The WATCHTOWER

Announcing JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

AUGUST 1, 1967
Semimonthly

KEEPING FREE FROM THE SPIRIT OF COMPLAINT

FINDING CONTENTMENT WITH JEHOVAH'S ORGANIZATION

A NEW ADMINISTRATION OF EARTH'S AFFAIRS

JUDGE EHUD—RESOURCEFUL AND VALIANT FOR JEHOVAH'S CAUSE

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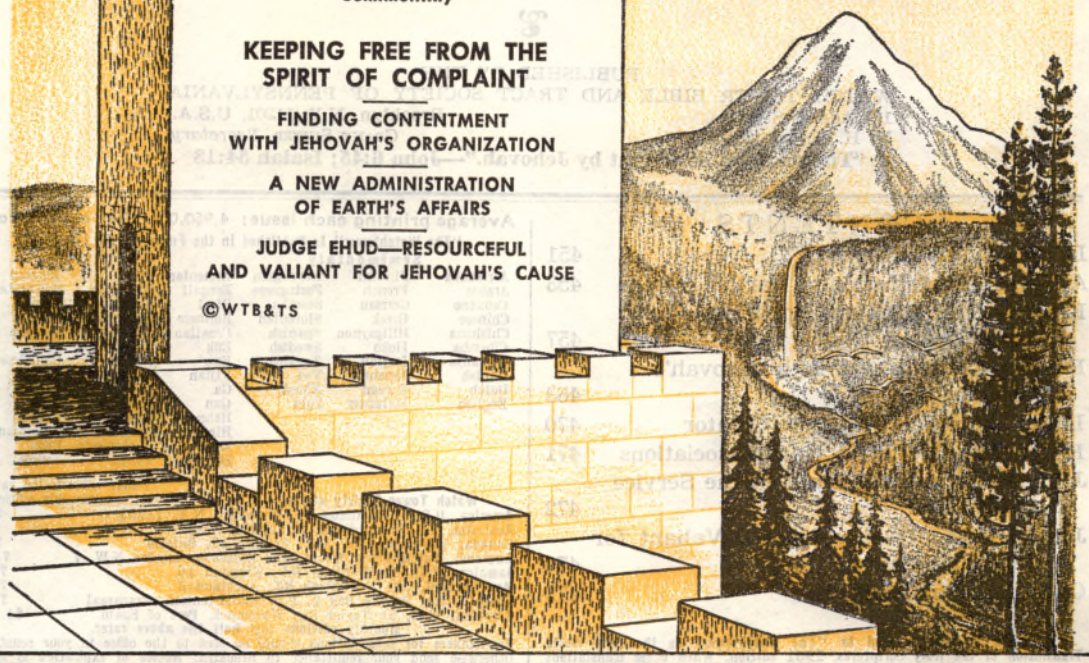

"YOU ARE MY WITNESSES," SAYS JEHOVAH.—Isa. 43:12

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.

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

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The WATCHTOWER Announcing JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

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Is it LOVE or Infatuation?

LOVE or infatuation? That is an important question. Why? Because the chances for happiness in marriage in many cases depend upon whether it is love or infatuation that brings the two together. This question is especially important for young folk, since one out of two teen-age marriages in the United States ends in separation or divorce.

Nor does that dismal picture present the whole of the tragedy. According to Clark W. Blackburn, General Director of the Family Service Association: "There is no question that a tragically high percentage of the young couples who remain married are disillusioned and dissatisfied with their marriage to the point where it has become a bore, a mockery, a burden, a failure."

No doubt these young folks felt that they were "in love"; being "in love" means being under the spell of the physical attraction of one of the opposite sex. Of itself it does not guarantee happiness even though at the time it appears a most pleasant state and holds out great hopes. But with a measure of unselfishness, that is, concern for the other's happiness, and a lot of common sense, such love can and often does result in happiness, even as we read of the ancient Hebrew Isaac, that "he fell in love with [Rebekah], and . . . found comfort after the loss of his mother."—Gen. 24:67.

Infatuation, however, is something different. It is defined as "strong and unreasoning attachment." The word comes from the Latin *fatuus,* meaning "foolish," from which also comes the English word "fatuous," defined as "marked by a want of intelligence and rational consideration, especially marked by futile, ill-founded hope or desire."

That members of the opposite sexes should form strong attachments for each other is natural. So that humankind would indeed "become many and fill the earth" the Creator put strong forces of attraction for the opposite sex in each. Medical science shows that the sex drive chiefly originates, not in the lower gonads or sex glands, but in the midbrain, in the hypothalamus. The fact that the center of the sex drive is located in the brain also helps to account for the fact that this drive influences the higher portions of the brain, such as man's reasoning, imagination and veneration. The question therefore is,

Which will we let control the other? Will we let the sex drive control the higher faculties or the higher faculties control the sex drive?—Gen. 1:28.

Infatuation obviously is the product of immaturity. It makes another person the object of desire or possession with little or no regard to the responsibilities involved and often regardless of the feelings or welfare of the other, as when girls idolize some popular entertainer.

Not, however, that only young persons err in mistaking infatuation for love. Age is no protection against this mistake, nor even experience, as can be seen from the frequency of cases in which divorced persons divorce or separate a second time. Infatuation fails to take the facts into consideration. It is based on neither reason nor principle. A very young person may become infatuated with a very old person, a single person with one already married, or one person with another whose tastes, way of life, principles or religion radically differ. In such cases each can contribute little to the happiness of the other except the pleasure each can give because of sex attraction.

There also seems to be something contrary about infatuation, in that the more unreasoning it is, the stronger it is likely to be. It ignores the advice of parents or friends and is marked with haste for the physical relationship and therefore results in either feelings of frustration or a guilty conscience. It is a strong, uncontrolled feeling, but, like other uncontrolled things such as earthquakes and cyclones, it usually is short-lived and destructive.

Some say love is blind, but true love is not blind. No doubt the ancient lover *Jacob*, whom the Bible tells about, and whose love for beautiful Rachel was such that in his eyes seven years "proved to be like some few days because of his love for her," saw much in her, and his fondness for her throughout her life proved that it was love and not infatuation. Further, had it been infatuation he could not have waited seven years, for, as it has well been said, "infatuation is haste to mate."—Gen. 29:20.

But infatuation is blind, at least in one eye. It sees only what it wants to see or imagines it sees and, being self-centered, is almost invariably doomed to unhappiness. The infatuated person does not take an honest accounting of himself, of what his potential is for making the other person happy and what the prospects are for a long and happy married life. He does not ask, What do we truly have in common aside from both of us liking fine food, nice clothes and "fun"? He ignores the principle that "there is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving," even as Jesus Christ said.—Acts 20:35.

However, let it be noted that not all unwise marriages need to end in separation or divorce. Two self-centered, immature young persons finding themselves within the bond of matrimony can grow up together, can learn to adjust to and learn to love each other. They can salvage their marriage if they really want to. But it will take humility, patience, perseverance, self-control, empathy and unselfish regard for the other.—Gal. 5:22, 23.

So, guard against infatuation. That the power of sex attraction can and must be controlled the Bible clearly indicates by warning, not only against fornication and adultery, but also against God's servants' marrying unbelievers. (Deut. 7:3, 4; 1 Cor. 6:9, 10; 7:39) This of itself shows that the power of sex attraction can be and should be controlled, directed into wise channels. Only then can it promise happiness; only then can it result in honor to God and be pleasing to Him.—1 Cor. 10:31.

A NEW ADMINISTRATION OF Earth's Affairs

THE problem that has always troubled reasoning man is, What is the purpose of it all? He looks around at the beauty of the earth, thinks of the fine place it could be in which to live, but sees so much going on that brings distress and sadness. Yet even with that, most persons enjoy what little life they have, but then it comes to an end. What is the purpose in living a short while, only to die? It does not seem reasonable. For example, we see a young man who has a high aim in life. He has the altruistic goal of equipping himself to help his fellowman. He studies hard, attends a university, with plans to be a doctor or surgeon or an engineer. He stores up much information, so that his worth to humankind cannot be calculated in money values. Yet when he has not much more than begun to apply his learning and ability for the benefit of his fellowman he is called to war and a bullet from someone who never saw him before cuts off his life. What a loss!

In view of this, should we throw up our hands despairingly and give up the search for a purpose in life? No, for an answer is available and it is an answer that satisfies to the full the mind and the heart. Although the situation just described has been the case for six thousand years of human history, there are a thousand years yet to come that will be governed by an administration so powerful and wise and so beneficial to humankind that all damages of the past six thousand years will be completely erased. Yes, completely—to the point where the remembrance of even the most saddening of world events will not be able to have the slightest clouding effect upon the subjects living under that administration. Let us look into and consider very carefully and analytically the answer. The analysis to be made is at Revelation, chapter twenty, verses four through six.

Revelation, chapter nineteen, has just given a description of earth's final war Har–Magedon doing away with all wickedness. The opening verses of chapter twenty show the source of the wickedness, Satan and his demons, bound (as discussed in our last two preceding issues). There are now no obstacles to the full and complete blessing of humankind. The thousand-year sabbath day for mankind begins. We shall consider, sentence by sentence, the description of the vision of earth's new administration.

WHO THEY ARE

"And I saw thrones, and there were those who sat down on them, and power of judging was given them." The ones sitting on the thrones can be easily identified. Jesus, while on earth, said to his apostles: "In the re-creation, when the Son of man sits down upon his glorious throne, you who have followed me will also yourselves sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (Matt. 19:28; Luke 22:28-30) The twelve apos-

tles are spoken of as twelve foundations of Jehovah's spiritual temple, built upon the chief cornerstone, who is Jesus Christ. However, the foundation of a building is not the entire structure. There are others built as a superstructure upon this foundation. This temple constitutes a spiritual palace or sanctuary where God dwells, in which he is shown to be enthroned, accompanied by his Son Jesus Christ.—Rev. 21:14; 1 Pet. 2:4.

There were more than twelve thrones in the vision that John saw. In fact, a few chapters earlier he saw 144,000 standing with Jesus Christ upon Mount Zion, where the temple was located. In the earlier part of the Revelation vision he had seen twenty-four older persons about the throne, representing the same group. It is significant that they are not shown here, for they are another symbolic presentation of the 144,000. In this view, John sees 144,000 on thrones.—Rev. 14:1-3; 3:21.

That this understanding is correct is supported by the apostle Paul. He wrote: "Do you not know that the holy ones will judge the world [of mankind]? . . . Do you not know that we shall judge angels?" (1 Cor. 6:2, 3) These 144,000, then, are royal judges as well as priests sitting on thrones. Whereas in Israel the kingship and priesthood were divided, which prevented undue concentration of power in human kings, these heavenly kings have been tested here on earth and have been proved righteous, trustworthy, qualified. They exercise their powers under their King and High Priest Jesus Christ.

The apostle John himself wrote while on earth with regard to the hope held by the spiritual brothers of Christ: "Beloved ones, now we are children of God, but as yet it has not been made manifest what we shall be. We do know that whenever he is made manifest we shall be like him, because we shall see him just as he is." (1 John 3:2) No earthly, fleshly person can see or visualize just what the immortal, heavenly body is like, because those with the heavenly invitation have to experience a change of nature. Therefore John, when he saw 144,000 on thrones, one of which was reserved for him, does not say that he saw himself among them. He says:

WHY THEY QUALIFY

"Yes, I saw the souls of those executed with the ax for the witness they bore to Jesus and for speaking about God, and those who had worshiped neither the wild beast nor its image and who had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand." John said he saw "souls." These would be the same souls that John had previously seen "underneath the altar," who had been "slaughtered because of the word of God and because of the witness work that they used to have." (Rev. 6:9-11) Men had killed their human bodies but had been unable to kill their souls, that is, their right and title to life in God's heavenly kingdom. They still were, in effect, "living," for Jehovah is "the God, not of the dead, but of the living." These Christian martyrs, or witnesses of God, were dead at the time John saw their souls underneath the altar, yet their life as intelligent creatures was assured to them in God's due time. —Matt. 22:32.

Some of them were, actually, literally executed with the ax for witnessing to Jesus and God, not all of them. But all of them, in order to follow in Jesus' footsteps, must die a sacrificial death like his, that is, they must die in integrity. Some of them were martyred in various ways, but not a single one of them had worshiped the symbolic "wild beast," the world system of politics; and since the formation of the League of Nations and the United

Nations, none of them have worshiped the political "image" of the symbolic "wild beast." They have not been marked in the head as supporters of it in thought or word, neither in the hand as being active in any way for the perpetuation of the "image." As members of the Bride they have had to keep themselves clean and without blemish or spot from the world. They have taken a course exactly opposite to Babylon the Great and her harlot daughters, the religious institutions of this world. Those "harlots" have committed spiritual fornication by meddling in politics and rendering everything to Caesar and nothing to God. (Matt. 22:21) The faithful members of the 144,000 have waited for God's kingdom to be established and let it minister earth's affairs.—Jas. 1:27; 2 Cor. 11:3; Eph. 5:25-27.

WHEN THE ADMINISTRATION BEGINS

"And they came to life and ruled as kings with the Christ for a thousand years." The thousand-year reign of Christ begins immediately after the binding of Satan and his demons and the hurling of them into the abyss. We can appreciate that not every member of the 144,000 will be in the heavens at the start of the thousand-year reign, for there will be a small remnant on the earth who survive Armageddon and who remain on earth for an unstated time. So the statement does not mean that every last one has to be in the heavens with Christ for the entire thousand-year reign. Those who died prior to the establishment of the Kingdom were resurrected at the time of Jehovah's coming to the temple with his messenger of the covenant in 1918. Revelation 14:13 indicates that a number of the remnant die after the birth of God's Messianic kingdom in 1914. These do not have to sleep in death until Satan the Devil is bound. They join him by a resurrection without delay. —1 Thess. 4:15, 16; 1 Cor. 15:51-54.

Therefore, when Christ's thousand-year reign begins, the "remnant" left on earth will not glorify themselves as kings, but they will be here serving the Kingdom interests until their death occurs and they are resurrected. (2 Pet. 3:11-14; Mal. 3:17 to 4:3) They will share in Christ's thousand-year reign. But Christ is the King and it is *his* thousand-year rule. It is not necessary for all to be with him the full thousand years. He has been given full Kingdom power. (Rev. 12:5, 10; Ps. 2:8) *His* reign is a thousand years long from the time of the abyssing of Satan, and most of the 144,000 are with him from the beginning of this period. The parenthetical statement, "The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended," is here inserted because the 144,000 who share with Jesus Christ as his new administrators get the reward of life first. John writes of the 144,000: "This is the first resurrection." It is first in time, importance and quality, for the first resurrection is the same kind of resurrection that Jesus Christ experienced.—1 Pet. 3:18; Rom. 6:3-9; Phil. 3:9-11; 2 Tim. 2:11, 12.

"Happy and holy is anyone having part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no authority." Jesus looked forward to sharing in a marvelous resurrection, and his followers happily anticipate this. They are raised up from their earthly bodies, which are mortal and corruptible, and changed, in that they are given incorruptible, immortal bodies. They are able to enter into the very presence of God, who is immortal. The "second death" symbolized by the "fiery lake that burns with sulphur" into which the "wild beast" and the "false prophet" were hurled

has "no authority" over the 144,000, for immortality means deathlessness. Jesus Christ was given "indestructible life" and these are sharers with him.—1 Cor. 15: 53, 54; Heb. 7:16.

SUBJECTS OF THE ADMINISTRATION

While the parenthetical sentence, "The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended," does not appear in the fourth-century Sinaitic Manuscript, it may have been on a missing page of the fourth-century Greek Vatican Manuscript No. 1209, and it is found in the Greek Alexandrine Manuscript of the fifth century and in the Latin *Vulgate,* in Revelation 20:5.

The ones here mentioned are the ones who will live on the earth. The "great crowd" is a class of persons who stand alongside Christ's spiritual brothers and who survive the battle of Har-Magedon and the binding and abyssing of Satan the Devil. There are also others of the ones Jesus called "other sheep" who must be resurrected. They will join with the "great crowd" in serving God during the thousand-year judgment day, and all of these together will have to be obedient, standing loyally through the test of the "little while" that Satan and his demons are loosed from the abyss.—Rev. 7:9; John 10:16; Rev. 20:3.

God is the Judge who personally decides who will live forever in his universe. "God is the One who declares them righteous." After the test he will declare these faithful ones unswervingly and unchangeably devoted to righteousness. He is able to judge in perfection and he knows that these will never, in the ages to come, turn against his sovereignty. Therefore he rewards them with the title to eternal life on earth in a paradise state. It is then that they will really "come to life" from God's viewpoint.—Rom. 8:33.

WORK OF THE ADMINISTRATORS

As to the 144,000 immortal ones, John further states: "They will be priests of God and of the Christ, and will rule as kings with him for the thousand years." On earth will be the "great crowd" and those who are resurrected, the faithful servants of God of ancient times and many, perhaps billions, of others who have died. It will be the tremendous but enjoyable task of earth's new administrators, Jesus Christ and his 144,000 associate kings and priests, to apply the merits of the ransom sacrifice of Jesus Christ to those who prove obedient. They will administer the government in righteousness to bring about God's purpose to have humankind living on the earth in perfection with everlasting life. The earth will be a beautified, paradise garden, with the animals in subjection to mankind. There false religion has no place; politics is gone forever; only the will of the Creator who made mankind in his own image and who has loving purposes for them will be carried out. —Gen. 1:27; Matt. 6:10.

Then the reverse of what we now see will be true. It will be very easy to discern that there is a purpose in life. The wicked system of false religion and political corruption that has a stranglehold upon mankind will be a thing of the past, never more to ruin the earth or those living upon it. The chief disturber of mankind, Satan the Devil, will be out of the way. The new administrator is immortal and, being at Jehovah's right hand, will be permanent, so that corruption and evil cannot rise up again. Earth will then stand out as a jewel in the starry heavens of Jehovah God, being an eternal praise to his name.—Psalm 150.

Keeping Free FROM THE SPIRIT OF COMPLAINT

"Keep doing all things free from murmurings and arguments."—Phil. 2:14.

TODAY we live in "critical times hard to deal with." International, national and individual problems arise daily and often seem insurmountable. We have been witnesses to bloody wars, famines, deadly epidemics, juvenile and adult crime and pitiful poverty. True to the prophetic words of the Bible writer Paul, men have become "lovers of themselves, lovers of money, self-assuming, haughty, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, disloyal, having no natural affection, not open to any agreement, slanderers, without self-control, fierce, without love of goodness, betrayers, headstrong, puffed up with pride, lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God."—2 Tim. 3:1-4.

[2] The reaction to these conditions varies with the individual. Many of those who observe this wicked state of affairs blame God for the things happening. They feel that he is slow to act to remedy the situation and so they complain, saying in effect: "Where is this promised presence of his? Why, from the day our forefathers fell asleep in death, all things are continuing exactly as from creation's beginning." (2 Pet. 3:4) Jude, the half brother of Jesus, says that "these men are murmurers, complainers about their lot in life."—Jude 16.

[3] Sincere, righteous-hearted persons, however, reason as did the prophet Jeremiah in Lamentations 3:38, 39: "From the mouth of the Most High bad things and what is good do not go forth. How can a living man indulge in complaints, an able-bodied man on account of his sin?" True, these people are "sighing and groaning" because of the detestable things going on around them, but, instead of blaming God, they humbly say along with Jeremiah: "Do let us search out our ways and explore them, and do let us return clear to Jehovah. We ourselves have transgressed, and we have behaved rebelliously." (Ezek. 9:4; Lam. 3:40, 42) They cry to Jehovah for salvation, and in his bountiful loving-kindness he hears their cry for help and delivers them from the present evil system of things, bringing them into spiritually "well-watered resting places" in association with his Christian witnesses.—Ps. 23:2.

[4] These true Christians have every reason to be happy and contented. Although living in 199 different lands, speaking

1, 2. What conditions exist world wide today, and how do many people react to them?

3. How do righteous-hearted persons reason on world conditions, and with what favorable results to themselves?

4. Give several reasons why Jehovah's witnesses today are a contented people.

many different languages and coming from various backgrounds, they are living at peace and unity, hundreds of thousands of them! They enjoy a close, precious relationship with their God and a clear understanding of his will. This understanding frees them from the heartaches and misery of those still part of the present wicked system and they optimistically look forward to a righteous new order of things in the very near future. Happily expressing this joy, they spend much of their time encouraging others, visiting them in their homes, cheering up those who are downhearted and urging them: "Become reconciled to God."—2 Cor. 5:20.

[5] In view of this happy spiritual condition existing among Jehovah's people, why was it necessary for the apostle Paul to write to early Christians in Philippi, "Keep doing all things free from murmurings and arguments"? Why is it necessary for *The Watchtower* to discuss this subject and give counsel on it? It is necessary because these Christians, while free spiritually, are still imperfect and subject to the weak fleshly tendencies inherited from Adam. They are also still living in the present wicked system of things and, if they do not exercise care, they can become influenced by the "spirit of the world," included in which is the spirit of complaint. In addition, each year tens of thousands of persons associate themselves with Jehovah's witnesses, having only recently left behind the many unwholesome traits common to this wicked world. To become fully free from the spirit of complaint will require time and effort for these individuals, along with Jehovah's help and guidance. Once free, each individual Christian must wage a continuous, progressive fight to keep free, as is indicated by the words, "*Keep doing* all things free from murmurings."—Phil. 2:14; 1 Cor. 2:12.

5. (a) What questions arise in view of the spiritual prosperity of God's people, and what three reasons are given in answer? (b) What is necessary in order to keep free from the spirit of complaint?

ITS CAUSES AND EFFECTS

[6] In order for us to keep free from the spirit of complaint and dispel it in the Christian congregation, we need to be able to recognize it in its various forms as it may arise in daily life and in association with our brothers. We should know something, too, of the things that lead to a complaining spirit and of its destructive effects. This is important, since, in many cases, those who complain do not even realize it themselves or do not fully appreciate its harmful consequences.

[7] To complain is defined in one dictionary* as "to give utterance to grief, pain, discontent, censure, regret, etc.; to lament; murmur." Thus it can be seen that a complaint is an expression of an inner feeling of discontent, irritation or pain. This outward expression of one's grievances is usually done by means of the tongue, although at times a gesture of disgust or a sour facial expression may also serve to convey your feelings to other people. Actions often speak louder than words, and people are quick to sense a disgruntled spirit even if no actual words of complaint are uttered.

[8] There is not one son of Adam who has not sinned with his tongue. Because of this Jesus' disciple James wrote, in James 3:2, 8-10: "For we all stumble many times. If anyone does not stumble in word, this

* *Webster's New International Dictionary*, 2d edition.

6. What things do we need to know to help us keep free from the spirit of complaint?
7. How is complaining defined, and in what ways may it be expressed?
8. (a) What did James write about the difficulty of controlling the tongue? (b) How may complainers not use these words of James, but how can an unintentional transgressor take comfort from them?

one is a perfect man, able to bridle also his whole body. . . . the tongue, not one of mankind can get it tamed. An unruly injurious thing, it is full of death-dealing poison. With it we bless Jehovah, even the Father, and yet with it we curse men who have come into existence 'in the likeness of God.' Out of the same mouth come forth blessing and cursing." However, let no one use these words as an excuse for possessing the spirit of complaint, for James continues: "It is not proper, my brothers, for these things to *go on* occurring this way." While it is true that we all sin at times, yet habitually to make a *practice* of sinning with our tongue to the extent of actually becoming a complainer, that is, one having the spirit of complaint, is something not compatible with true Christianity. On the other hand, we can take comfort from James' words if we sin unintentionally while striving hard to overcome our fleshly tendency in this regard.

[9] Jesus stated an indisputable fact when he said: "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks." (Matt. 12:34) Thus, while it is important to control the tongue and prevent it from speaking complainingly, it is even more important to control the thoughts that lead one to complain. The tongue utters only what is in the mind and heart of an individual, thus giving verbal expression to it. What kind of thoughts can lead a person to complain?

[10] Pride may be one cause for complaining. A person may think too highly of himself and, in order to build up his own ego and his stature with his brothers, he may resort to criticizing the faults of others. In this way he draws attention to the fact that he does not have these particular faults to the same extent. Another may be impatient because his brothers are not as quick to grasp things as he or become irritated at what he considers to be *their* weaknesses. Others who suffer some unusual hardship may feel self-pity when comparing their condition with other brothers in the congregation and thus may complain because of this. A desire for greater efficiency may cause some to complain, feeling perhaps that they could do the job better than the one who is appointed to serve.

[11] However, after our analyzing only a few of the many possible reasons why brothers complain, one fact stands out clearly: It is caused in all cases by putting too much emphasis on self, by attaching too much importance to one's own feelings or position. It is thus an expression of selfishness, which is the opposite of love.

[12] In this regard it is good to reflect on how the one who became Satan the Devil came to be dissatisfied with his very privileged position of oversight. The Bible tells why, saying to the king of Tyre who betrayed the spirit of the Devil: "Your heart became haughty because of your beauty. You brought your wisdom to ruin on account of your beaming splendor." (Ezek. 28:17) His proud desire to be the ruler of the universe caused him to rebel against the Sovereign Jehovah. He began to think too highly of himself and thus developed a complaining spirit, which soon expressed itself in action, leading to much misery and unhappiness for the human race.

[13] While not all complaints have such disastrous consequences, yet even the

9. As indicated in Jesus' words at Matthew 12:34, what is even more vital than control of the tongue, and why?
10, 11. (a) Give some possible reasons why people complain. (b) What, basically, is the root cause for a complaining attitude?
12. How did the one who became Satan develop a complaining spirit, and with what consequences?
13. Show the effect that complaining has (a) on the one spoken against, (b) on the *one who hears it*, (c) on a new or weaker brother and (d) when directed against the organization.

least expression of discontent brings harmful results. If the complaint is against a brother or sister, then it will tend to lower the reputation of that one in the eyes of the one to whom you are talking. It focuses attention on things that are weak and it is thus negative and discouraging. If spoken to a weak or new brother, it may make him so disillusioned that he could become badly weakened in faith and trust in his brothers. If spoken against the organization of God or its appointed representatives, it has an even more harmful effect, that of undermining confidence in the organizational arrangements, hence weakening faith in Jehovah himself.

[14] Even if one is not stumbled or seriously affected spiritually by listening to a complaining tongue, due to his being mature and so recognizing it and putting it out of mind, still it is not pleasant to be around a complaining person. Complaining has the same effect as putting sand into a well-oiled machine. It puts a damper on the joy of the congregation. It is as if a dark cloud has suddenly appeared on the horizon. It has the same effect on brothers as a contentious wife has on her husband, as recorded in Proverbs 21:19: "Better is it to dwell in a wilderness land than with a contentious wife along with vexation."

[15] Besides the demoralizing effect on those who listen to his complaining, the one uttering the grievance is himself adversely affected. He is discontented, unhappy, and in many cases suffers guilt of conscience after uttering his complaint. Truly, the wise man spoke well when he said under inspiration: "He that is keeping his mouth and his tongue is keeping his soul from distresses."—Prov. 21:23.

14. What effect does a complaining tongue have on the entire congregation? Use Proverbs 21:19 to illustrate your answer.
15. How is the complaining one himself affected?

"GUARD YOUR HEARTS AND YOUR MENTAL POWERS"

[16] Since complaints originate in the heart and mind, it is essential that our thoughts be properly controlled and directed to upbuilding and encouraging matters. The apostle Paul showed that Jehovah's help must be sought in order to do this, saying: "Do not be anxious over anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication along with thanksgiving let your petitions be made known to God; and the peace of God that excels all thought will guard your hearts and your mental powers by means of Christ Jesus." Yes, if you have a weakness in this regard, do not hesitate to ask for Jehovah's help to overcome it. Such earnest petitions will be heard by Jehovah and he will grant you peace and contentment of mind to replace a complaining, dissatisfied spirit. Paul, however, goes on to show that the individual must work hard in harmony with his prayers, saying: "Finally, brothers, whatever things are true, whatever things are of serious concern, whatever things are righteous, whatever things are chaste, whatever things are lovable, whatever things are well spoken of, whatever virtue there is and whatever praiseworthy thing there is, continue considering these things."—Phil. 4:6-8.

[17] In this way Paul emphasizes that the individual must exercise control, not only over his tongue, but also over his very thoughts, concentrating on good, virtuous and lovable things in our brothers. The tendency of the fallen flesh is to see the weaknesses of an individual first, which often blinds one to the many fine, lovable and praiseworthy qualities that he pos-

16. Whose help did Paul show we should seek in order to guard our hearts and mental powers, and on what should our thoughts be focused?
17. (a) Why does it require a continuous fight to apply Paul's words at Philippians 4:8? (b) What should we do when we begin to feel irritation at our brothers' faults?

sesses. And, since it is so easy to find weak points in any one of us, it is thus not difficult for the complaining spirit to find fuel to keep itself burning. That is why we have a continuous fight to keep our thoughts under control. When we note something that makes us feel jealousy or irritation, we should try to put it out of our mind immediately and think of the good qualities instead. This will not be easy at the beginning, but, by working at it with Jehovah's help, you will find that you will develop a closer relationship with your brothers and a deeper appreciation of their devotion to Jehovah, and, of course, you yourself will be a much happier person to be around.

[18] One who complains puts emphasis on the flesh and its weaknesses and is thus acting like a spiritual babe in that particular regard. Instead of looking at the heart devotion and love shown by his brothers, he looks at the fallen, sinful flesh. The congregation at Corinth was also guilty of this, and so Paul wrote to them: "I was not able to speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to fleshly men, as to babes in Christ. . . . For whereas there are jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly and are you not walking as men do?" (1 Cor. 3:1, 3) In Romans 8:5, he gives the reason why this is true, saying: "For those who are in accord with the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those in accord with the spirit on the things of the spirit." Therefore, one who keeps filled with God's holy spirit by regular Bible study, meeting attendance, prayer and active service to Jehovah will find it less difficult to overcome a complaining tendency than will one who is irregular in these spiritual activities.

18. (a) What mistake is the complaining one making, according to Paul's words to the Corinthians and to the Romans? (b) So who find it easier to overcome a complaining attitude?

PERSONAL COMPLAINTS

[19] In analyzing this matter of complaining, we can divide it into two general categories: (1) Complaints against individuals and (2) complaints of a more serious nature involving Jehovah's organization or his purposes. We will take up the matter of personal complaints first, and the succeeding *Watchtower* article will discuss the second aspect.

[20] By far the majority of complaints against individuals are caused by minor misunderstandings or personality conflicts. A sister who is quiet and reserved may become irritated at another sister who is far more outspoken in her manner, and she may express this irritation to others. Personal habits, customs and actions may be acceptable to some, but to others they may be very annoying, causing them to complain at times. Most of these complaints are not premeditated, but, rather, are provoked on the spur of the moment by some little, annoying thing that occurs. They are often spoken hastily and frequently are regretted later. What can be done to keep free from this kind of complaining?

[21] First, it is essential that we recognize these complaints for what they are: petty, unimportant, even childish in many cases. There is no real ground for complaint, but it is just that a certain brother or sister does not do things the way you feel they should be done. It will help us, too, to consider seriously how Jehovah views these "weaknesses" of our brothers, realizing that he is willing to overlook and forgive them. Does not Jehovah freely forgive you in spite of your many failings? Do you not make allowances for your own short-

19. Into what two general categories do complaints fall?

20. What causes by far the majority of personal complaints, and are they generally premeditated?

21. How should we view these minor failings on the part of our brothers, especially in the light of Jesus' words at Matthew 6:14, 15?

comings, asking Jehovah for forgiveness over and over again, perhaps for the same weakness? A prerequisite for gaining Jehovah's forgiveness is that we forgive others, as Jesus pointed out in Matthew 6:14, 15: "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; whereas if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

22 Really, then, we would be showing a lack of love and forgiveness if we held such minor failings against our brothers and magnified them by bringing them to the attention of others. That would certainly not be in imitation of our heavenly Father. In describing love God's Word says: "Love is long-suffering and kind. Love . . . does not become provoked. It does not keep account of the injury." "Love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without grumbling." (1 Cor. 13:4, 5; 1 Pet. 4:8, 9) In view of this, it is not hard to understand why we are counseled to keep on "putting up with one another in love."—Eph. 4:2.

23 Thus, if we are not to "keep account of the injury," it is our Christian obligation to forget these minor grievances that arise, putting them out of our mind completely. Do not let them grow to unreasonable proportions, but cut them off early, before they have time to take root and flourish. Quench the spirit of complaint and prevent much unhappiness for yourself and others.

24 There may be times, however, when a brother or sister really does have a cause for complaint against another. Whether knowingly or unknowingly, a brother may have done something that has hurt you in some way and, because of its nature, you are unable to forget it and put it out of your mind. You may find that it is disturbing you considerably and is even affecting your service to Jehovah. It is for just such occurrences that Jesus gave his very sound advice at Matthew 18:15: "If your brother commits a sin, go lay bare his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother."

25 Even if you do have grounds for complaint, never should this be spread abroad in the congregation by your complaining about the brother's action to others. This will not make for peace but will disturb the entire congregation, possibly even creating a division among the brothers. It will certainly not be of help to the offending party, who will undoubtedly hear your complaint secondhand from others. Complaining will only make matters worse instead of healing the breach, as the proverb shows: "He that keeps talking about a matter is separating those familiar with one another." (Prov. 17:9) No, a complaining attitude will not help anyone. The correct way is to approach the brother in private and discuss the matter calmly and peacefully with him. You may find that he did not even realize he had hurt you and, if this is the case, imagine how happy he will be that you approached him directly instead of spreading a complaint within the congregation!

26 When your brother humbly asks for your forgiveness, it is your obligation to accept his apology and forgive him, just as your heavenly Father forgives you. Love is a debt that is never completely paid off. (Rom. 13:8) Thus, when the apostle Peter asked Jesus, "How many

22. Show how complaining about minor shortcomings betrays a lack of love.
23. What, then, should be done about these minor grievances?
24. How did Jesus say more serious personal complaints should be handled?
25. (a) What should never be done by one having a serious complaint against his brother, and why? (b) Show why following the counsel at Matthew 18:15 is very wise.
26, 27. (a) What obligation rests on the one offended when his brother asks for forgiveness, and how far-reaching is it? (b) Show how Paul's counsel at Colossians 3:12-14 will help in all cases of personal complaints.

times is my brother to sin against me and am I to forgive him? Up to seven times?", Jesus answered: "I say to you, not, Up to seven times, but, Up to seventy-seven times." (Matt. 18:21, 22) By being generous with our love, mercy and forgiveness in relation to our brothers, we will reap in return much joy and happiness and will be able to keep free from the corrosive, divisive spirit of complaint. By having a deep appreciation for Jehovah and a love for him and our brothers we will be able to fix our minds on the "more important things" that will affect our future life instead of the many petty things that characterize the present imperfect system of things.—Phil. 1:10.

[27] In concluding this discussion, let us listen carefully to and diligently apply the words of Paul many years ago to the Colossians. If we do, we will be greatly helped to keep free from all kinds of personal complaints. Paul urged: "Accordingly, as God's chosen ones, holy and loved, clothe yourselves with the tender affections of compassion, kindness, lowliness of mind, mildness, and long-suffering. Continue putting up with one another and forgiving one another freely if anyone has a cause for complaint against another. Even as Jehovah freely forgave you, so do you also. But, besides all these things, clothe yourselves with love, for it is a perfect bond of union."—Col. 3:12-14.

FINDING CONTENTMENT with JEHOVAH'S ORGANIZATION

"Lord, whom shall we go away to? You have sayings of everlasting life."—John 6:68.

JEHOVAH is and always has been in full control of everything in the universe. It is his almighty power that keeps the stars, sun, moon and planets in their respective orbits and it is he who lovingly maintains and preserves the earth as man's home. Everything he does is absolutely perfect and because of this his creatures can have full confidence in his sovereign rule and merciful oversight.

[2] Being almighty and all-seeing, Jehovah exercises his unlimited qualities of love, wisdom, justice and power in a perfectly well-balanced way when dealing with his creatures. Never does he carry his justice to the extreme without tempering it with love and mercy. Never does he misuse his limitless power, but always exercises it in love and with wisdom. He never contradicts himself, nor is he inconsistent with himself in the use of his attributes. Since this is true, why do some of his creatures complain at times about his arrangements and ways of doing things? Many times it is because of a lack of understanding of the way Jehovah works out his purposes, or because of having a very shortsighted view of Jehovah's dealings with his creatures. However, while it may be true that

1. Why can Jehovah's creatures have full confidence in him?
2. (a) How does Jehovah exercise his attributes? (b) Why, then, do some complain, and against whom, in fact, are they complaining?

often we do not fully appreciate the reason why Jehovah does certain things, our complaining about this would show a lack of trust and faith in Jehovah God and in his ability to accomplish things in his own way and time. This is a most serious mistake. About 3,500 years ago, when God's people Israel were traveling in the wilderness in southern Palestine, they began to complain to their overseers, Moses and Aaron, about a lack of food. Moses showed them just how serious their complaining spirit was when he said: "Your murmurings are not against us, but against Jehovah."—Ex. 16:8.

FINDING JOY IN OUR ASSIGNMENTS

[3] Some brothers today who have been in the truth for a number of years may begin to show a discontented spirit similar to that shown by the Israelites of Moses' day. For many years they have been telling their friends and neighbors that the battle of Armageddon is very close. No doubt they have gone to the same houses time after time with the message of God's kingdom. Now, however, they feel that Armageddon should come quickly and they begin to feel impatient because God does not immediately destroy all wickedness. They begin to utter words of complaint.

[4] It would be well for such brothers to remember the prophet Jonah, who was assigned to preach to the people of Nineveh in the ninth century B.C.E. His message was a startling one: "Only forty days more, and Nineveh will be overthrown." (Jonah 3:4) As soon as the people of the city heard this, they immediately repented of their wickedness and turned toward Jehovah. Even the king dressed himself in mourning clothes and instructed all the people to fast and call on God for mercy. He said: "Who is there knowing whether the true God may turn back and actually feel regret and turn back from his burning anger, so that we may not perish?" (Jonah 3:9) Because of this mass expression of repentance and humility, Jehovah did not bring the promised destruction after forty days. How did Jonah feel about this?

[5] The inspired Record tells us: "To Jonah, though, it was highly displeasing, and he got to be hot with anger." (Jonah 4:1) Jonah had a very unbalanced and selfish view of the entire situation. At a time when the lives of tens of thousands of people were at stake, he was more concerned with his own feelings, thinking that he had lost face because his prophecy had not immediately come to pass. He impatiently wanted Nineveh's destruction to come immediately after forty days, and because of this he forgot the quality of mercy. As he was brooding unhappily over his complaint under the hot sun, Jehovah caused a big plant to come up to shade him. The next day, however, he caused a worm to dry up the plant, and Jonah immediately began to complain again. At this opportune moment Jehovah drove home the point to Jonah: "You, for your part,

3. What causes some to complain in regard to their preaching work?

4, 5. (a) Relate the Bible account of what happened when Jonah preached to the Ninevites. (b) What was Jonah's big mistake, and how did Jehovah teach him a lesson in mercy?

felt sorry for the bottle-gourd plant, which you did not toil upon or make get big, which proved to be a mere growth of a night and perished as a mere growth of a night. And, for my part, ought I not to feel sorry for Nineveh the great city, in which there exist more than one hundred and twenty thousand men who do not at all know the difference between their right hand and their left, besides many domestic animals?"—Jonah 4:10, 11.

6 Yes, Jehovah is merciful and abundant in loving-kindness, and any time that he permits before he destroys the wicked at Armageddon is a wonderful expression of his love and patience. "Jehovah is not slow respecting his promise, . . . but he is patient with you because he does not desire any to be destroyed but desires all to attain to repentance." (2 Pet. 3:9) What a lofty view of matters! By understanding Jehovah's mind on this matter and imitating his matchless qualities, we will never become impatient, but will be content to wait upon him and his due time. We will go on preaching with the motive of love, taking advantage of every minute Jehovah allows to aid them to repentance. By doing this we will be full of joy in our ministry and will avoid becoming unhappy complainers.

7 A brother may be sent to a foreign assignment as a missionary and fall into the snare of complaining. How? By having the mental attitude that everything in his new country should be comparable to conditions in his own land. He may expect the same living standards and comforts that he enjoyed at the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead in New York city. If he finds that this is not so, he begins to feel unhappy and discontented. This spirit of discontent then quickly spreads to other things, such as the customs, language and habits of the people in whose country he is living. He starts to criticize openly these and many other minor things that he feels are not just right. Some of these may have nothing at all to do with the preaching of the Kingdom good news, but still he is outspoken in complaining about them. He complains about things that he would never normally complain about in his own land, because he now has a dissatisfied, discontented spirit. Such a brother will never be happy in his assignment as long as this attitude persists.

8 This reminds us of a mixed crowd of fugitives who left the land of Egypt to travel with the Israelites in the wilderness 1,500 years before the time Jesus walked the earth. They had been traveling for over a year under the direction of Jehovah when they began to complain. They had not gone hungry, nor had their shoes and clothing worn out on the journey. They had sufficient for their daily needs. Yet they were not satisfied with this. They began comparing their nomad life with their life in Egypt previously, and because of this, even the Israelites joined them in crying: "How we remember the fish that we used to eat in Egypt for nothing, the cucumbers and the watermelons and the leeks and the onions and the garlic! But now our soul is dried away. Our eyes are on nothing at all except the manna." (Num. 11:5, 6) What a lack of gratitude for Jehovah's provision of miraculous bread from heaven!

9 Instead of imitating this ungrateful mixed crowd and these Israelites, we should endeavor to be like the apostle Paul, who lived under many varied conditions and in many different lands. Re-

6. What view did Peter take of God's mercy, and how can we avoid an impatient, complaining attitude in our ministry?
7. Explain how a complaining spirit can develop in the mind of a missionary.
8. Who in ancient times became dissatisfied with their living conditions, and did they really have cause to complain?
9. How is the apostle Paul a fine example for modern-day missionaries and special pioneers, and what will they avoid by imitating him?

ferring to his varied experiences as a missionary, he told the Philippian Christians: "I have learned, in whatever circumstances I am, to be self-sufficient. I know indeed how to be low on provisions, I know indeed how to have an abundance. In everything and in all circumstances I have learned the secret of both how to be full and how to hunger, both how to have an abundance and how to suffer want. For all things I have the strength by virtue of him who imparts power to me." (Phil. 4:11-13) No matter where Paul went he had learned to adapt himself to the conditions there and to be happy and contented in any assignment given him by Jehovah. Missionaries and special pioneers today can learn much from his fine example and will thus avoid the frustrations and heartaches caused by unhappily complaining about their assignments.

RESPECT FOR THEOCRATIC AUTHORITY

10 Since Jehovah uses imperfect men to represent him within his earthly organization, it becomes difficult for some to recognize and respect theocratic authority. These lose sight of the fact that it is Jehovah who appoints such individuals and they begin to see only the weak, imperfect man. Instead of respecting the position held by a brother, they quickly complain when he makes some minor error because of his inherited shortcomings. This is a grave mistake and can lead to much unpleasantness and discontent in a congregation of Jehovah's people.

11 Many hundreds of years ago, a group of over 250 men made such a mistake in viewing Jehovah's representatives Moses and Aaron. These men felt that they were equally well qualified to oversee the nation of Israel as these two and so "they congregated themselves against Moses and Aaron and said to them: 'That is enough of you, because the whole assembly are all of them holy and Jehovah is in their midst. Why, then, should you lift yourselves up above the congregation of Jehovah?'" They thus improperly accused Moses and Aaron of lording it over the congregation. Dathan and Abiram, two of this group, said to Moses later that he was trying to "play the prince" over them. Was this true? Had Moses and Aaron set themselves in their positions of oversight for their own selfish ends, or had Jehovah placed them there? The next day the entire nation was made to know the answer from Jehovah himself. By splitting open the earth and by fire, Jehovah wiped out the rebels and their families, thus confirming Moses' statement: "By this you will know that Jehovah has sent me to do all these deeds, that it is not of my own heart." May we never make such a fatal mistake by complaining against Jehovah's appointed representatives!—Num. 16:3, 13, 28.

12 As with those disrespectful rebels long ago, no brother today will enjoy true contentment with Jehovah's organization as long as he views appointed servants from a fleshly or human viewpoint. They will be constantly noticing the weak points of a servant and will openly complain about the way he handles things, feeling perhaps that they could do it more efficiently themselves. It is good, however, to remember Jehovah's command to his prophet Samuel, who was charged with the responsibility of anointing the next king in Israel. Samuel took one look at Eliab, one of the sons of Jesse, and felt sure that this must be the one chosen by Jehovah because of his impressive personal appear-

10. Why do some have difficulty in respecting theocratic authority, and to what can this lead?

11. (a) What complaint did over 250 Israelites make against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness, raising what issue? (b) How did Jehovah express his anger at this lack of respect for his appointed representatives?

12. What is the danger of viewing appointed servants from a fleshly viewpoint, and how did Jehovah show this in his words to Samuel, at 1 Samuel 16:7?

ance. Jehovah warned Samuel, however: "Do not look at his appearance and at the height of his stature, for I have rejected him. For not the way man sees is the way God sees, because mere man sees what appears to the eyes; but as for Jehovah, he sees what the heart is." (1 Sam. 16:7) Realizing this, all dedicated Christians will respect Jehovah's appointment of an individual, even if to all outward appearances and from a worldly viewpoint he does not appear to be the best qualified.

13 Such respect and wholehearted submission and cooperation on the part of publishers and pioneers in a congregation help to make the work of an appointed servant joyful and rewarding. That is why Paul told Hebrew Christians: "Be obedient to those who are taking the lead among you and be submissive, for they are keeping watch over your souls as those who will render an account; that they may do this with joy and not with sighing, for this would be damaging to you." (Heb. 13:17) Any complaints made against such brothers in positions of oversight would rob the congregation of much joy. It would be "damaging" to the congregation and would indicate a spirit of discontent with Jehovah's arrangement of things.

14 What, though, would be the position if the overseer in a congregation became negligent in arranging for the meetings and failed to take the lead in service? Perhaps it will be two or three more months before the circuit servant is due to visit the congregation. Would it not be proper *in this case* for a brother publicly to complain about this, even going so far as to have all the publishers sign a petition to send to the Society asking that this brother be removed from his position of oversight? No, this would definitely be out of order! Remember that David did not attempt to usurp wicked Saul's throne in Israel, although he knew that he was to be the next king. He did not feel justified in taking action to kill Saul, even though Saul was a wicked man who had lost God's favor. He respected the fact that Saul was "the anointed of Jehovah" and he was willing to submit to this arrangement until Jehovah saw fit to remove him from his position.—1 Sam. 24:6.

15 David showed great faith in Jehovah at all times. He knew that Jehovah was in full control and he was content to wait for His due time to act. Unlike David, any brother who democratically arranges for a petition or openly complains against an appointed servant is showing a lamentable lack of trust and faith in Jehovah's ability to oversee *His* organization. In effect, such a brother is saying that, since God is not handling the matter speedily enough, he will need to take action instead. What a shortsighted and immature way of viewing things! Jehovah does not always do things the way we think they should be done, but we can rest assured that they will be done properly and at the right time. So the thing to do is to wait upon Jehovah, keep busy in service, lovingly help our brothers, and encourage respect for the theocratic arrangement of things. Any other hasty action would *undermine* respect for theocratic authority and would cause much spiritual damage to the congregation.

16 We can have full confidence that Jehovah knows what is going on in every congregation of his people. "And there is not a creation that is not manifest to his

13. What contributes much to the joy experienced by an appointed servant, but what could destroy such joy?
14. What should never be done even if an overseer is becoming neglectful of his duties? Give a Scriptural example to back up your answer.

15. (a) Show how one who complains against an appointed servant is actually showing a lack of faith in Jehovah. (b) What would a mature brother do in the event an overseer is neglecting his work?
16. Of what can we be confident, and so what should we be busily doing?

sight, but all things are naked and openly exposed to the eyes of him with whom we have an accounting." (Heb. 4:13) He is not asleep and nothing goes unnoticed by him. He does not need to be informed by a complaining brother if something is in need of correction. The Scriptures tell us: "The eyes of Jehovah are in every place, keeping watch upon the bad ones and the good ones." (Prov. 15:3) With this comforting thought in mind, we can content ourselves with doing our assigned tasks, happy in the knowledge that the Almighty Sovereign himself is in complete control of his visible organization.

[17] Sometimes even an appointed servant is affected by the spirit of complaint, feeling that he has too much work to do. He may feel overburdened in taking care of the flock of God or he may become impatient with the brothers, complaining that they do not cooperate with him or do not grasp things as quickly as he would like. This brother has lost sight temporarily of the fact that it is Jehovah's organization he is working with and Jehovah's "sheep" he is overseeing. He feels as if the entire burden of caring for these "sheep" has fallen on his shoulders. This is not true, however. It is Jehovah who takes on himself the responsibility of caring for his "sheep" and it is Jesus Christ his Son who gave his life for them. No overseer should attempt to take on the responsibility of taking care of Jehovah's "sheep" alone. He needs to rely heavily upon Jehovah and show complete faith in him. David, who had experience for thirty-three years as the overseer of an entire nation, urged: "Throw your burden upon Jehovah himself, and he himself will sustain you. Never will he allow the righteous one to totter." —Ps. 55:22.

17. (a) How may an appointed servant develop a spirit of complaint? (b) Of what has such a brother lost sight, and so what does he need to do?

[18] Moses, an appointed overseer, once allowed himself to get into a complaining frame of mind while guiding the rebellious Israelites in the wilderness. He even addressed his complaint to God in prayer, saying: "Why have you caused evil to your servant, and why have I not found favor in your eyes, in placing the load of all this people upon me? Have I myself conceived all this people? Is it I who have given them birth, so that you should say to me, 'Carry them in your bosom, just as the male nurse carries the suckling,' . . . ? I am not able, I by myself, to carry all this people, because they are too heavy for me. So if this is the way you are doing to me, please kill me off altogether." —Num. 11:11, 12, 14, 15.

[19] Moses was normally a happy, contented servant of Jehovah and certainly was not a habitual complainer. Yet on this occasion the grumbling of the Israelites just became too much for him, and he became infected with the spirit of complaint. However, no human overseer today has such a large congregation to care for, and few have to deal with the difficult problems that Moses handled. Also, overseers today have the loving guidance of the organization to back them up, along with the support of Jehovah and his enthroned King. There is thus no reason to feel overburdened or to complain. By keeping sight of their wonderful privilege and viewing it with joy, they can imitate the "Chief Agent and Perfecter of our faith, Jesus." By doing this, and by dealing with the brothers in love, not expecting too much from them, an overseer will not give voice to complaints, but, rather, will be optimistic and happy, thus spreading a joyful atmosphere throughout the entire congregation.—Heb. 12:2.

18, 19. (a) How did Moses show a complaining attitude on one occasion, but could we say he was a complainer? (b) Why do overseers today have every reason to be optimistic?

CONTENT WITH REVEALED TRUTH

[20] At times we hear brothers talking complainingly about the Scriptural explanations and truths published in *The Watchtower*. Being unable to understand fully why a certain point is made or why a clearer understanding of a particular point has been given, they begin expressing their doubts to others. This, of course, creates confusion among the brothers, especially among the newer ones, and it certainly does not help the complainer in any way. He is showing a spirit of discontent with Jehovah's channel of communication, in many cases doing so hastily and prematurely without a full knowledge of all the facts involved.

[21] This same spirit existed among some of Jesus' early followers. Once, after listening to Jesus teach them some strong new truths, some said: "This speech is shocking; who can listen to it?" The inspired record tells us the result of this, saying: "Owing to this many of his disciples went off to the things behind and would no longer walk with him." Because of this, Jesus asked his twelve apostles: "You do not want to go also, do you?" Peter promptly answered: "Lord, whom shall we go away to? You have sayings of everlasting life." (John 6:60, 66-68) The ones who were stumbled became discontented hastily. They did not take the time or make the effort to examine the truths explained to see if *they* were in harmony with God's Word. The apostles, however, were content to stay with Jesus and be taught by him gradually. This did not mean that they fully understood everything he told them at that time, since there were many things they could not grasp. However, they had real faith. They knew that Jehovah would not give them a stone if they asked for bread, and therefore were satisfied to listen and learn, asking questions when they did not grasp a point fully. (Matt. 7:9-11) They were richly blessed for this and were given a full vision of Jehovah's will at that time when they received the holy spirit at Pentecost, 33 C.E.

[22] We can learn much from the example of these faithful men. It is true that some points are difficult to grasp at first, but, instead of complaining or arguing about them, thus in effect pitting our puny knowledge against the almighty wisdom of Jehovah and the experience of his spirit-guided organization, would it not be wiser to look into the matter farther? After studying it carefully yourself, talk to mature brothers about it, not in a complaining manner, but to get their mind on the matter. If, after doing this, you still

20. How do some complain about the Society's explanation of the Scriptures, and why is this dangerous both to themselves and others?

21. (a) Why did some of Jesus' disciples leave off from following him? (b) In contrast to this, what commendable attitude did the twelve apostles take, with what results?

22. Explain what should be done when we have difficulty in grasping a point of truth, and show why this is the only reasonable course.

have difficulty understanding the point, it may be better to leave it for a while, waiting for further clarification, just as the apostles did. Take the matter to Jehovah in prayer, asking for wisdom to understand the point of truth. You will be granted a full understanding in due time as Jehovah reveals it through his organization, providing you stay close to that organization in faith.

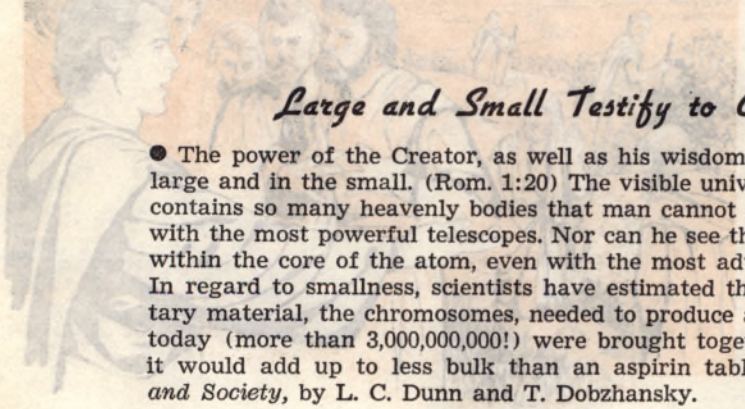
[23] Certainly we do not want to become like those mentioned by Paul at 1 Timothy 6:3-5: "If any man teaches other doctrine and does not assent to healthful words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, nor to the teaching that accords with godly devotion, he is puffed up with pride, not understanding anything, but being mentally diseased over questionings and debates about words. From these things spring envy, strife, abusive speeches, wicked suspicions, violent disputes about trifles on the part of men corrupted in mind and despoiled of the truth." Many have become apostate because of allowing a complaining spirit to embitter them against Jehovah's organization. To avoid becoming like them, we must avoid complaining even about small things, "trifles," but need to be content with revealed truth from Jehovah.

23. How can we avoid becoming like the apostates described at 1 Timothy 6:3-5?

[24] As the examples we have discussed show, complaining against the organization is generally caused by a lack of understanding of Jehovah's way of doing things and a lack of complete faith in him and his arrangements. Therefore, in order to overcome a complaining tendency, we need to build up our faith in Jehovah and his organization, getting a deeper insight and a mature understanding by personal study, prayer and close association with his people.

[25] So let us all be content to work in our assigned places within the organization, recognizing Jehovah as the sole Founder and Organizer of his people and appreciating that Jesus Christ is his appointed King now enthroned in the heavens. By doing our work uncomplainingly we will have many joys now along with our brothers in the congregation, and, in the "coming systems of things," we will enjoy more blessings than our minds can now comprehend as Jehovah unfolds his glorious purposes over the centuries to come. Do not lose out on this delightful future by becoming an unhappy, shortsighted complainer, but enjoy true satisfaction and peace of mind along with Jehovah's proved, faithful people.—Eph. 2:7.

24. What lack is betrayed by those who complain against Jehovah's organization, and how can this be counteracted?
25. How can we be sure of gaining many joys both now and in the "coming systems of things"?



Large and Small Testify to Creator

● The power of the Creator, as well as his wisdom, can be seen in the large and in the small. (Rom. 1:20) The visible universe is so large and contains so many heavenly bodies that man cannot see the end of them with the most powerful telescopes. Nor can he see the smallest particles within the core of the atom, even with the most advanced microscopes. In regard to smallness, scientists have estimated that if all the hereditary material, the chromosomes, needed to produce all the people living today (more than 3,000,000,000!) were brought together, the amount of it would add up to less bulk than an aspirin tablet.—*Heredity, Race and Society*, by L. C. Dunn and T. Dobzhansky.

Keep Useful Habits by Good Associations

WHAT are "useful habits"? By "useful habits" we do not here mean merely polished manners or nice ways of doing things. Rather, we mean habits that are useful, practical, in keeping us morally sound and spiritually strong, habits that honor Jehovah God and that upbuild others.

The daily reading of God's Word is a useful habit and so is regularity in prayer. Punctual and regular attendance at the five weekly meetings of the Christian congregation and witnessing about God and his purposes from house to house and on other occasions as we have opportunity are also habits that certainly must be termed useful. Then, again, the practice of marriage mates' showing thoughtful, loving consideration for each other is a very useful habit and so is the rendering of respectful obedience to parents on the part of their children.—Luke 6:31.

It takes real effort to cultivate these useful habits; they do not come instinctively. And having acquired these habits, we want to keep them, do we not? What will help us to keep them? Good associations. What will tend to spoil them? Bad associations.

No question about it, as God's Word warns: "Bad associations spoil useful habits." (1 Cor. 15:33)* The ancient Israelites grew careless regarding their associations, and what happened to them? "They went mingling with the nations and took up learning their [pagan] works. And they kept serving their idols, and these came to be a snare to them." That is why the apostle Paul, after telling how wicked men would act in these last days, warns us, "from these turn away." Yes, associating with worldlings will tend to spoil our useful habits.—Ps. 106:35, 36; 2 Tim. 3:1-5.

That is why Christians must ever be on guard to keep their contacts, their associations with worldlings at a minimum. As long as we are in the world we cannot avoid all contact with worldlings in such places as school or places of employment. But we can avoid associating with worldlings voluntarily. They may tempt us to fall, perhaps never to recover.

How wise, therefore, are the Scriptural commands for servants of God to limit themselves to *good* associations! That is why the Israelites were commanded to assemble regularly with one another, not only to be instructed but to be kept from bad associations. (Deut. 31:12) By telling us that he would be present where two or three met in his name, Jesus Christ was encouraging right association. (Matt. 18:20) And we all certainly are familiar with Paul's counsel at Hebrews 10:23-25 about the need of our associating together.

Surely only our Christian brothers can provide us with good association that will help us to keep our useful habits. Are we thinking of relaxing? How enjoyable it is to invite some of them for an evening of refreshment and interesting Bible games or to have several Christian families join for a one-day outing, as many missionary groups do in foreign lands!

However, especially at the Kingdom Hall is where we will find the good associations that will help us to keep our useful habits. The same is true of the larger gatherings, such as our circuit assemblies and this summer's district assemblies. At all these gatherings we are encouraged to cultivate and to keep our useful habits both by what is said on the platform and by our association with those who themselves manifest such useful habits in their everyday lives.

Valuable as these occasions for good association are for keeping our useful habits, it appears that not all of Jehovah's witnesses appreciate their value. On the average, only 75 percent of those who share in the preaching work attend the congregational meetings. Of course, some miss due to illness. But how is it that in some lands the attendance is 100 percent or more? Perhaps they are not as distracted by material possessions and easy travel, and there are also in attendance those who are old enough physically or spiritually to listen and to learn but who have not started to go from house to house as active associates of Jehovah's witnesses. So they have more than 100 percent present at their meetings. Could that be true of your home congregation too? Do you individually attend regularly? Could you help others to associate regularly?

Truly, many are our opportunities for cultivating the kind of associations that will help us to keep useful habits!

* For details see *The Watchtower*, January 15, 1966.

Joys, Trials and Blessings IN THE Service of Our God

as told by RICHARD BLÜMEL

IN THE summer of 1918 Germany was fighting a desperate battle, its men distributed on all fronts. Behind the lines women and children were starving and many thousands died daily from malnutrition and influenza. How the multitudes now longed for peace! In the large industries most of the work was being performed by older men, women and the youth of the land. I was eighteen years of age and was employed in a Leipzig bookbindery, where I had but lately concluded an apprenticeship as gold-embosser and bookbinder.

It was during this time that I first received a message of hope. It came from a middle-aged woman who talked much about her convictions with others. One day she told me about a marvelous book, *The Divine Plan of the Ages,* and, noting my keen interest, gave me a tract called "Old Theology Quarterly," containing proof that the "times of the nations" had run out. (Luke 21:24) I read it over and over again, so absorbing did I find this message from the Bible.

Later that same lady told me about weekly meetings where similar subjects were discussed, so I accepted her invitation to attend. On the agreed date I was waiting at the entrance to the school auditorium where the meetings were held, and when the lady arrived she took me inside. About fifty people were present. The topic of discussion was a chapter in *The Divine Plan of the Ages,* and my interest was now thoroughly aroused. I decided to procure the book and started reading. In fact, I became so engrossed in its pages day after day that my parents began to worry about me, and I had to find some quieter spot to do my reading. What quieter place than the nearby cemetery, where I felt I would be unseen and undisturbed. It was marvelous to learn from this book that God had long ago foreknown and foretold the rise and fall of the world powers and how they would all come to their end.

The taking in of this thrilling information brought me so much joy and satisfaction that I just had to begin talking to others about it. Naturally, my parents were the first to hear from me, but did not at this time respond. At the meetings I was attending I obtained a supply of tracts and began going from house to house introducing the Bible prophecy at Daniel 2:44, in which is foretold the establishment of God's kingdom and the dissolution of all the kingdoms of the world. One day I happened to call on one of my fellow workers at the factory, and he was quite surprised to hear what I had to say and curious to learn how I came to be a preacher of the Bible's message.

Thereafter I started to use opportune moments to speak to other employees at the factory, inviting them to attend the Bible-study classes or the special public lectures on Bible chronology as it relates to our times. By October 1918 I was grati-

fied to see some fruits from those labors, for five of my fellow workers responded and eventually took the same course that I did, namely, dedicated their lives to Jehovah God and submitted to water baptism. Since the war was still raging, my baptism had to be conducted quite secretly.

Soon I had thoroughly considered the six volumes of *Studies in the Scriptures* published by the Watch Tower Society as well as the booklet *Tabernacle Shadows of Better Sacrifices*. How thankful I was to be enjoying such spiritual plenty at a time when famine for both material and spiritual food was so widespread! My desire to help many others to enjoy these same blessings continued to grow. People must be told about the end of all human kingdoms and the righteous government that would replace them according to the promises of God.

In 1919 the seventh volume of *Studies in the Scriptures* was published in German, having been printed in a commercial printery. Entitled "The Finished Mystery," it discussed the fall of Babylon as described at Revelation, chapters seventeen and eighteen. The 21st day of August was the date set for a wide distribution of this book, and tracts entitled "The Fall of Babylon" would be used to publicize it. With great anticipation we awaited that date. How happy I was that I had already heeded the command recorded at Revelation 18:4: "Get out of her, my people, if you do not want to share with her in her sins, and if you do not want to receive part of her plagues."

On the way to the territory assigned me, pulling my handcart loaded with *The Fall of Babylon* tracts, I passed a monument commemorating Gustavus Adolphus, king of Sweden, champion of Protestantism. On the plaque I read: "Gustavus Adolphus, Christian and hero, by [the battle of] Breitenfeld saved freedom of religion for the world." As I proceeded with my ministry I could not help thinking that I was one of a group of true freedom fighters. Later that evening, tired but content, I returned home with my empty cart. All my tracts were gone.

"MILLIONS NOW LIVING WILL NEVER DIE"

The following year, 1920, the theme "Millions Now Living Will Never Die" was proclaimed in Germany as in so many other parts of the world. The German booklet bearing that title was released and public lectures on the subject were presented wherever a hall could be engaged. I can well remember following up the lectures with distribution of the booklet, and keeping record of people who manifested interest. Handbills and placards advertised the talks. One night I had the privilege of pasting signs on traffic centers throughout Leipzig. How satisfying to see the Alberthalle, largest lecture hall we could get, crowded out by an audience of 4,000, many of whom had to stand!

Our efforts to spread the Kingdom message had not ended with the war's end. Rather, we were moved to redouble our efforts when the *Watch Tower* magazine called attention to our serious obligation in the light of Jesus' prophecy that "on account of the chosen ones those days [of great tribulation] will be cut short." We discerned that it was the responsibility of God's servants on earth to give a wide witness to the Kingdom so that some "flesh would be saved."—Matt. 24:21, 22.

In 1921 the Dresden Bank in Leipzig offered me a job as bookbinder with an annual income of $2,460. However, it was intimated that there would be days when I would have to work longer than the usual eight and a half hours. I turned down the offer. It was my fondest desire

to give God's service first place in my life.

TASTING THE JOYS OF FULL-TIME SERVICE

An announcement in *The Watch Tower* early in 1923 invited those with bookbinding experience to apply for service at the Watch Tower Society's branch office, then located at Barmen. After prayerful consideration of my circumstances I determined to respond, and soon received a telegram, saying: "Please come immediately." I sold some of my valuables, bought a ticket to Barmen, and arrived there on May 11, 1923. This was the start of a new life for me, the happiest period of my whole life.

That year the Society's own presses began to print *The Watch Tower* and *The Golden Age* (now *Awake!*) for Germany. It was my privilege to run a small hand-operated trimming machine. Soon the building and the presses were inadequate for the growing volume of the work. President J. F. Rutherford of the Watch Tower Society directed that a larger building in a more central location be acquired. On June 19, 1923, we began moving all our equipment to new and larger quarters in the city of Magdeburg.

But, again, the expansion of the work in Germany required further enlargement of our facilities. Following a visit by the Society's president, it was arranged that extra land adjacent to the headquarters property be purchased. On this a much larger building was constructed, including a spacious assembly hall and improved equipment for printing and binding. It was wonderful to reach the stage when we were producing 7,000 bound volumes each day—helps to the study of the Bible.

The year 1931 was memorable, for it was then that special conventions of Jehovah's people were conducted throughout the world, and the name "Jehovah's witnesses" came to the fore. I had the pleasure of attending the assembly in Paris that year. It was quite a novel experience for me to go from house to house with a printed card explaining my mission. You see, I did not know any French. It was in September of the same year that I took up the auxiliary pioneer ministry, that is, an arrangement under which I spent half my time preaching from house to house. My aim was to have a larger personal share in the spread of the booklet released that year, *The Kingdom, the Hope of the World.* We started off the campaign by forming a long line and marching through the center of the city carrying placards showing an enlarged picture of the booklet. We offered them to people right on the street. In four weeks millions of copies were put into the hands of the people.

On one occasion we narrowly missed being mobbed by a gang of Communists who had just ended a rally in their own hall. As they emerged and caught sight of our group they began threatening us with a beating. Just then the police flying squad arrived on the scene and stood, pistols drawn, between us and the Communists.

THE TESTING OF OUR FAITH

In April 1933 Hitler declared the work of the Witnesses illegal and forbade their meetings for Bible study. Nevertheless, our worship and service of the Creator continued, though underground. On October 9, 1934, a resolution was sent to the dictator informing him that we were determined to hold to our worship of Jehovah. During that trying time I can recall enjoying the privilege of visiting seven small groups of Witnesses each week. Eventually many of the places of meeting were discovered, and in due course I was

one of thousands arrested merely for being a Witness, reading the Bible and talking to others about its message.

In 1937, about a year after my arrest, the court trial opened. One hundred and eighty-six of us were named in the lengthy indictment. Some twenty heavily armed men were posted in court as the long line of men and women, many of them elderly, entered. All present well knew that these witnesses of Jehovah had never done anything injurious to anyone, yet they were objects of fear. When *The Watchtower* had been strongly condemned as a source of political agitation, and I was later asked if I had anything to say, I replied: "I consider *The Watchtower* to be revealed truth from Jehovah God." The majority of us received prison sentences of from ten months to five years.

During my imprisonment I was, on one occasion, brought before the prison officials and asked what I thought about the defense of my country. I answered: " 'All those who take the sword will perish by the sword,' just as Jesus declared, and if I were ever to forsake his lead I would be the most miserable person on earth." (Matt. 26:52) They told me that with that kind of attitude I would never be released. In reply I stated: "That lies in someone else's power." And happily it came about that on September 7, 1940, the recruiting office removed me from draft eligibility.

OUR CUP WELL FILLED

Shortly after the war's end my wife and I offered our services to the Watch Tower Society in whatever capacity we could be of service. The response brought us great happiness, for on October 1, 1945, we had the privilege of resuming full-time service. True, by this time the Magdeburg office had been reduced to a desolate state, but soon willing hands promoted a wonderful restoration. At first, paper was so scarce that we had to press old paper into bundles for sale to the paper mills in order to get some new paper. Half of Magdeburg had been wiped out, and it was not at all unusual to receive as many as eight whole streets as a personal territory in which to preach, so few people lived there now.

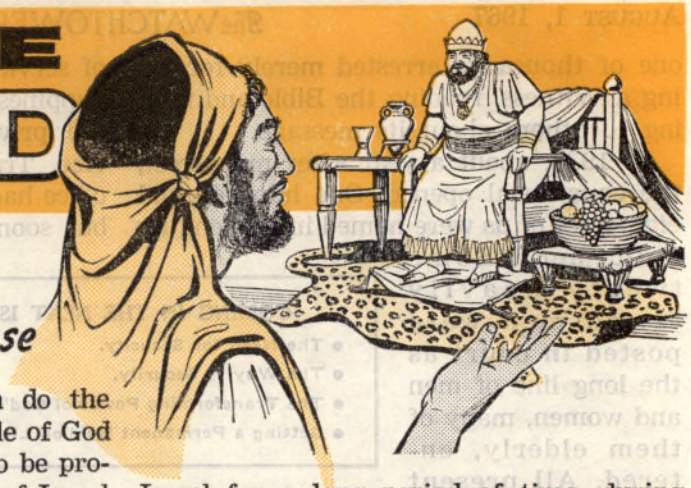
COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- The Need for Security.
- The Way to Security.
- The Transforming Power of God's Word.
- Getting a Permanent Hold on Life.

In October 1948 I was called to the Society's headquarters, now located at Wiesbaden, where once again I enjoyed the privilege of serving in the bookbindery, while my wife served in the office. To this day we have experienced the joy of full-time service of the interests of God's kingdom, a service that has so filled our lives with satisfaction that the past twenty years have flown by, it would seem. It is true we are not as young and vigorous as we once were. We have had trials and hardships, but we have also had many offsetting joys and privileges. We are thankful to Jehovah for his undeserved kindness in permitting us to continue on as his servants, and to witness the vast expansion of his Kingdom preaching work in all the earth. It is also a source of deep satisfaction to look back on the time of youth and be able to say that one has heeded the wise counsel: "Remember, now, your grand Creator in the days of your young manhood."—Eccl. 12:1.

JUDGE EHUD

—Resourceful and Valiant for Jehovah's Cause



NOT without good reason do the Scriptures liken the people of God to sheep. Sheep need to be led, to be protected and fed. When the people of Israel first became Jehovah's nation, God provided a shepherd for them in Moses, who led, protected and fed them for forty years. After Moses' death Joshua carried on.

After the death of Joshua and the older men of his day the Israelites kept falling away from the pure worship of Jehovah, for which reason He let them become oppressed by the pagan nations surrounding them until they came to their senses. Because of such conditions, there arose the need of shepherds to serve as "judges" and "saviors," even as we read: "When Jehovah did raise up judges for them, Jehovah proved to be with the judge, and he saved them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge; for Jehovah would feel regret over their groaning because of their oppressors."—Judg. 2:18; Neh. 9:27.

Ehud was the second of these judges, but the first of whom we have a comparatively detailed account. He is generally remembered by those familiar with their Bibles as the left-handed Benjamite who killed one of Israel's oppressors by a ruse and freed his people from that one's yoke. However, there is far more to be said in favor of Ehud than that.

Ehud apparently administered justice in Israel for a long period of time, during which he kept his nation both faithful and loyal to Jehovah God and free from war. As the inspired Record reads: "Moab came to be subdued on that day under Israel's hand; and the land had no further disturbance for eighty years. Then the sons of Israel again began to do what was bad in Jehovah's eyes now that Ehud was dead."—Judg. 3:30; 4:1.

It was when "the sons of Israel went doing what was bad in Jehovah's eyes" that "Jehovah let Eglon the king of Moab grow strong against Israel." Eglon, by means of an alliance with Ammon and Amalek, was able to subdue the Israelites, after which he oppressed them for eighteen years.—Judg. 3:12-14.

Then the "sons of Israel began to call to Jehovah for aid" and so "Jehovah raised up for them a savior, Ehud the son of Gera, a Benjamite, a left-handed man." (Judg. 3:15) While the Hebrew word for left-handed here simply means unable to make natural use of the right hand, from the Scriptural record it is apparent that Ehud was skillful with his left hand. Of the tribe of Benjamin we read that on one occasion there were among them "seven hundred chosen men left-handed. Every one of these was a slinger of stones to a hairbreadth and would not

miss." The *Septuagint* says they were ambidextrous. Later other Benjamites who were noted for being ambidextrous are mentioned as being in David's army. They were said to be "using the right hand *and* using the left hand with stones or with arrows in the bow."—Judg. 20:16; 1 Chron. 12:2.

EHUD'S STRATEGY

Jehovah God, having raised up Ehud for the purpose of delivering his people, would put His spirit upon him. It no doubt quickened his mind as well as strengthened his heart for the work God had for him to do. For one thing, it gave him insight to see that he could strike a decisive blow for the freedom of his people Israel simply by doing away with King Eglon himself; and also how he could go about doing this successfully and make his escape.

First of all, he needed a weapon especially suited for his purpose. And so he made himself one, a sharp two-edged sword or dirk a cubit or eighteen inches long. Such a weapon he could easily hide on his side under the folds of his long flowing garment, which was what men wore in his day. There it would not arouse suspicions, and yet from there he could quickly draw it with his skillful left hand.

Important also to the success of his strategy was for Ehud to choose the right time and occasion. He chose the time when Israel was due to bring tribute to King Eglon, and Ehud saw to it that he headed the delegation bringing it. Most likely the delegation was quite large, as it was customary to bring the tribute in the form of produce of the land. Of course, receiving this tribute put King Eglon in good spirits and made him quite favorably disposed toward Ehud.

After presenting the tribute, Ehud and those with him started back; and upon reaching the quarries, or graven images, at Gilgal, he sent the rest on their way, while he returned to King Eglon. For the business he now had at hand others would prove to be an encumbrance, for not only might they arouse suspicion but escape would be more difficult for a group than for just one man.—Judg. 3:18, 19.

By saying that he had a secret message for King Eglon, Ehud succeeded in getting a private audience with the king "as he was sitting in his cool roof chamber that he had to himself." Curious to know what it was, King Eglon ordered all his attendants from his presence. Then Ehud said to him, "A word of God I have for you." Whether out of respect for such a message or because of expecting a valuable gift, King Eglon, who was very fat, ponderously arose. Then, quick as a flash, before King Eglon could utter a sound, Ehud with his left hand pulled his sword from his side and plunged it deep into Eglon's belly. Apparently the sword did not have a crosspiece between the blade and the handle, for the record tells us: "And the handle kept going in also after the blade so that the fat closed in over the blade, for he did not draw the sword out of his belly, and the fecal matter began to come out," as King Eglon fell heavily onto the floor.—Judg. 3:20-22.

Thinking quickly, Ehud first locked the doors of the king's roof chamber before escaping through a ventilating passage. This delayed discovery of Eglon's death and so gave Ehud more time to flee before an alarm could be sounded. The king's attendants, noting that the doors were locked, thought that their king was easing nature and patiently waited so as not to embarrass him. After waiting as long as they dared they finally unlocked the doors to find out what was wrong with their king, and something wrong they did find —their king lying dead on the floor with a mess all around him! What consterna-

tion that must have caused!—Judg. 3: 23-25.

While Ehud had carefully planned it all, and it had worked out as he had planned, it took no little courage for him to embark on such a mission. No fear of man could he dare betray, even though King Eglon had oppressed Israel for eighteen years. He also knew that he could not be certain of finding the king alone by himself and that it would be a question of how far he would escape until an alarm was sent out after him. Some condemn Ehud's strategy, but they forget that God was using him as a savior for Israel. How many Israelites had King Eglon killed in subjugating them with the help of Ammon and Amalek? Besides, had he not oppressed Israel for eighteen years, with no justification on his part except that with the help of allies he had been able to do it?

MOAB DEFEATED—ISRAEL FREED

Continuing his successful strategy, Ehud took advantage of the consternation and confusion caused to the Moabites by the sudden death of their king and so rallied an army of Israel to his side by blowing a horn in the mountainous region of Ephraim, adjoining his land of Benjamin. Indicative of his reliance upon Jehovah are the words he said to his army: "Follow me, because Jehovah has given your enemies, the Moabites, into your hand." By mustering his forces while the Moabites were in confusion because of the death of their king, he was able to seize the initiative. Then, to block the retreat of the occupational forces of Moab, he had part of his army seize the fords of the Jordan, which maneuver at the same time prevented any help from coming from Moab. As a result 10,000 robust and valiant Moabites were slain.—Judg. 3:26-29.

After that, as already noted, Israel entered upon a long period of peace and worship of Jehovah. And while Ehud is not mentioned again in the Scriptures, he without doubt is presented to us as an example of faith, being included among those who "through faith defeated kingdoms . . . , became valiant in war, routed the armies of foreigners."—Heb. 11:33, 34.

The inspired record of Ehud finds a parallel in our day and in the near future. How so? In that, Ehud-like, Jesus Christ in modern times has freed his people from bondage to the oppressive world empire of false religion. And even as Ehud and his army destroyed Eglon's army, so at Armageddon Jesus Christ and his heavenly forces will destroy all the oppressors of God's people on earth, bringing in peace and establishing the pure worship of Jehovah throughout the earth for a long, long time, in fact, forever.—Rev. 16:14, 16; 2 Pet. 3:13.

From another standpoint Jehovah's people on earth might themselves be likened to Ehud. They are not revolutionaries. Instead of fleshly weapons they use spiritual ones, such as the "sword of the spirit, that is, God's word," to carry on a warfare as fine soldiers of Jesus Christ. By means of such spiritual weapons they are able to kill the enslaving power that the enemies of God's people have had over lovers of righteousness and thus *bring* them spiritual freedom. All who are engaged in the spiritual warfare should be concerned to prove themselves as resourceful and as valiant as was Ehud, so that success might crown their efforts. —Eph. 6:17; 2 Cor. 10:3, 4; 2 Tim. 2:3.

● What is the meaning of Jesus' statement, at Matthew 17:26, that the "sons are tax-free"? —E. D., U.S.A.

Jesus was showing by illustration why he, as the Son of God, was not obligated to pay the temple tax customary among the Jews, collectors of which tax visited each town of Judea yearly at a certain time. After the fall of Jerusalem, the Romans collected this tax, Josephus saying that Caesar laid a "tribute upon the Jews wheresoever they were, and enjoined every one of them to bring two drachmae every year into the capitol, as they used to pay the same to the temple at Jerusalem." —*The Jewish War*, VII, 6, 6.

The account is unique to Matthew's Gospel and reads: "After they arrived in Capernaum the men collecting the two drachmas tax approached Peter and said: 'Does your teacher not pay the two drachmas tax?' He said: 'Yes.' However, when he entered the house Jesus got ahead of him by saying: 'What do you think, Simon? From whom do the kings of the earth receive duties or head tax? From their sons or from the strangers?' When he said: 'From the strangers,' Jesus said to him: 'Really, then, the sons are tax-free. But that we do not cause them to stumble, . . . give it to them for me and you.' "—Matt. 17:24-27.

Possibly in an attempt to involve Jesus in some breach of accepted custom, Peter was questioned about Jesus' position. In later discussing the matter with Peter, Jesus pointed out that, in the normal course of things, kings of the earth do not tax their own sons, but, rather, impose taxes on others, strangers. The sons are tax-free.

The point Jesus made was that as the Son of God, according to the normal practice, he would be able to claim exemption. This was on the basis that the king's son belongs to the royal household for whom tax is collected and not by whom it is rendered. Similarly, Jesus' Father, King of the universe, was the God worshiped at the temple, so the Son was not obligated to follow the custom, it not being a legal requirement. (Ex. 15:18; 1 Tim. 1:17) Nevertheless, not wanting to stumble others by suggesting that he did not support the worship carried on at the temple, Jesus saw that the tax was paid.

● Under the Mosaic law, what was the difference between the sabbath year and the Jubilee year? Were not debts canceled on both years? —E. P., U.S.A.

The Jubilee year shares some features of the regular seventh-year sabbath, but there are marked differences. As to the sabbath year, according to Deuteronomy 15:1, 2, there was a releasing from debt: "At the end of every seven years you should make a release. And this is the manner of the release: there will be a releasing by every creditor of the debt that he may let his fellow incur. He should not press his fellow or his brother for payment, because a release to Jehovah must be called." The expression "at the end of every seven years" is understood as meaning 'in the seventh year.' Compare Deuteronomy 14:28.

This sabbath year was thus fittingly called "the year of the release." (Deut. 15:9; 31:10) During that year, not only the land enjoyed a rest or release, lying uncultivated (Ex. 23:11), but there was also to be a rest or a release in connection with debts incurred. (Deut. 15:3) It was a "release to Jehovah," in honor of him.

As to the matter of the releasing of debts on the sabbath year, though some commentators view it differently, apparently the debts were not canceled, but a creditor was not to press a fellow Hebrew for payment of a debt. He was released from paying on any debt that year. This was a loving provision, especially since the land was not cultivated during the sabbath year and, with no crops, there would be no income for the farmer during the year.

This year of release from being pressed for payment of debts did not bring release to slaves, many of whom would be in slavery because of indebtedness. Rather, the Hebrew slave was released on the seventh year of his *servitude*, or on the Jubilee if it came first. (Deut. 15:12; Lev. 25:10, 54) This regulation is mentioned at Exodus 21:2: "In case you should buy a Hebrew slave, he will be a slave six years, but in the seventh he will go out as one set free without charge." It is to be noted that the freedom of the slave here did not necessarily coincide with the sabbath year.

However, on the Jubilee year all who had sold themselves into servitude, whether the six years of servitude had been completed or not, were set free; there was liberty. "You must

sanctify the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty in the land to all its inhabitants. It will become a Jubilee for you, and you must return each one to his possession and you should return each man to his family."—Lev. 25:10.

As to the Jubilee year, seven of the seven-year periods (7 X 7 = 49) were to be counted, and the following year, the fiftieth, was a Jubilee year. The land again had complete rest. (Lev. 25:11, 12) The Jubilee was in a sense an entire year of festival, a year of liberty. The keeping of it would demonstrate Israel's faith in their God Jehovah and would be a time of thanksgiving and happiness in his provisions.—Lev. 25:20-22.

The Jubilee horn announced that all hereditary land possessions that had been sold (usually because of financial reverses) were to be returned; and each man returned to his family and his ancestral possession. No family was to sink into the depths of perpetual poverty. Every family was to have its honor and respect. Even one who squandered his substance could not forever lose his inheritance for his posterity. After all, the land was really Jehovah's and the Israelites themselves were temporary residents from Jehovah's standpoint.—Lev. 25:9, 23, 24.

By reason of the Jubilee law none of the land could be sold in perpetuity. God provided that, if a man sold any land of his hereditary possession, the sale price was to be gauged according to the number of years left until the Jubilee. The same rate was in effect when hereditary land was repurchased by its owner. In effect a sale of land, therefore, was actually only the sale of the use of the land and its produce for the number of years left until Jubilee year. (Lev. 25:15, 16) This applied to houses in unwalled villages, which were counted as the open country, but houses in walled cities were not included in property returned at Jubilee. An exception to this was the property of the Levites in Levite cities, whose only possessions were the houses and the pasture grounds around the Levite cities; these had their property returned at Jubilee.—Lev. 25:29-34.

The seventh-year sabbath brought about a rest or a releasing from being pressed for debts and rest for the land, but the Jubilee year brought much more—complete liberty from indebtedness and from servitude to any fellow citizens and the return of hereditary possessions, as well as another year of rest for the land.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

August 27: Keeping Free from the Spirit of Complaint. Page 457. Songs to Be Used: 41, 45.

September 3: Finding Contentment with Jehovah's Organization. Page 463. Songs to Be Used: 54, 60.