a false Messiah. After Nimrod's death he was deified by the Babylonians. His followers, therefore, in directing their worship toward Nimrod, were unknowingly worshipping the

Devil and became his "seed," carrying out his work in opposition to God. When the famous Hammurabi became king and made Babylon the chief city of all Babylonia, Merodach as the city god increased in importance. His proper name was later replaced by the title Belu ("Lord"). Finally he was commonly called Bel and his wife Belit ("Lady").

TRIADS OR TRINITIES OF GODS BEGIN

From that start in the worship of Nimrod the gods of that first Babylonian Empire began to multiply. Among these were a number of triads of gods or deities. In Babylon the temple erected to the god Belus is reported as having been surmounted by three statues, namely, that of Bel (or Bel-Merodach), his mother Rhea (Semiramis), and Bel-Merodach's wife, Juno or Beltis (Zer-panitu)—this according to the ancient Greek historian Ctesias. According to the later Greek historian Diodorus Siculus, at one period in Babylon the religious triad consisted of two goddesses and the son, namely, Hera (the Roman Juno), Rhea (or Semiramis) and Zeus (= Merodach, Nimrod).

Regarding the religion of Babylon and its triadic worship we read: "In the late Babylonian period the worship seems chiefly devoted to Marduk, Nabu [Nebo, meaning Speaker or Announcer], Sin, Shamash and Ishtar. . . . The Babylonians, with all their wonderful gifts, were never able to conceive of one god, of one god alone, of one god whose very existence makes logically impossible the existence of any other deity. Monotheism transcends the spiritual grasp of the Babylonian mind. . . . neither the Babylonians nor the Assyrians arose to any such heights as distinguish the Hebrew book of Psalms."—*The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia*, edition of 1955, Volume 1, page 370.

Another triad was that of Sin (the moon-god) and Shamash (the sun-god) and Ish-tar—the rulers of the zodiac. From Babylon triads of deities spread throughout the earth, even into the time of the Christian Era.

Belief in a triad or trinity defies the sovereignty, even the supremacy, of the one true Almighty God. Fittingly serving the Devil's purpose, it is a potent poison that has contaminated Christendom's religions to the extent that the trinity, which it is claimed consists of three persons in one god, is called today "the central doctrine of the Christian religion."

DEMONISM, MAGIC ROOTED IN BABYLON

What effect does such doctrine have on its worshipers? It weakens their faith in God. It lessens their feeling of responsibility to God to obey him implicitly and give him exclusive devotion. It puts them off balance, confuses their vision, makes them drugged religiously. It puts them in fear and makes it easy for them to begin to accept many gods whom they must appease or please or to whom they must address petitions, for example, so-called "saints." It is a short step from this to the fear of demons, so that among some people this has led to a miserable existence—a life of fear for followers of that kind of religion. Babylon's worshipers were poisoned spiritually in this way. Sir E. A. Wallis Budge, in *Babylonian Life and History*, says:

The demons and devils that made the Babylonian's life a misery to him were many, but the forms of most of them and their evil powers were well known. Most of all he feared the Seven Evil Spirits, who were the creators of all evil. . . . As there were triads of gods, so there were triads of devils, for example, Labartu, Labasu and Akkhazu. The first harmed little children, the second caused the quaking sickness, and the third turned the face of a man yellow and black. Another triad comprised Lîlû, Lîlitu and Ardat Lîli. . . . The Babylonians . . . went to

the priest, who often assumed the character of a god, and who exorcised the devils by reciting incantations, . . .—Pages 146, 147 (1925 edition). See also *The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia*, edition of 1955, Volume 1, page 373.

Magic, sorcery and astrology were developed and indulged in by all, from the king down to his lowest subject. They even believed in a witch who was believed to "possess the power of flying through the air on a stick."—*Ancient History, Part I*—P. V. N. Myers, page 72.

The Bible speaks of the idol images of Bel and Merodach and calls them "dungy idols," that is, filthy idols. (Jer. 50:1, 2) Addressing Babylon as a woman, the prophecy of Isaiah 47:12, 13 says: "Stand still, now, with your spells and with the abundance of your sorceries, in which you have toiled from your youth [as a city]; . . . Let them stand up, now, and save you, the worshipers of the heavens, the lookers at the stars, those giving out knowledge at the new moons concerning the things that will come upon you."

Magical arts were invented by the Chaldeans of Babylonia. How strong the hold of magic and sorcery was upon Babylon may be seen when, centuries after Nimrod, King Nebuchadnezzar is reported as turning to it to determine whether to attack Jerusalem. Here is what Jehovah God said to Ezekiel about this:

"The king of Babylon stood still at the crossways, at the head of the two ways, in order to resort to divination. He has shaken the arrows. He has asked by means of the teraphim; he has looked into the liver. In his right hand the divination proved to be for Jerusalem, to set battering-rams, to open one's mouth for a slaying, to raise the sound in an alarm signal, to set battering-rams against gates, to throw up a siege rampart, to build a siege wall."—Ezek. 21: 20-22.

With King Nebuchadnezzar II the city of Babylon reached the peak of its glory and set itself in the position of the Third World Power of Bible history. So its greatest height was reached shortly before its fall. Because even her greatest king clung to magical arts, Jehovah's prophet Isaiah could, when foretelling her doom, tell her to resort to her magical arts and her stargazers, sorcerers and monthly forecasters to try to save her from disaster if they could. But it would be in vain, for Jehovah had doomed her.

BABYLON'S RELIGIOUS TOWER

Babylon's false religion, which first revealed itself historically in her original Tower of Babel, doomed her from the start for eventual destruction. In the days of her most glorious king, Nebuchadnezzar II, she had her tower of religion, built doubtless on the foundations of the very tower where Jehovah God confused the language of the builders. It was situated in the southern part of the city, not far from the eastern or right bank of the Euphrates River. By King Nebuchadnezzar and his royal father it was called *Ziqqurat Bâbili*, that is, "The Tower of Babylon." It was dedicated to Babylon's chief god, Mero-dach, and his wife Zêr-panîtum.

The tower had a great foundation upon which as a platform were built six square stages and it had a sanctuary at the top, this being dedicated to the god Bel-Merodach, whom the evidence indicates to have been the mighty hunter Nimrod deified. Around the base of the tower were small temples or chapels dedicated to various other gods of the Babylonians.

BABYLON'S TEACHING ON SOUL SICKENS THE NATIONS

Another outstanding feature about the religion of Babylon is that it taught the

immortality of the human soul. Of course, when Babylon deified the first king, Nimrod, at his death, which is not described in the Bible, it had to attribute immortality of soul to Nimrod, or Merodach. In the Babylonian myth about Gilgamesh, whom some investigators try to identify with Nimrod, this half-man and half-god Gilgamesh sought immortality of his human body, in other words, indestructible life on earth. In the twelfth book of the epic of Gilgamesh he is granted an interview with his dead one-time companion, who "describes the gloomy abode of the afterworld, and tells of the various futures that await the dead, according to the manner of their ends."—*The Encyclopedia Americana*, edition of 1929, Volume 12, page 654.

In the Babylonian religion Nergal was the god of the underworld and his wife Eresh-kigal was the sovereign lady thereof. Showing that the Babylonians did not believe in the immortality of the human body but did believe in the immortality of what the Greeks called a *psykhé* or "soul," we read the following concerning "the last things" as understood by the Babylonians:

After death the souls of men were supposed to continue in existence. It can hardly be called life. The place to which they have gone is called the "land of no return." There they lived in dark rooms amid the dust and the bats covered with a garment of feathers, and under the dominion of Nergal and Eresh-kigal. When the soul arrived among the dead he had to pass judgment before the judges of the dead, the Annunaki, but little has been preserved for us concerning the manner of this judgment. There seems to have been at times an idea that it might be possible for the dead to return again to life, for in this underworld there was the water of life, which was used when the god Tammuz returned again to earth [as vegetation]. The Babylonians . . . placed often with the dead articles which might be used in his future existence. . . . In the future world there seem to have been distinctions made among the dead. Those who fell in

battle seem to have had special favor. They received fresh water to drink, while those who had no posterity to put offerings at their graves suffered sore and many deprivations. . . . The Babylonian doctrine was that man, though of Divine origin, did not share in the Divine attribute of immortality [that is, immortality of his body].—*The International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia*, Volume 1, page 373.

Along with astrology, fear of demons and trinity, this teaching, as originated in Babylon and propagated among the peoples of earth, led to the unscriptural doctrines of hellfire, purgatory, reincarnation, transmigration of souls and spiritism, with which all nations and most of their religionists are being spiritually sickened to death. If your religion holds any of these doctrines, you can be sure it is Babylon-contaminated and constitutes one of the

false religious strongholds springing from the rebellious Babylonish source.

These are only a few of the deceptions founded in ancient demon-dominated Babylon, as a base on which the invisible deceiver, Satan the Devil, builds a religious structure for world deception. Babylon suffered a fall when Jehovah God confused the language of its builders at the Tower of Babel, but it was not destroyed at that time. Later it passed from the hands of Hamitic rulers to Shemite rulers, but this did not turn aside the doom to which it had been condemned by God. The foretold destruction befell the famed city and at last its very location became unknown. But what is the Greater Babylon, foretold in the Bible to fall with a tremendous crash? Further Bible investigation will reveal this.

Plain Speaking About Nicaea and the Trinity

WELL-KNOWN writer and historian H. G. Wells had very definite ideas about the doctrine of the trinity. In his book *God the Invisible King* he outlined his own religious belief and why he rejected the Trinity. In the preface he remarks: "The writer is of opinion that the Council of Nicaea, which forcibly crystallised the controversies of two centuries and formulated the creed upon which all the existing Christian churches are based, was one of the most disastrous and one of the least venerable of all religious gatherings."

Yes, that is where all the trouble started, thought H. G. Wells, and any who raised a voice in protest did not stand a chance. He adds, "The systematic destruction by the orthodox of all heretical writings, had about it none of that quality of honest conviction which comes to those who have a real knowledge of God; it was a bawling down of dissensions that, left to work themselves out, would have spoiled good business." Emperor

Constantine took the lead in this because he wanted a united empire at any price.

But if this is true, how could such a deception persist through the centuries until today? Says Wells, "A large majority of those who possess and repeat the Christian creeds have come into the practice so insensibly from unthinking childhood that only in the slightest way do they realise the nature of the statements to which they subscribe. They will speak and think of both Christ and God in ways flatly incompatible with the doctrine of the Triune deity upon which, theoretically, the entire fabric of all the churches rests."

It was the firm belief of H. G. Wells that there was no greater stumbling block to understanding God than the trinity. He turned away from it with the comment, "By faith we said of that stuffed scarecrow of divinity, that incoherent accumulation of antique theological notions, the Nicene deity, 'This is certainly no God.'"



YOUTHS,

Keep Your Integrity While at School



ALL Christians, whether young or old, have the responsibility to keep their integrity to Jehovah God. Sometimes, however, young persons feel that their load of responsibility for keeping integrity is lighter than for older Christians. But if you young persons profess to be true witnesses of Jehovah God, then you do well to keep in mind that you, too, must maintain integrity at all times. Do not think that youthfulness excuses you from the consequences of violating Bible principles. If you want to prove worthy of everlasting life in God's new order of things, be diligent to apply Bible principles, thereby keeping your integrity during school years.

What are some of those Bible principles that will help you to keep your integrity to God?

"FLEE FROM IDOLATRY"

One of them is found at 1 Corinthians 10:14: "Flee from idolatry." This command to Christians embraces the thought of the second of the Ten Commandments, which says: "You must not make for yourself a carved image or a form like anything that is in the heavens above or that is on the earth underneath or that is in the waters under the earth. You must not bow down to them nor be induced to serve them, because I Jehovah your God am a God exacting exclusive devotion."—Ex. 20:4, 5.

To give exclusive devotion, true Christians throughout the centuries have fled from idolatry. Showing how the early Christians kept their integrity by fleeing from any form of idolatry, the book *A His-*

tory of Civilization, by

Brinton, Christopher and Wolff, says: "To hold this motley collection of peoples [in the Roman Empire] in a common allegiance, to give them something like a national flag as a symbol of this unity, the emperor was deified. . . . [But] the true Christian . . . could not bring himself to make what to an outsider was merely a decent gesture, like raising one's hat today when the flag goes by in a parade."

Even under persecution the early Christians did not cave in to the demands of men to perform a religious act toward national images or idolized humans, for to do so would be to render to them sacred service that belongs to God. (Rom. 1:25) We today do well to follow the example of the early Christians in fleeing from every form of idolatry.

"NO PART OF THE WORLD"

Another Bible principle young dedicated Christians should apply is that of separateness from the world of ungodly mankind. This is what Jesus Christ taught his followers, and he said of them: "They are no part of the world, just as I am no part of the world." (John 17:16) Jesus Christ demonstrated for us what staying separate from the world means. Not only did he reject the low moral standards of the world around him, but he stayed clear of its political affairs. When the Devil offered Jesus rulership of all the political kingdoms

of mankind, Jesus rejected the offer. (Matt. 4:8-10) Jesus Christ would not accept any part, small or large, in the political structure that the world of unbelieving mankind had set up. Hence Jesus also turned down a popular draft for local kingship, 'withdrawing again into the mountain all alone.'—John 6:15.

Not only did Jesus himself stay separate from politics, but about 96 C.E. the resurrected Son of God gave his apostle John a vision of a wild beast ascending out of the sea, with seven heads and ten horns. Since Revelation was presented in signs, the wild beast was symbolic. Harmonizing with the Bible's own explanation of the wild beasts of Daniel, chapters seven and eight, the wild beast John saw in vision symbolizes the Devil's visible political organization under seven successive headships through the centuries. Who gave this symbolic political beast its power? The Bible says: "The dragon gave the beast its power and its throne and great authority." (Rev. 13:2) Since the Dragon, the Devil, gives the symbolic political beast its power, Christians wisely heed Jesus' counsel and example and refuse to get involved in the political affairs of the world of unbelieving mankind.

"GENTLE TOWARD ALL"

The Bible also shows that all true Christians must cultivate the fruitage of God's holy spirit in their lives. This fruitage includes love, peace, kindness, mildness and self-control. (Gal. 5:22, 23) Hence Christians, whether young or old, are told: "A slave of the Lord does not need to fight, but needs to be gentle toward all, qualified to teach, keeping himself restrained under evil." (2 Tim. 2:24) Following this counsel, we must be gentle both in our speech and in our conduct toward others. We should not go around with a chip on our shoulder, looking for fights or even expecting trou-

ble. We should learn to restrain ourselves, even when provoked.

Having noted certain Bible principles that must be heeded if a Christian is to keep integrity to God, consider what this means to you as a student in school. You go to school to get an education—learning to read and write, becoming acquainted with history, perhaps getting training in a trade. But while you are there in school, as a Christian you do not want to adopt the "spirit of the world," because Jesus said that his true followers are "no part of the world." And his inspired apostle Paul wrote: "Quit being fashioned after this system of things, but be transformed by making your mind over, that you may prove to yourselves the good and acceptable and perfect will of God." (1 Cor. 2:12; John 15:19; Rom. 12:2) So a Christian cannot share with the world in all its activities. He must guide his course of conduct by the "perfect will of God" as set out in the Bible. Of course, the Bible does not give direct commands on every situation that may arise, but it does set out principles that should guide us.

FLAG-SALUTE CEREMONIES

For example, flag-salute ceremonies are frequent in schools all over the world. Now, what Bible principles govern what a Christian should do while the class is engaged in this activity?

Well, what is a flag? It is an image made by man; it is a representation of the State. Flags often contain representations of things in the heavens, such as stars, as well as things on earth. So to dedicated Christians, kneeling before or saluting a flag would be a violation of the Second Commandment and of the Christian command to "flee from idolatry."

In some lands children are expected to kneel and kiss the flag. Elsewhere flags are saluted with outstretched arm or with the

hand held to the forehead or over the heart. All these ways of rendering homage to the flag have the same basic significance. Any kind of salute to an image with the hand or body is an idolatrous act, hence it is something Jehovah's witnesses, who are dedicated Christians, cannot conscientiously do. Nevertheless, they do not interfere with what others do in this matter.

But what if you are not asked to salute the flag but merely to hold it, either in a parade or in a classroom, so that others can salute? Well, would that be 'fleeing from idolatry'? No, rather than fleeing, it would place you at the very center of the idolatrous ceremony.

The same is true of marching in patriotic parades, which is expected of students in many lands. Of course, those who do it are participating in the ceremony and showing their support of the thing honored by the parade. This Jehovah's witnesses conscientiously decline to do.

In view of the Bible principle involved, could a dedicated Christian stand quietly during a flag-salute ceremony? Well, would the act of standing make you an idolater? No, merely standing quietly while others salute shows that you are only a respectful observer; the act of idolatry to the witness of Jehovah would be the saluting, not the mere standing in a normal manner.

But suppose one were required to assume some rigid bodily posture at the time of flag saluting? Doing so would make one a participant in the idolatrous ceremony.

Obviously there are many circumstances that arise in regard to salutes. How, then, should a young Christian be governed? By a set of Talmudlike rules to cover every conceivable circumstance? No, but by principle. You know the principle involved: "Flee from idolatry." Then always apply the principle, and you should be able to

decide what a dedicated Christian must do to keep integrity.

Let us take another example. Suppose one student in a school is chosen to represent the whole school and that student salutes the flag outside at a flagpole; inside, the other students merely stand while their representative salutes the flag. Now, would the act of standing in this case be something a dedicated Christian could do? Well, what does the standing in this case signify? It signifies that you agree to having the student on the outside salute the flag for you. He takes your place, acting as your representative. In view of this, you realize that in this case standing in any manner would be joining in the idolatrous ceremony. So one who wants to "flee from idolatry" would remain quietly seated.

As another example, suppose one is at a sports event, and the flag is paraded by, at which time people take off their hats for the flag. There the very gesture is in the nature of a salute, even though the removed hat may not be placed over one's heart as is often done. So if a witness of Jehovah were required to be at such a place where a flag might be paraded by, then he would have to take his stand for Bible principle. However, if attendance at the event is optional, then the Christian would wisely be elsewhere at the time. If one finds it desirable to attend a public event, he need not be present at the time of an idolatrous ceremony, which usually takes place at the opening of such an event, but he could come later, after the ceremony is over. Or, if it regularly comes at the end of the event, he would leave quietly before the event closes.

STANDING FOR WORLDLY SONGS

The Christian youth who desires to keep integrity to God is often faced today with the matter of standing for songs, such as national anthems. Now what Bible princi-

ples are involved? You know that true followers of Jesus Christ must keep separate from the world, and, following the example of Jesus, they do not pray for the world. How, then, could Christians join in the sentiments of a song that is, often at least in part, in effect a prayer to God on behalf of a nation of the world? While it is true that Christians are law-abiding and respectful toward public officials, how could they join in a song that extols a nation that is a part of "this system of things" of which, as the Bible shows, Satan is the god?—John 17:9; 2 Cor. 4:4.

So when it comes to standing for these songs, the witness of Jehovah must ask himself what the standing signifies. If arising from a seated position and standing while the music is played is all that is expected of anyone present to show that he is in accord with the sentiments of the song, the Christian would refrain from doing so, as those sentiments are out of harmony with Bible principles.

What, now, is the difference between standing for the flag-salute ceremony and standing for an anthem? When a Christian stands up when others arise to salute the flag, his just quietly standing does not constitute the salute, does it? In most instances you would have to do more in order to salute. However, the way national anthems are handled is that usually all that a person has to do in order to indicate to all present that he shares the sentiments of the song is to stand up.

But suppose students in a classroom are already standing during a music session and among the songs that come up is a national anthem. Would the Christian youth have to take the special action of sitting down? No, he could just remain standing; it is not as though he had specifically stood up for the anthem.

Do school songs come into the same category as national anthems? Yes, they are

viewed the same way by those in the school as national anthems are by the nations. They are often sung with religious fervor and with cheers, and the students are expected to arise. It is a matter of paying homage to an institution of the world, which Jehovah's witnesses cannot do. Why not? Because they reserve such worshipful honors for Jehovah God.

It is for the same reason that they refrain from joining in ceremonies (such as standing for a minute of silence) in honor of national heroes following their death or on anniversaries connected with them.

ELECTIVE OFFICES AND POSITIONS

In many schools the student body elects other students to certain offices or positions, such as president or spokesman for the class, cheerleader, homecoming queen, and so on. One might be nominated and voted into a position without his even accepting the nomination. Some high schools even allow for small-scale political campaigning, and students may wear campaign buttons and put up "vote for" posters.

Now, how do Christians view these elective offices and positions? Would they accept a position if voted in by their classmates? Would they participate in the voting, either by a show of hands or by balloting?

Well, what is the purpose of this voting in school? In most cases it is to familiarize young persons with the machinery of worldly politics. So what Bible principle applies? Why, separateness from the world and its politics. Since Jehovah's witnesses as adults do not mix in politics, it is only reasonable that children of Jehovah's witnesses do not mix in politics on a school level, either by accepting an elective office or participating in conferring such an office upon others. What, then, would a Christian youth do if he were nominated to an office? He could tactfully decline the

nomination or, if elected without his assent, he could tactfully decline the office; so following the example of Jesus, who withdrew when the people wanted to make him king.

Though one of Jehovah's witnesses would decline a position given him through small-scale political machinery, he considers an appointment by the teacher as something different. If a Christian youth were appointed by the teacher to help in traffic direction or some other unobjectionable duty during school hours, he would cooperate. If no violation of Bible principles would result from carrying out an appointment, then he would be helpful to the school and other students to every reasonable extent.

Of course, some positions at school involve violation of Bible principles, even if that position comes by appointment and not through political machinery. For instance, what if one were appointed cheerleader? Encouraging others in itself is not wrong, as when one is playing on a team and he shouts words of encouragement. But it is something else to lead a crowd into frenzied cheering for and exaltation of an institution of this world, to lead people in standing for the school song or to lead others into the snare of hero worship. That would violate Bible principles. A Christian who is separate from this world and who gives exclusive devotion to Jehovah God would decline a cheerleader appointment.

Some schools may vote a girl as "Homecoming Queen" or as beauty queen. Even if a Christian girl were appointed and not elected to such queenship, how could she accept it? Bible principles show that it is not proper for the creature to be given undue importance. (Rom. 1:25) Moreover, to set up womanhood upon a pedestal would violate Bible principles. (1 Tim. 2: 12, 13) Christians do not engage in the

glorification of humans, and they would not want anyone to give them such idolatrous treatment. Also, those who serve as "kings" or "queens" are expected to take the lead in political, patriotic and worldly religious activities, which true Christians cannot do.

Of course, it is well for you young Christians to keep in mind that not all voting is political. Sometimes students are called on by the teacher to express opinions. There would be no violation of Bible principle in expression of one's preference of certain activities or the appraisal of a talk or composition. It is not electing one politically to an office when one expresses an opinion by a show of hands as to the quality of something.

CLASSROOM INSTRUCTION

What if part of the classroom instruction you receive requires expression concerning what you understand to be contrary to Bible principles? Suppose in music class you are required to sing a national anthem? Though a witness of Jehovah could not conscientiously sing the words, some sing the notes to show they know the tune. If you are required to recite something such as a pledge that a Christian could not conscientiously make, then what? Even though it is simply a test of knowledge or memory, you would rather be excused from it if possible. But, if necessary, you could show that you have the mental ability to recite it, and, to avoid a wrong impression, you would explain beforehand or afterward that you do not share the sentiments of that pledge.

Some classroom instruction may involve philosophies such as evolution that are contrary to the Bible. What if you are assigned to speak on subjects that you know are false or pagan? Why, take advantage of the assignment to give a witness regarding what you know to be the truth. Class

talks are a fine way to give a witness. If one were assigned a talk on evolution, he could state what the textbook says and then he could state what he believes according to the Bible. Likewise with written examinations, if a question requires a textbook answer on evolution, you could give that answer, adding, if necessary, that you personally accept the Bible's answer as the correct one rather than the textbook's. View class talks as opportunities to help others. Even if it is necessary to learn details about false theories such as evolution, do not consider it a total waste of time. With that knowledge you will understand the viewpoint of others better and can use it to good advantage when you help them to break free of the empty philosophies of men.—Col. 2:8.

ATHLETIC INSTRUCTION

In some schools physical education may involve various gymnastic activities. There is no violation of Bible principles in such activities as running. But suppose the school wants to teach you wrestling, boxing and jujitsu or other ways to injure persons? Well, what Bible principle would apply? You know that "a slave of the Lord does not need to fight." So a Christian would not train himself for the purpose of fighting or hurting others. Moreover, since he does not go around looking for or even anticipating trouble, he would not train in forms of physical violence. A Christian "needs to be gentle toward all," and to keep himself "restrained under evil." (2 Tim. 2:24) He avoids training for activities that are not in accord with what the Bible says at Isaiah 2:4. Hence a witness of Jehovah could not accept training in the technique of injuring others, though

he would cooperate with other school-hour physical education activities.

Living by Bible principles in the midst of a world that is alienated from God obviously is not easy. Some of you youths may be threatened with expulsion from school or be denied a diploma at the time of graduation because you refrain from activities that are not in harmony with the

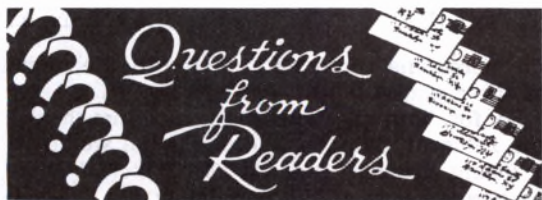
Bible. If the law makes provision for freedom of conscience in these matters, the problems will be fewer. But if there is no allowance made for those who

do not conform, it is often wise to talk to your teacher ahead of time and kindly explain your position from the Bible. Perhaps your parents will want to go with you when this is done. When your teachers appreciate that you are not refraining from participation because of any spirit of rebelliousness, but that you appreciate their efforts to teach you and that you have proper respect for the "superior authorities," they may be willing to show consideration for your beliefs. But it will call for patient and faithful conduct on your part.—Rom. 13:1.

Regardless of the reaction of others, if you are to prove yourself to be a true Christian, it is vital to guide your course by the Word of God. With the help of your parents or your congregation overseer, discern the Bible principles that apply and then make your decisions in harmony with them. Then you will not need to ask someone else what you should do in every situation, but you will know what is pleasing to God. Your guarding your integrity while at school will bear good fruits, because you are proving to God that you are the kind of person who he says will live in his everlasting new system of things.

COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- Gathered in Unity for Ministerial Work.
- "Fully Accomplish Your Ministry."
- Why They Question the Existence of God.
- Let's Clean House, Religiously Speaking.
- A Pattern of Action for Pleasing God.



● Why does the *New World Translation* at Isaiah 14:23 use the term “porcupines” instead of “bittern” or some other term describing a bird?—M. S., U.S.A.

The Hebrew word *qippōd* at Isaiah 14:23 has been a matter of much dispute as to what it represents, whether a bird such as the bittern or an animal, either the hedgehog, a porcupine-like creature, or the porcupine itself. The prophecy of Isaiah 14:23 relates to the utter desolation that God would bring upon Babylon and reads, according to the *New World Translation*: “I will make her a possession of porcupines and reedy pools of water, and I will sweep her with the broom of annihilation.” The *King James Version* uses “bittern,” instead of porcupine, the bittern being a long-necked wading bird of the heron family that inhabits marshy places. The Bible translation by George M. Lamsa reads: “I will make it a possession for owls.” The *Revised Standard Version*, *An American Translation* and the translation by Roman Catholic Monsignor Ronald A. Knox all render the word in question as “hedgehog.”

Bible dictionaries and commentaries are often uncertain in their explanation of *qippōd*. Thus *The Interpreter's Bible* simply says: “What creature is meant by [the *qippōd*] is uncertain; it is mentioned only in connection with desolate places.” *Harper's Bible Dictionary* states: “Perhaps a porcupine or some sort of lizard, though not definitely identified.” The *Dictionary of the Bible* by Dr. William Smith (1888 edition) states: “The Hebrew word has been the subject of various interpretations, the old versions generally sanctioning the ‘hedgehog’ or ‘porcupine;’ . . . the ‘tortoise,’ the ‘beaver,’ the ‘otter,’ the ‘owl,’ have also all been conjectured, but without the slightest show of reason.” The older versions such as the Latin *Vulgate* and the *Septuagint* use “hedgehog” or “porcupine.” The *Septuagint Bible*, as translated by Charles Thomson, revised by C. A. Muses, renders Isaiah 14:23: “I will lay Babylonia waste: that porcupines may inhabit it; and it shall be a desolation.”

Hebrew-English lexicons of recent date generally list the Hebrew word *qippōd* as meaning either a hedgehog or a porcupine. Moreover, older lexicons such as those by Lee, Parkhurst, Winer, Fürst and Gesenius all give “hedgehog” or “porcupine” as representative of the Hebrew word. Gesenius links the Hebrew *qippōd* [or *kippōd*] to the Arabic *kunfudh*, the porcupine, regarding them as the same.

The reasons some expositors have preferred “bittern” at Isaiah 14:23 are: (1) Porcupines do not frequent reedy pools of water; (2) the creature in question is supposed to be able to climb to the top of capitals of columns, in view of Zephaniah 2:14 and (3) it must be a bird to sing, in view of that same text.

These reasons for preferring “bittern,” however, are not valid. It should be noted that Isaiah 14:23 does not say that pools of water would become the home of the porcupines; it says Babylon will become “a possession of porcupines and [not, in] reedy pools of water.” The idea behind the expressions porcupines and reedy pools of water is that of desolation. As to Zephaniah's prophecy (Zeph. 2:13, 14), it reads, according to the *King James Version*: “He will stretch out his hand against the north, and destroy Assyria; and will make Nineveh a desolation, and dry like a wilderness. And flocks shall lie down in the midst of her, all the beasts of the nations: both the cormorant and the bittern shall lodge in the upper lintels of it; their voice shall sing in the windows; desolation shall be in the thresholds.”

It is not essential, however, that the *qippōd* be able to climb to the top of standing columns, since the allusion is rather to the fallen pillars of Nineveh's palaces, not the capitals of standing columns. The *New World Translation* renders Zephaniah's prophecy: “He will make Nineveh a desolate waste, a waterless region like the wilderness. And in the midst of her, droves will certainly lie stretched out, all the wild animals of a nation. Both pelican and porcupine will spend the night right among her pillar capitals. A voice will keep singing in the window. There will be devastation at the threshold.” The thought is that wild creatures would make their home among the fallen pillar capitals of Nineveh, which porcupines might easily do, since they often make their home between rocks. As to the third point, the *King James Version* says “their voice shall sing in the windows,” but the word “their” is not in the original Hebrew; so the *New World Transla-*

tion says: "A voice will keep singing in the window," which could be a reference to any bird that would perch in the deserted window or to the sound of wind. The "voice" does not refer back to the pelican or the porcupine, neither of which can be said to have "singing" voices.

The bittern also does not have a singing voice but a booming cry, and this wading bird is not likely to fit in with Nineveh's foretold "waterless region like the wilderness." The porcupine and the pelican, however, would fit in here. The pelican, though being a flying water fowl, is also a bird of the wilderness, as the psalmist wrote: "I do resemble the pelican of the wilderness." (Ps. 102:6) The pelican, an unclean bird according to Leviticus 11:18, not infrequently retires inland to a wilderness spot and sits in a melancholy attitude, its head sunk on its shoulder and its bill resting on its breast. The pelican also selects desert islands and rocky shores remote from the haunts of men as breeding places. The intent of the prophecy is that Nineveh would become utterly desolate. New York, London and Paris would need to become utterly desolate before the pelican and

the porcupine could be at home in the midst of these places.

So for both the wilderness of Nineveh and the ruins of Babylon, the porcupine would be a fitting denizen. Indeed, *The Imperial Bible Dictionary* says of the porcupine: "It is abundant throughout Palestine, Syria, and the Euphrates valley. It is a nocturnal animal, and therefore fit to associate with the 'doleful creatures' which are the companions of the *kippod*. It habitually conceals itself in dark and lonely places, and, as a matter of fact, is found in the ruins of Idumea [Isa. 34:11] and of Babylon. Mr. Rich [a former British resident of Baghdad] expressly says in his attempts to explore the burned mounds of ancient Babylon, which are full of passages and galleries, 'I found quantities of porcupine quills.'"

Porcupines, the inhabitants of Babylon's ruined palaces—how fitting! What a terrible end for so great a city! By reason of its habits and its quill-bristling armament the creeping porcupine is a fitting creature to express what has befallen Babylon, as well as Nineveh, in harmony with Jehovah's prophetic Word—absence of man, utter desolation.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FIELD MINISTRY

During June Jehovah's witnesses will continue to share unitedly in the ministry, so cooperating together to maintain their spiritual maturity. As they do so they will be aiding others to acquire the Scriptural knowledge they need in order to serve God. This they will do by offering the modern-English *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*, with a free Bible study booklet, on a contribution of \$1. To those who read Dutch, French, German, Italian, Portuguese or Spanish, they will offer the *New World Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures* for just 50c.

1964 DISTRICT ASSEMBLIES

This year the Watch Tower Society will sponsor a series of "Fruitage of the Spirit" Assemblies of Jehovah's Witnesses in many cities. This arrangement will make it possible for you to attend, because one of these district assemblies is certain to be near your home. At

each assembly the program will begin on Thursday afternoon and conclude on Sunday at about 6 p.m. Plan now to attend and receive the rich benefits in store for all. For further details write Watch Tower Convention in care of the publishers of this magazine.

In addition to the "Fruitage of the Spirit" Assemblies scheduled for the United States, Canada and the British Isles in coming months, as listed in the May 1 issue of *The Watchtower*, conventions will also be held by Jehovah's witnesses in Jamaica, W.I., at the following locations: Government Primary School, South Race Course, Mandeville, August 6-9; Little Ascot Race Course, Old Harbour, August 13-16; Standard Wharf, Oracabessa, August 20-23.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

July 19: Jehovah, the God of Progressive Revelation. Page 360.

July 26: Keeping Abreast with Revealed Truth. Page 366.