



The WATCHTOWER

Announcing
**JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM**

MAY 1, 1969

Semimonthly

**"SERVE JEHOVAH
WITH REJOICING"**

**"TAKING PLEASURE IN
THE HOUSE OF MY GOD"**

"GET OUT FROM AMONG THEM"

**SOCIAL EVENTS
NEED CHRISTIAN MODERATION**

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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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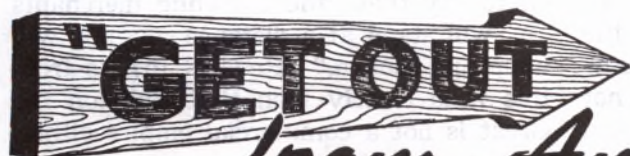


Announcing
JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM

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Number 9



from Among Them"

JEHOVAH GOD expects all who love and serve him to keep free from false worship. His Son Jesus Christ met this expectation. Of God's Son, the Bible says: "You loved righteousness, and you hated lawlessness." Because of this his Father has specially blessed him, exalting him as the king of God's kingdom.—Heb. 1:9.

If you love truth and righteousness, then you will also hate and avoid what is false and displeasing to God. In this way you can find protection both now and during the coming execution of God's judgment upon the wicked.—Prov. 1:28-33.

Long ago God foretold that he would have a people who would be his "special property," and that observers would certainly see "the distinction between a righteous one and a wicked one, between one serving God and one who has not served him." (Mal. 3:17, 18) If you see this distinction, then you should act accordingly. Failure to do so would endanger your prospect of gaining eternal life.

What course should you take? God's Word says very definitely: "Do not become unevenly yoked with unbelievers.

For what sharing do righteousness and lawlessness have? Or what fellowship does light have with darkness? Further, what harmony is there between Christ and Belial? Or what portion does a faithful person have with an unbeliever? And what agreement does God's temple have with idols?" Because there can be no proper fellowship between those practicing righteousness and those practicing lawlessness, God commands: "Therefore get out from among them, and separate yourselves." —2 Cor. 6:14-17.

GETTING OUT OF "BABYLON THE GREAT"

To those who were once his chosen people and who were in exile in ancient Babylon, Jehovah God spoke similar words. He said: "I, Jehovah, am your God, the One teaching you to benefit yourself, the One causing you to tread in the way in which you should walk. O if only you would actually pay attention to my commandments! Then your peace would become just like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea. . . . One's name would not be cut off or be annihilated."

ed from before me. Go forth, you people, out of Babylon!"—Isa. 48:17-20.

By the conquest of Babylon in 539 B.C.E. Jehovah God made it possible for his people who were exiled there to leave Babylon as a free people. Jehovah thus acted for the benefit of those loving him. He did not deprive them of anything good.

Ancient Babylon, of course, has long since ceased to exist. Yet God speaks of another Babylon called "Babylon the Great." And again he gives the command: "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." (Rev. 18:4) In the previous chapter of this Bible book of Revelation, Babylon the Great is described in symbol as an immoral woman. Note what the Bible says about her:

"Come, I will show you the judgment upon the great harlot who sits on many waters, with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication, whereas those who inhabit the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication.' . . .

"And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, and was adorned with gold and precious stone and pearls and had in her hand a golden cup that was full of disgusting things and the unclean things of her fornication. And upon her forehead was written a name, a mystery: 'Babylon the Great, the mother of the harlots and of the disgusting things of the earth.' And I saw that the woman was drunk with the blood of the holy ones and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. . . .

"The waters that you saw, where the harlot is sitting, mean peoples and crowds and nations and tongues. And the woman whom you saw means the great city that has a kingdom over the kings of the earth.'"—Rev. 17:1-6, 15, 18.

Since Babylon the Great has "a kingdom over the kings of the earth," this

means that Babylon the Great is an empire. But what kind of empire?

It could not be a political empire, for "the kings of the earth," the political element, are said to 'commit fornication' with Babylon the Great. Is it, then, a commercial empire?

No, for when Babylon the Great is destroyed, the Bible book of Revelation goes on to say that "the traveling merchants . . . will stand at a distance . . . and will weep and mourn." (Rev. 18:15) So from this it is clearly seen that Babylon the Great is not a commercial empire either.

Could she, then, be a religious empire? Yes, Babylon the Great fittingly represents the world empire of false religion! Religion has certainly had great influence over the political kingdoms, and its control does extend over peoples of all the earth. But why should this religious empire be pictured by a prostitute woman?

This is because it mixes religion and politics. As regards Christendom, the Bible shows that those who claim to serve God, but are unfaithful and enter into relations with the political powers, are viewed by God as spiritual prostitutes or adulteresses. The Bible says of such ones: "Adulteresses, do you not know that the friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever, therefore, wants to be a friend of the world is constituting himself an enemy of God."—Jas. 4:4; Ezek. 16:1, 2, 28-30.

THE SPREAD OF BABYLONISH FALSE RELIGION

It was shortly after the global flood of Noah's day that false religion got its start in Babylon, where Nimrod exalted himself "in opposition to Jehovah." However, Jehovah confused the people's language and "scattered them from there over all the surface of the earth." As they went, they took with them their Babylonish doctrines and practices.—Gen. 10:8-10; 11:4-9.

In harmony with this, the book *The Re-*

ligion of Babylonia and Assyria (by Professor Morris Jastrow, page 701) tells of "the profound impression made upon the ancient world by the remarkable manifestations of religious thought in Babylonia and by the religious activity that prevailed in that region."

So, too, the book *The Worship of the Dead* (by Colonel J. Garnier, pages 3, 4, 8) shows that evidence has "indisputably proved the connection and identity of the religious systems of nations most remote from each other," and that these "must have all derived their religious ideas from a common source and a common centre. Everywhere we find the most startling coincidences in rites, ceremonies, customs, traditions."

Thus, although many persons are unaware of it, there are many doctrines and practices found in religions today that have a common origin in Babylon's false religion. What are some of these?

Among the teachings prominent in ancient Babylon were: worship of a triad or trinity of gods, the belief that the human soul could not die, and the teaching that persons suffered after death in an underground world or "land of no return." The use of images also played a large part in Babylonian worship. As has been shown frequently in the pages of this magazine, none of these things are taught in God's Word, the Bible. However, do we see similar teachings and practices in the religious organizations around us today?

Along with the doctrines of the "Trinity," the immortality of the human soul and a hellfire of torment, any other teaching or practice that goes contrary to God's inspired Word marks a religion as false and labels it as part of Babylon the Great. A religion may *claim* to advocate worship of the true God of the Bible and it may use the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, but of what value is this if it is contaminated

with Babylonish doctrines and practices?

The Bible principle applies: "A little leaven ferments the whole lump." (*Gal.* 5:9) Whatever good may have been done is canceled by the contamination. Jesus Christ also showed this, when he explained: "Many will say to me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and expel demons in your name, and perform many powerful works in your name?' And yet then I will confess to them: I never knew you! Get away from me, you workers of lawlessness."—*Matt.* 7:22, 23.

God has foretold that suddenly, "in one day," plagues of "death and mourning and famine" will come upon Babylon the Great. So it is urgent and for our good that we completely separate ourselves now from that false religious empire.—*Rev.* 18:8.

TAKING THE NECESSARY STEPS TO SEPARATE YOURSELF

What does it mean to "get out from among them"? Is it enough for a person merely to recognize in his mind the falseness of Babylonish teachings, while still continuing to associate with a religious organization that holds to those teachings? Really, would this not be a course of hypocrisy? Would it not give visible support to something that God condemns? How could such a person truly consider himself obedient to God's command to "get out from among them, and separate yourselves, . . . and quit touching the unclean thing"?—*2 Cor.* 6:17.

If we do not want to be like those people who gathered at the temple of Baal in Jehu's time only to suffer destruction at God's command, then we need to make a clean break from any and all organizations of Babylon the Great. We need to quit sharing in their activities. (*2 Ki.* 10:20-27) We need to serve notice on them that we are withdrawing from their or-

ganizations. By doing this we will not be "limping upon two different opinions," trying to 'partake of "the table of Jehovah" and the table of demons,' and thereby "inciting Jehovah to jealousy."—1 Ki. 18:21; 1 Cor. 10:21, 22.

But is not the getting together of religions in an interfaith or ecumenical movement a good thing? Well, how does Jehovah God view it? The Bible record shows that he allowed no interfaith with the Canaanites for the nation of Israel. God commanded the Israelites: "You must form no marriage alliance with them. Your daughter you must not give to his son, and his daughter you must not take for your son. For he will turn your son from following me, and they will certainly serve other gods."—Deut. 7:3, 4.

And how did God's Son view interfaith? Jesus Christ did not engage in interfaith activities with the various sects of Judaism while on earth. To the contrary, he roundly condemned the false religion of his day, and stated positively: "No one comes to the Father except through me."—John 14:6; Matt. 23:13, 38.

FIRM STAND FOR TRUTH BRINGS BLESSINGS

Making a clean break from false worship may bring problems. Jesus showed that one's relatives may oppose such a course. Yet, even though those opposing may be as near and dear as a member of one's own family, Jesus said that this should make no difference in our decision. He explained: "He that has greater affection for father or mother than for me is not worthy of me; and he that has greater affection for son or daughter than for me is not worthy of me." (Matt. 10:32-37) It is a question, not of loving such ones less than formerly, but of how strong our love is for Jehovah and his Word of truth.

Actually, it is by taking a firm stand for the truth that one can really act for

the lasting good of relatives who may at first oppose one's right course. Yielding to pressure may only encourage these in their opposition to the truth. On the other hand, your faithful conduct in holding to the truth of God's Word and living in harmony with it will bring you blessings and happiness; it will make a better person of you. Thus, in course of time, those close to you may come to recognize the wisdom and rightness of your course and be helped to see the truth as well. This is the hope the Bible encourages us to embrace and work for.—1 Cor. 7:12-16.

For example, Christian wives are urged to be in submission to their unbelieving husbands, in order that "they may be won without a word through the conduct of their wives." (1 Pet. 3:1, 2) True, it will call for patience, faith that God's way is best, and, above all, love. But God himself lovingly assures you that he will support and strengthen you if you put him first in your life.—Rom. 8:38, 39.

Again, some may feel that they are now well along in years, and that it is too late to change their course. However, Jehovah God, who is himself called "the Ancient of Days," invites old persons also, to join in praising him, saying: "You old men together with boys. Let them praise the name of Jehovah."—Dan. 7:9; Ps. 148:12, 13.

God's Word shows that old age will not excuse one if one fails to separate from what God condemns, but that "gray-headedness is a crown of beauty when it is found in the way of righteousness." (Prov. 16:31; Ezek. 9:4-6) It is never too late in life to take a stand in harmony with what one knows to be the truth, thus setting one's steps firmly on the way to eternal life. No matter how many years we may have misused in the past, these will seem few indeed when compared with the never-ending years of life to which we may

attain in God's new system.—Prov. 10:22.

If we now take positive action to get out from among those who practice false religion, we may enjoy a blessed, happy relationship with our God, Jehovah. (2 Cor. 6:17, 18) For the matter does not end with getting out from among those who teach and practice things contrary to God's Word. God also gives the command that we should not 'forsake the gathering of ourselves together,' as Hebrews 10:24, 25 tells us.

With whom, then, are we to assemble? With those who worship God in spirit and in truth, practicing true Christianity, the religion of the Bible. Of such ones God says: "I shall reside among them and walk among them, and I shall be their God, and they will be my people."—2 Cor. 6:16.

Those who make up the Christian organization of Jehovah's witnesses are persons who have separated themselves from the many religions of both pagandom and Christendom. They have thus fled from Babylon the Great. By attending meetings at one of their Kingdom Halls, you can see for yourself the difference this has made. It is not just the meeting place and the fact that money collections are not taken, but primarily the meetings themselves and the attitude of the persons attending that mark Jehovah's witnesses as distinct from other religions.

These meetings are real Bible studies, with emphasis on how Bible principles apply in our daily lives and also on how to *teach* God's Word to others. There you will see persons who are sincerely 'seeking first the kingdom and God's righteousness,' and who earnestly endeavor to produce the fruits of God's spirit.—Matt. 6:33; Gal. 5:22, 23.

Attending once or twice may satisfy your curiosity, but for you to make genuine progress in God's service you need to

be like the early Christians. They really valued the truth, so they "continued devoting themselves to the teaching of the apostles . . . And day after day they were in constant attendance at the temple with one accord." (Acts 2:42, 46) Only by regularly sharing in these congregation meetings can you develop the faith that you need to gain God's approval.

Although separating from modern Babylon the Great may cost you something in the way of previous associations, you will gain far more by your regular attendance at the meetings of Jehovah's people. Like Jesus' early disciples, who also left much in order to follow him, you will see fulfilled the promise to "get a hundredfold now in this period of time" in the way of brothers and sisters and homes where you will be gladly received. You will find that you have become part of a large family of Christian brothers, whose love and friendship are genuine and sincere. You will gain all this along with the hope of everlasting life "in the coming system of things."—Mark 10:28-30; Ps. 27:10.

Jehovah God has a visible organization that he is using today to train and equip us for life in his righteous new system. After the present wicked system is gone, God's way will prevail everywhere. His will be the only government left. (Dan. 2:44) His approved people will be the only ones remaining on earth with whom to associate. Only God's standards of right and wrong will be allowed. There will be only one religion.

Therefore, the wise thing to do is to bring ourselves into line with God's way of doing things now, taking full advantage of the training that God provides through His written Word the Holy Bible. In this way we prove that we really mean it when we say that we want eternal life in God's righteous new system.—Ps. 86:10, 11; Prov. 4:10-13.

"SERVE JEHOVAH

—with—

Rejoicing"

"**H**APPY at last." A Swedish governor once ordered that his epitaph contain those words (in Latin, *Tandem felix*). Regardless of how he viewed that phrase, one may wonder whether life held true happiness for such a man. Many persons, even some who have devoted themselves to religious pursuits, have experienced much unhappiness and may have died feeling that their lives were productive of little good. But that is not true of those who serve God faithfully until death. By their godly works they build up a good name with Jehovah and are assured of a resurrection from the dead. —Eccl. 7:1; John 5:28, 29; Acts 24:15.

² Herodotus (a Greek historian of the fifth century B.C.E.) said: "Call no man happy till you know the end of his life. Till then, at most, he can only be counted fortunate." Indeed, good things and bad can happen during one's lifetime. But, whatever they must face, those who truly love God will maintain faithfulness to him, like Job of ancient times, who said resolutely: "Until I expire I shall not take away my integrity from myself!" (Job 27:5) Job died in the favor of Jehovah, and he received favorable mention in later Bible books. (Job 42:12; Ezek. 14:14, 20; Jas. 5:11) David of Israel once declared: "As for me, in my integrity I shall walk."

1. Do Jehovah's servants lead unhappy lives?

2. What results from maintaining integrity to Jehovah?

**"Happy is the people
whose God is Jehovah!"**

—Ps. 144:15.

(Ps. 26:11) He was a man agreeable to God's own heart and he, too, died as an integrity-keeper. (Acts 13:22, 23; Heb. 11:32-34) Both Job and David will receive a resurrection to life here on earth during Jesus Christ's millennial reign. (Rev. 20:11-14) Matters also turn out well for faithful, godly persons of today, those who "serve Jehovah with rejoicing." —Ps. 100:2.

³ Jehovah, by means of his holy spirit or active force, imparts the courage and strength necessary to face even death as one of his servants. (Phil. 4:13) Indicative of this are expressions found in letters written by Jehovah's witnesses in Nazi concentration camps. One young Christian, sentenced to death by beheading, wrote to his parents:

"It is already past midnight. I still have time to change my mind. Ah! could I be happy again in this world after I had denied our Lord? Surely not! But now you have the assurance that I leave this world in happiness and peace."

To his wife another Witness wrote:

"It is now my last night. My sentence has been read out to me and I have eaten my last meal. So when this letter reaches you my life will be fulfilled. We know that the sting has been removed from death and

3. By what means does Jehovah impart the strength needed to face even death as his servant? Cite examples that indicate this.

victory has been won over the grave. Naturally, this appears utterly foolish and ridiculous to most people; but that is of little importance. The hour will come when the name of the Almighty God will be vindicated and mankind will see it. . . . And so I look once more into your serene and glistening eyes, and wipe away the last sorrow from your heart; and, in spite of the pain, lift up your head and rejoice, not about death, but over the life that God will give those that love Him."

Both of these witnesses of Jehovah, and many others, were loyal to God till death at Nazi hands. However, whether one's integrity to God is tested to the point of death or not, faithfulness to Jehovah always turns out well, a real contrast with the lot of the wicked one, as indicated by the words: "Because of his badness the wicked will be pushed down, but the righteous will be finding refuge in his integrity."—Prov. 14:32.

GOOD REASONS TO REJOICE IN SERVING JEHOVAH

⁴ While Jehovah sustains his loyal servants even in the face of death and sets before them the prospect of the resurrection, there are many other reasons why it can be said: "Happy is the people whose God is Jehovah!" (Ps. 144:15) For one thing, it is an inestimable and joyous privilege to serve Jehovah, "the Most High over all the earth." (Ps. 83:18) There is certainly nothing oppressive about being his servant, for "God is love." (1 John 4:8) Witnesses of Jehovah can surely rejoice because in this time of great woe they have been entrusted with "the glorious good news of the happy God." (1 Tim. 1:11) And, how delighted they can be that by their faithful service to God they make Jehovah's heart rejoice.—Prov. 27:11.

⁵ Furthermore, Christians are able to re-

joice because, unlike the masses of humanity for whom the future is bleak or entirely obscure, they are aware of what tomorrow will bring. God has lovingly revealed the future to them through prophecies in his Word, the Bible, and by means of his spirit, which "searches into all things, even the deep things of God." (1 Cor. 2:10) Consequently, Jehovah's servants know they are living in the last days of this system of things and they can 'raise their heads up because their deliverance is getting near.' (Luke 21:25-28; Matt. 24:3-14, 34; 2 Tim. 3:1-5) In this very generation the words of Psalm 37:37, 38 will take on even fuller meaning: "Watch the blameless one and keep the upright one in sight, for the future of that man will be peaceful. But the transgressors themselves will certainly be annihilated together; the future of wicked people will indeed be cut off." One who trusts in God and serves Jehovah with rejoicing is assured of a happy future. So, true indeed are the words: "O Jehovah of armies, happy is the man that is trusting in you."—Ps. 84:12.

⁶ Persons dedicated to Jehovah God can also rejoice in having the best of associates. Though it has been necessary for some Christians to leave father, or mother, or other family members because these greatly opposed their Scriptural pursuits, such servants of God are happy, for they have personally realized the fulfillment of Jesus Christ's statement: "No one has left house or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for my sake and for the sake of the good news who will not get a hundredfold now in this period of time, houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and fields, with persecutions, and in the coming system of things everlasting life." (Mark 10:29, 30) Since faithful Christians apply God's Word

4. Why is being Jehovah's servant a cause for happiness?
5. Unlike the masses of humanity, Christians can rejoice because of knowing what about the future?

6. Why is it a delight to have Christian associates?

to their lives, they are morally clean and upright. (Rom. 12:2) They have stripped off the old personality and put on the new. (Col. 3:8-11) Their conduct shows that they agree with the Christian apostle Peter, who said: "The time that has passed by is sufficient for you to have worked out the will of the nations when you proceeded in deeds of loose conduct, lusts, excesses with wine, revelries, drinking matches, and illegal idolatries." (1 Pet. 4:3) No longer indulging in the works of the fallen flesh, Christians cultivate and display the fruits of God's holy spirit and heed the admonition to "go on walking orderly also by spirit." (Gal. 5:19-26) What a delight it is to have such associates!

Not infrequently ideological or political differences cause a breach between worldly acquaintances. But this does not occur among those who "serve Jehovah with rejoicing." They remain neutral in all worldly affairs, applying to themselves the words of Jesus Christ: "They are no part of the world, just as I am no part of the world." (John 17:16) Though being in relative subjection to governmental "superior authorities" and paying back "Caesar's things to Caesar," Christians also render "God's things to God." (Rom. 13:1; Mark 12:17) In any conflict of wills—that of Jehovah as opposed to that of man—they "must obey God as ruler rather than men." (Acts 5:29) Additionally, true Christians are without worldly prejudices, such as racial prejudice, for they know that Jehovah "made out of one man

every nation of men, to dwell upon the entire surface of the earth," and that "God is not partial, but in every nation the man that fears him and works righteousness is acceptable to him." (Acts 17:26; 10:34, 35) It is truly a joy to associate with individuals holding such Scriptural views.

A person has reason to rejoice when his conduct harmonizes with the Scriptures and pleases Jehovah. The Christian apostle Paul declared: "I am exercising myself continually to have a consciousness of committing no offense against God and men." (Acts 24:16) Present-day Christians do the same thing and therefore need not live in fear of divine retribution sure to befall willful and unrepentant wrongdoers. (Matt. 12:22-32; Heb. 10:26-31) Moreover, Christians heed the admonition given at Proverbs 3:21-26 and thus also realize the fulfillment of the assurances found there in the words: "Safeguard practical wisdom and thinking ability, and they will prove to be life to your soul and charm to your throat. In that case you will walk in security on your way, and even your foot will not strike against anything. Whenever you lie down you will feel no dread; and you will certainly lie down, and your sleep must be pleasurable. You will not need to be afraid of any sud-

8. When his conduct harmonizes with the Scriptures, why can a person rejoice?

True Christians realize that God is not partial, that he "made out of one man every nation of men"



7. (a) Why do worldly ideological or political differences cause no breach between Christians?
(b) True Christians have no racial prejudice because of what?

den dreadful thing, nor of the storm upon the wicked ones, because it is coming. For Jehovah himself will prove to be, in effect, your confidence, and he will certainly keep your foot against capture." What blessings result when one serves Jehovah with rejoicing!

⁹ But, consider another significant cause for Christian joy. Babylon the Great, the world-embracing empire of false religion, "sits on many waters," meaning "peoples and crowds and nations and tongues." However, she does not figuratively "sit" on, or religiously influence and control, those worshiping Jehovah. (Rev. 17:1, 15) Having taken warning from heaven, they have fled out of her, and they realize that she will soon be destroyed. (Rev. 18:4, 5, 8) Out of her clutches, they are not victims of her unclean false religion. They know, not religious falsehood, but Scriptural truth that sets its possessor truly free. (John 8:31, 32) Having this freedom is another reason for Christians to rejoice.

JOYOUS LIVES OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES IN TIMES PAST

¹⁰ Great happiness was experienced by persons of ancient times who devoted their lives to Jehovah. Moses was one of them. Of Moses' early life in Egypt Stephen said: "But when he was exposed, the daughter of Pharaoh picked him up and brought him up as her own son. Consequently Moses was instructed in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. In fact, he was mighty in his words and deeds." (Acts 7:21, 22) According to tradition, Moses once led a successful Egyptian military campaign against Ethiopia, returning to Egypt victorious. (Josephus' *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book II, Chapter X) This

is merely a tradition. The Bible does not say it, though Moses probably could have attained military or political prominence or materialistic advantages by espousing Egyptian interests. However, the Scriptures report: "By faith Moses, when grown up, refused to be called the son of the daughter of Pharaoh, choosing to be ill-treated with the people of God rather than to have the temporary enjoyment of sin." Why? "Because he esteemed the reproach of the Christ [the privilege of being God's anointed one] as riches greater than the treasures of Egypt; for he looked intently toward the payment of the reward." (Heb. 11:24-26) God came first with Moses. For his faithful course, Moses enjoyed a long rewarding life and the privilege of being used by Jehovah to lead God's people out of Egyptian bondage. Moses surely did not die with a feeling that his life had been fruitless, wasted. And, because he faithfully served Jehovah, he will be resurrected in the Scripturally promised new order, in which he will serve as one of the "princes in all the earth" under God's Messianic Liberator, the Greater Moses, Jesus Christ.—Ps. 45:16; 72:1, 4, 12-14.

¹¹ Ruth the Moabitess made the proper religious decision, resulting in happiness. During a famine in the days of Israel's judges, Elimelech of Bethlehem, his wife Naomi and their two sons became residents in Moab. Elimelech died and his sons took the Moabite women Orpah and Ruth as wives. Later these men also died, and the three widows were then alone. In time, they set out for Judah. When Naomi strongly urged the young women to return to their people, Orpah tearfully complied and "returned to her people and her gods." However, Ruth refused to leave her mother-in-law and said: "Where you go

9. Why can Christians be joyful despite the existence of Babylon the Great?

10. (a) What might Moses have attained by espousing Egyptian interests? (b) Putting God first resulted in what blessings in Moses' case?

11. What religious decision did Ruth make, and how did it result in happiness?

I shall go, and where you spend the night I shall spend the night. Your people will be my people, and your God my God." (Ruth 1:1-16) Though Ruth had apparently been taught pagan religion at least in childhood, devotion to false gods was not for her. Naomi's God, Jehovah, would be Ruth's God. In time this faithful Moabitess became the wife of Boaz and the mother of Obed, David's grandfather. (Ruth 4:13-17) But think of it! Ruth was privileged to be an ancestress of Jesus, the Messiah! (Matt. 1:1-16) Surely, when she is resurrected on earth during Christ's millennial reign she will rejoice that she held firmly to her words: "Your people will be my people, and your God my God."

¹² Some have abandoned outright demonism in order to serve Jehovah with rejoicing. Regarding the apostle Paul's ministry in Ephesus it is reported: "Many of those who had become believers would come and confess and report their practices openly. Indeed, quite a number of those who practiced magical arts brought their books together and burned them up before everybody. And they calculated together the prices of them and found them worth fifty thousand pieces of silver. Thus in a mighty way the word of Jehovah kept growing and prevailing." (Acts 19:18-20) Demonistic practices are not for Jehovah's servants, and "those practicing spiritism" are among the wicked whose foretold portion is to be "in the lake that burns with fire and sulphur." They thus experience the "second death," from which there is no resurrection. (Rev. 21:8; Deut. 18:10-12; Isa. 8:19, 20) But imagine the new and happy life that opened up to the Ephesians who abandoned demonism, burned their magical books, and proceeded to "serve Jehovah with rejoicing."

12. To serve Jehovah, what changed position have some had to take respecting demonism?

¹³ Ancient Corinth, in Greece, has been described as "a renowned and voluptuous city, where the vices of East and West met." The Christian apostle Paul preached and founded a Christian congregation there in the first century C.E. (Acts 18:1-11) Later, when writing to his fellow believers in that city, the apostle pointed out that fornicators, idolaters, thieves, drunkards, and the like, would not inherit God's kingdom. He then observed: "And yet that is what some of you were. But you have been washed clean, but you have been sanctified, but you have been declared righteous in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and with the spirit of our God." (1 Cor. 6:9-11) Yes, Jehovah had helped many of them to make great moral changes, and thus they entered into a happy and healthier life. Furthermore, by remaining faithful to God till death, they have had the joy of being resurrected to immortal heavenly life in association with Jesus Christ.—1 Cor. 15:42-57.

¹⁴ A change had taken place in Paul's own life. As a rabid persecutor of Christ's followers, he was once on his way to Damascus to continue his opposition there when the miraculous appearance of the glorified Jesus Christ brought his opposition to a halt. By God's undeserved kindness, the former persecutor became one of the persecuted, a faithful follower of Christ and "an apostle to the nations." (Rom. 11:13; Acts 9:1-20) As such, he endured many sufferings for Jesus' sake. (2 Cor. 11:23-27; 12:10) With God's aid Saul changed and served Jehovah with rejoicing. That apostle now has the "crown of righteousness," along with other faithful anointed Christians in heaven.—2 Tim. 4:6-8.

13. Because some Corinthians made great moral changes, what resulted?

14. What significant change had taken place in Paul's life?

JOYOUS LIVES OF PRESENT-DAY WITNESSES OF JEHOVAH

¹⁵ Jehovah's servants have many reasons to rejoice. Persons of various kinds have changed their lives in the past in order to serve Jehovah. Individuals are still doing so in great numbers, and in some instances the changes they are making are comparable to those made by persons who took their stand for Jehovah in ancient times. One faithful Christian of the present day who chose to be a soldier of Jesus Christ (2 Tim. 2:3, 4) instead of pursuing a military career and worldly materialistic interests was able to say joyfully after decades of loyal service in spiritual warfare: "I am happy that I could, at the age of seventy-one, attend the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead in Brooklyn in 1964 to receive advanced theocratic training. My prayer is that 'Jehovah, the God of armies,' and his appointed Commander in Chief, Christ Jesus, may strengthen all their spiritual warriors to carry on faithfully until the final victory.—Jer. 38:17."

¹⁶ Thousands of persons have made a religious change, turning from false worship to true religion, just as Ruth did. For instance, consider this account:

"Many years ago a young woman who was born in Germany and who was a devout Protestant and a student of the Bible believed she could serve the poor and needy better if she were to embrace the Roman Catholic belief and become a nun. This she did. She took the veil in the order of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart, of which 'Mother' Cabrini was the mother general. This sister became the traveling companion of Cabrini and was later elevated to the position of a mother superior. . . . She came to America and she and her secretary, an-

other nun, opened a home for orphans just outside of New York city. She was crying for God to show her the truth. She bought a small radio and began to tune in various religious programs. One day she tuned in WBBR [onetime Watchtower radio station], listened, and a great flood of light came into her heart and mind. She had found the truth! She sent for literature and began to witness to her neighbors in her nun's garb. Her secretary also got the truth and began to witness. It was not long before off came the garments of ritualistic religion and on went the garments of praise to the Great Jehovah!"

¹⁷ In order to "serve Jehovah with rejoicing," some today have abandoned occultism, just as many practitioners of magical arts did in ancient Ephesus so as to become Christians. Still others, like some who embraced Christianity in Corinth, have made great moral changes in life. Then too, many now serving Jehovah once persecuted faithful Christians, as did Saul of Tarsus before becoming the apostle Paul. One Christian man who suffered persecution at Nazi hands showed how Jehovah's witnesses in concentration camps gave their captors a bold and open witness leading to such transformations, reporting:

"By such fearless preaching and neighbor love faith was often born in the lions' den. Here and there, in various camps, SS guards renounced their Nazi oath and declared their belief in Jehovah. These 'Sauls,' our persecutors, became 'Pauls,' our fellow prisoners!"

SHOW YOUR JOY IN SERVING JEHOVAH

¹⁸ It cannot be denied. Moses made the right choice of loyalties. Ruth's was the proper religious decision. Those who turned from magic to Christianity in ancient Ephesus acted with wisdom, as did residents of Corinth who made moral changes to become God's servants. And

15. After decades of loyal service in spiritual warfare, how did one Christian express himself?

16, 17. (a) Give an example of a change from false to true worship. (b) To "serve Jehovah with rejoicing," what other changes have some persons made?

18. What privileges may be enjoyed if one pursues true worship?

certainly Saul of Tarsus acted wisely and properly in devoting his life to Jehovah, becoming the Christian apostle Paul. To such persons, and others like them in more recent times, the door to blessings and inestimable privileges before God swung open. Possibly you are already of their number. Or, perhaps you have resolved to pursue true worship from now on and "serve Jehovah with rejoicing." If so, rich blessings await you, for of Jehovah it is said: "You are opening your hand and satisfying the desire of every living thing." (Ps. 145:16) For instance, it may yet be your joyous privilege to aid other good-hearted persons to conform their lives to God's righteous requirements by preaching to them and teaching them his Word.

¹⁹ Faithful Christian ministers experience no sorrow over an unsatisfying or fruitless life. Instead, despite persecution, years of service to God and his manifest blessing on the Kingdom-preaching work prompted one of Jehovah's witnesses to

19, 20. (a) Give examples to show that serving Jehovah results in blessing and joy. (b) What is required to enjoy full satisfaction and true happiness?

write: "How gratifying it is to have experienced all this! How often I have felt Jehovah's help and protection! Time and again I have stared death in the face, but I can join the psalmist in saying: 'Jehovah is my shepherd. I shall lack nothing.' . . . Truly, Jehovah blesses us beyond what we can ever ask or comprehend when we answer his call and wholeheartedly take up the ministry as his witnesses." (Ps. 23:1) At ninety-three years of age another Witness, long a minister, could state: "Spending my full time in Jehovah's service has been the joy of my life, and I look forward to continuing it eternally in association with Jesus Christ and his 'holy ones in the light.'—Col. 1:12."

²⁰ This is the experience of those who faithfully "serve Jehovah with rejoicing." (Ps. 100:2) They can confidently speak about God as did David, who said: "You will cause me to know the path of life. Rejoicing to satisfaction is with your face; there is pleasantness at your right hand forever." (Ps. 16:11) But, to enjoy full satisfaction and true happiness, one must take pleasure in the house of God.

"Taking Pleasure

MORE than thirty-four centuries ago, in the inhospitable wilderness of the Sinai Peninsula, a magnificent tent was erected. It was only fifteen feet wide, fifteen feet high and forty-five feet long. Yet it, together with its courtyard and all furnishings, cost well over two million dollars. (Ex. 38:29-31, footnotes b, c, 1953 edition) This was the marvelous tabernacle as set up in 1512 B.C.E. at

1. Describe the structure for true worship originally erected by the Israelites in the wilderness.

in
**THE HOUSE
OF
MY GOD"**

**"We should not neglect
the house of our God."**

— Neh. 10:39.

God's command by the Israelites, liberated by Jehovah from Egyptian bondage. (Ex. 36:2-38:20) This grand tent served as Israel's center of true worship for some 485 years.

² In 1027 B.C.E. Solomon, son of David and king of Israel, inaugurated in Jerusalem another structure to Jehovah's praise, a temple for which his father had received the architectural plan by divine inspiration. (1 Chron. 28:11-19) Inside, its temple sanctuary measured thirty feet in width, ninety in length and forty-five in height. (1 Ki. 6:2) Constructed mainly of limestone and cedarwood, the temple was decorated with gold and precious stones and was undoubtedly one of the most beautiful and expensive buildings ever built. Upward of five billion dollars in gold and silver had been contributed for its construction. Almighty God surely took pleasure in it, for after Solomon's moving prayer at its dedication, "the fire itself came down from the heavens and proceeded to consume the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and Jehovah's glory itself filled the house."—2 Chron. 6:12-7:3.

³ The temple Solomon built was destroyed by the Babylonians in 607 B.C.E. and the Jews were then taken into exile. (2 Ki. 25:8-12) Released from Babylon seven decades later by Persian king Cyrus, they returned to Jerusalem, and the temple was eventually rebuilt there under Zerubbabel's supervision. (Ezra 1:1-4; 3:8-11; 6:14, 15) Centuries thereafter, Herod the Great gradually reconstructed this temple, and that later structure was standing when Jesus Christ was on earth. However, due to the Jews' unfaithfulness to Jehovah and as Jesus foretold, that temple was razed when the Romans destroyed Jerusalem in 70 C.E.—Matt. 24:1, 2.

⁴ The temple was fittingly spoken of as the "temple of Jehovah," the "house of the true God" and the "house of Jehovah." Jesus also called it "the house of my Father." (2 Chron. 26:16; Ezra 3:8; John 2:16) Israel's early tabernacle and the later material temples exist no longer, but an even more glorious spiritual temple has taken their place. Concerning it the Christian apostle Paul told fellow believers in Ephesus: "Certainly, therefore, you are no longer strangers and alien residents, but you are fellow citizens of the holy ones and are members of the household of God, and you have been built up upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, while Christ Jesus himself is the foundation cornerstone. In union with him the whole building, being harmoniously joined together, is growing into a holy temple for Jehovah. In union with him you, too, are being built up together into a place for God to inhabit by spirit." (Eph. 2:19-22) The spirit of God dwells in the persons comprising this temple, and they are "living stones" being built up as a "spiritual house." (1 Pet. 2:4, 5; 1 Cor. 3:16) Those comprising the spiritual temple number only 144,000, of which but a small remnant are yet alive on earth.—Rev. 7:4-8; 14:1-5.

⁵ The spiritual temple may be represented in a local congregation of Jehovah's witnesses by the presence therein of one or more anointed followers of Jesus Christ. However, due to the small number of such ones still alive on earth, congregations of God's servants in some areas consist only of dedicated praisers of Jehovah having earthly hopes, a "great crowd," depicted in Revelation as standing before God's throne and "rendering him sacred service day and night in his temple." (Rev. 7:

2, 3. (a) What structure to Jehovah's praise did Solomon inaugurate in 1027 B.C.E.? (b) Outline the later history of the temple in Jerusalem.

4. What has replaced the tabernacle and later material temples? Please describe it.

5. In what way do praisers of Jehovah having earthly hopes show they appreciate any contact with the temple class?

9, 15) These persons keenly appreciate any contact they have with the temple class and show this by cooperating fully with the "faithful and discreet slave," made up of all anointed Christians on earth as a class. (Matt. 24:45-47) For doing good things to Christ's "brothers," his anointed followers, they will be rewarded with everlasting life.—Matt. 25:34-40, 46.

HONORING JEHOVAH WITH VALUABLE THINGS

⁶ The Israelites were privileged to contribute gold, silver, copper, wool, linen and other things for the construction of the tabernacle. Joyfully, willing-hearted ones gave this "contribution for Jehovah," giving so much, in fact, that the donations had to be halted because the contributed materials "proved to be enough for all the work to be done, and more than enough." (Ex. 35:4-9, 20-29; 36:4-7) Centuries later, aged David took such pleasure in the prospective temple to be built in Jerusalem that he contributed heavily toward its construction, giving such things as gold, silver, copper, iron, mosaic pebbles and precious stones. But David said: "Since I am *taking pleasure in the house of my God*, there is yet a special property of mine, gold and silver; I do give it to the house of my God over and above all that I have prepared for the holy house." He gave additional gold and silver in great quantities. Invited to share in such giving, his fellow Israelites contributed liberally, and "the people gave way to rejoicing over their making voluntary offerings, for it was with a complete heart that they made voluntary offerings to Jehovah; and even David the king himself rejoiced with great joy."—1 Chron. 29:1-9.

⁷ Jehovah's servants respond in a similar

6, 7. (a) How did the Israelites respond when privileged to contribute toward the construction of the tabernacle and the temple? (b) In what manner do Jehovah's servants now respond to opportunities to support true worship? (c) Does this giving result in poverty?

manner today when some structure for true worship is about to be built. They are glad to support such a project materially, whether to expand facilities at the headquarters of the Watch Tower Society or at one of its branch offices, or to construct a new Kingdom Hall locally. For that matter, often they personally assist, spending time and energy when building a Kingdom Hall. Jehovah prospers them, making Christian generosity of various kinds possible. (2 Cor. 9:8-12) Supporting true worship by making contributions to advance the interests of God's kingdom as one is able does not result in poverty, for Proverbs 3:9, 10 states: "Honor Jehovah with your valuable things and with the first fruits of all your produce. Then your stores of supply will be filled with plenty; and with new wine your own press vats will overflow."

⁸ The Israelites were privileged to support the tabernacle and later temples, as well as priestly and Levitical services at them. In Nehemiah's day, for instance, the Jews resolved to keep God's law and to make contributions to maintain pure worship at Jehovah's sanctuary, realizing that they should not neglect God's house. (Neh. 10:32-39) Jehovah's witnesses of today are not guilty of neglecting the house of God. For one thing, they contribute, as they are able, toward the maintenance of their Kingdom Halls and toward the furtherance of the work of preaching the good news of the *Kingdom*. (Matt. 24:14; Mark 13:10) This they do cheerfully, thus showing that they take pleasure in the house of their God, while acting in harmony with Paul's words: "Let each one do just as he has resolved in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver."—2 Cor. 9:7.

8. Because they do not wish to neglect God's house, what has been done by Jehovah's servants?

⁹ With the passing of time the temple built by Solomon needed some repairs, as in the days of Judean king Jehoash, for instance. Responsible ones did not then act promptly, but eventually the sanctuary was repaired. (2 Ki. 12:4-15) Later, King Josiah of Judah was also concerned about repairing the "house of Jehovah." (2 Ki. 22:3-7) God's present-day servants show that they take pleasure in the house of their God by attending to the upkeep of the local Kingdom Hall, not procrastinating when repairs are required and endeavoring then to engage the services of industrious and honest workmen.

¹⁰ At times the temple was plundered, as when another Jehoash, the king of Israel, assaulted Jerusalem in the days of Judean king Amaziah and "took all the gold and silver and all the articles to be found at the house of Jehovah and in the treasures of the house of the king and the hostages and then returned to Samaria." (2 Ki. 14:11-14) This incident may well cause a servant of Jehovah today to exercise care in using furnishings and other articles at the Kingdom Hall. Never would he want to become guilty of improperly appropriating for himself personally any items belonging to the congregation in general. Kingdom Hall property should be viewed with respect, as the possession first of Jehovah and then of the Christian congregation using that place of worship. Remember, too, Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar stripped Jehovah's temple of its valuable articles and had that glorious building destroyed. (2 Ki. 25:8-17) Never, through misuse of the Kingdom Hall or items on hand there, would Christians want to be like that pagan monarch, even to the smallest degree!

THE NEED FOR CLEANNESS

¹¹ Doing your part to clean the Kingdom Hall and maintain it in good condition is also a privilege. Furthermore, physical and spiritual cleanliness are essential for those desiring to serve Jehovah. The Israelites gave attention to bodily and religious cleanness, the washing of garments and bathing being incumbent upon them, for instance, in connection with uncleanness incurred because of certain bodily discharges. (Lev. chapter 15) Bodily and ceremonial cleanness were not the same thing, but one might involve the other, as just noted. Sanitary measures were taken regarding the disposal of human wastes. (Deut. 23:12-14) At the tabernacle and later at the temple provision was made for large basins to hold water for the priests to use in washing. So, they were to be clean physically as well as spiritually when ministering at Jehovah's sanctuary. (Ex. 30:17-21; 2 Chron. 4:6) Prior to the Jews' release from Babylonian captivity (in 537 B.C.E.) Isaiah was inspired to say to them: "Turn away, turn away, get out of there, touch nothing unclean; get out from the midst of her, keep yourselves clean, you who are carrying the utensils of Jehovah." (Isa. 52:11) Think of it! They would be privileged to carry back to Jerusalem the sacred utensils Nebuchadnezzar had taken from Jehovah's temple years earlier. Those holy utensils should certainly be borne only by clean worshipers of Jehovah, for God does not use unclean persons in his service.

¹² Enlarging on the meaning of Isaiah 52:11 and applying that text to Christians, the apostle Paul wrote: "Do not become unevenly yoked with unbelievers. For what

9. In view of examples involving the temple, what should be done when Kingdom Hall repairs are needed?
10. What view should Christians take of Kingdom Hall property?

11, 12. (a) What requirements as to cleanness had to be met by the people and priests of Israel? (b) Why was it necessary for Jews released from Babylonian captivity to be clean? (c) Does Isaiah 52:11 have any application to Christians?

sharing do righteousness and lawlessness have? Or what fellowship does light have with darkness? Further, what harmony is there between Christ and Belial? Or what portion does a faithful person have with an unbeliever? And what agreement does God's temple have with idols? For we are a temple of a living God; just as God said: 'I shall reside among them and walk among them, and I shall be their God, and they will be my people.' "Therefore get out from among them, and separate yourselves," says Jehovah, "and quit touching the unclean thing." (2 Cor. 6:14-17) The faithful released Jewish remnant of ancient times got away from Babylon and her idolatrous false religion, so as to be free of defilement with her uncleanness and be clean in heart. Similarly, Christians have left Babylon the Great, the worldwide empire of false religion, and are not defiled with her uncleanness. (Rev. 18:1-8) Taking pleasure in the house of their God, Jehovah, they worship him with spirit and truth.—John 4:23, 24.

¹³ All dedicated Christians must be aware of the need for moral and spiritual cleanness. The Christian congregation in ancient Corinth once tolerated an immoral man in their midst, so that Paul had to urge his fellow believers there to oust that wicked one, handing him "over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, in order that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord." Paul knew that action had to be taken against the wrongdoer because "a little leaven ferments the whole lump." (1 Cor. 5:1-6) It was necessary to expel him from the congregation so that the spirit of the congregation based upon God's written Word could be saved.

¹⁴ It is vital that a Christian maintain

13. For what reason did Paul once urge Corinthian Christians to expel an immoral man from the congregation?

14. (a) Why must a Christian maintain fine conduct? (b) By what quality are Jesus' disciples identified, and how did Paul define it?

fine conduct (1 Pet. 2:12), for what he does can affect the congregation with which he associates. He also does well to remember the psalmist's words: "O Jehovah, who will be a guest in your tent? Who will reside in your holy mountain? He who is walking faultlessly and practicing righteousness and speaking the truth in his heart." (Ps. 15:1, 2) It was Paul's desire that the Philippian Christians "be filled with righteous fruit, which is through Jesus Christ, to God's glory and praise." (Phil. 1:9-11) He urged Roman fellow believers to owe no one anything but love (Rom. 13:8), and he was inspired to give a sterling epitome of that splendid quality in writing to Christians in Corinth. He showed that love is long-suffering, kind and not jealous. It does not brag, get puffed up, behave indecently, look for its own interests, become provoked, keep account of the injury, or rejoice over unrighteousness. It rejoices with the truth, and it bears, believes, hopes and endures all things. "Love never fails." (1 Cor. 13:4-8) Disciples of Jesus Christ are identified by the love that prevails among them. (John 13:34, 35) And, by his godly conduct in general, a Christian shows that he takes pleasure in the spiritual house of God, that he cherishes his relationship with it and with Jehovah God.

"TO THE HOUSE OF JEHOVAH LET US GO"

¹⁵ What a pleasure it was to gather with others at Jehovah's sanctuary in ancient times! The Israelites were privileged to do so three times a year—to celebrate the festival of unfermented cakes, the festival of harvest and the festival of ingathering. (Ex. 23:14-17) When the temple stood in Jerusalem, anticipation ran high as the multitudes approached that city. Having

15. For what annual festivals did the Israelites gather at Jehovah's sanctuary? What benefits resulted from being present?

an elevation of almost 2,600 feet, it was indeed "pretty for loftiness, the exultation of the whole earth." (Ps. 48:1, 2) There at the temple one could hear the reading of Jehovah's Word, observe the priests in action and hear the many musical instruments and Levitical voices blended in songs of praise to Jehovah. Services at the earlier tabernacle were highly beneficial spiritually, too, and so no wonder David exclaimed: "I rejoiced when they were saying to me: 'To the house of Jehovah let us go.'"—Ps. 122:1.

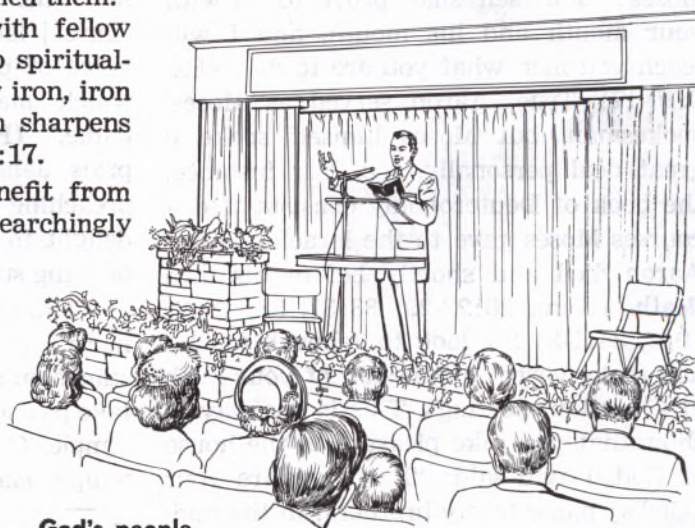
¹⁶ Christians today do not assemble three times annually at a particular tabernacle or temple, though they meet weekly for Bible study and discussion at their Kingdom Halls and also meet in convention from time to time. When they gather together for instruction in God's Word, they incite one another to love and fine works. (Heb. 10:24, 25) At such meetings they receive encouragement, even as Christians in Antioch did nineteen centuries ago, Luke reporting: "Judas and Silas, since they themselves were also prophets, encouraged the brothers with many a discourse and strengthened them." (Acts 15:30-32) Association with fellow believers also sharpens them up spiritually, for the Scriptures state: "By iron, iron itself is sharpened. So one man sharpens the face of another."—Prov. 27:17.

¹⁷ To derive the greatest benefit from Christian meetings, think searchingly when questions are posed by the servant conducting the meeting. In commenting on a question, endeavor to express the idea in your own words, for it is rarely sufficient merely to read an answer from a

Christian publication. Understanding what is meant therein is important. The Ethiopian eunuch to whom Philip preached might have been able to answer some queries about Isaiah's prophecy, for he was reading it. He could read what it said. But he was unable to understand what was meant in one of its Messianic prophecies. The deeper meaning was obscure to him until Philip, starting with the particular scripture, "declared to him the good news about Jesus." (Acts 8:26-39) Similarly today, a person who thinks deeply and listens carefully to the expressions of others at Christian meetings may come to understand a difficult Biblical matter. How wise it is, therefore, to reason actively on the information furnished at such a gathering by means of a Biblical discourse, a demonstration or other presentation.

¹⁸ Yet, it is difficult for some persons to comment, to express themselves. They are shy and would rather remain silent, letting others speak. However, such individuals

^{18, 19.} What encouragement is there for those who are shy and find it difficult to express themselves verbally at Christian meetings?



God's people take pleasure in meeting together to incite one another to love and fine works; this sharpens them spiritually

16. What benefits are realized when Christians meet for instruction in God's Word?

17. What advice is given on answering questions and listening at Christian meetings?

can be encouraged by the fact that others with similar feelings have made spiritual progress. Paul lovingly told Timothy: "God gave us not a spirit of cowardice, but that of power and of love and of soundness of mind. Therefore do not become ashamed of the witness about our Lord." (2 Tim. 1:7, 8) Surely, Jehovah, "who daily carries the load for us" and who "cannot possibly allow your foot to totter," will help you to express your faith verbally at Christian meetings and elsewhere.—Ps. 68:19; 121:3.

¹⁹ If a person is not a fluent speaker, he is somewhat like Moses. When Jehovah determined to use him in effecting Israel's deliverance from Egypt, Moses said: "Excuse me, Jehovah, but I am not a fluent speaker, neither since yesterday nor since before that nor since your speaking to your servant, for I am slow of mouth and slow of tongue." But Jehovah set matters straight and then told Moses: "I myself shall prove to be with your mouth and I will teach you what you ought to say." God next arranged for Moses' brother Aaron to accompany him, and He assured Moses: "I myself shall prove to be with your mouth and his mouth, and I will teach you men what you are to do." (Ex. 4:10-17) True, Aaron served as Moses' spokesman, but Moses himself spoke a great deal personally, too. For instance, the book of Deuteronomy consists of discourses Moses gave to the Israelites after Aaron died and shortly before his own death. (Num. 20:22-29; 33:37, 38; Deut. 10:6; 34:1-8) So, look to Jehovah for aid and make verbal expression of your faith at Christian meetings. This is one way to show that you take pleasure in the house of God. David said: "I will declare your [God's] name to my brothers; in the middle of the congregation I shall praise you." (Ps. 22:22) If you feel the same way,

show it at Christian meetings by participating in them at every opportunity.

BLESS JEHOVAH ALL DAY LONG

²⁰ Centuries ago David exclaimed concerning Jehovah: "All day long I will bless you, and I will praise your name to time indefinite, even forever." (Ps. 145:2) Do you feel that way? If so, you will want to bless Jehovah and praise his name constantly. When the Israelites took pleasure in the house of God, they faithfully offered suitable sacrifices to Jehovah, both animals and harvest fruits. Those delighting in the house of God today offer acceptable sacrifices of a different kind, doing so because they wish to bless Jehovah and praise his name. Long ago, erring Israel was urged: "Do come back, O Israel, to Jehovah your God, for you have stumbled in your error. Take with yourselves words and come back to Jehovah. Say to him, all you people, 'May you pardon error; and accept what is good, and we will offer in return the young bulls of our lips.'" (Hos. 14:1, 2) Jehovah's servants now offer the 'young bulls of their lips' and heed the admonition: "Through [Jesus Christ] let us always offer to God a sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of lips which make public declaration to his name." (Heb. 13:15) Yes, they joyfully praise Jehovah verbally, as in the Kingdom preaching and teaching work. Show your delight in the house of God by regularly offering such praise to Jehovah.

²¹ Though a magnificent material tabernacle or temple of Jehovah no longer stands on some earthly site, show that you take pleasure in the more glorious spiritual temple. Cooperate fully with the spiritual temple class. Continue to manifest your

20. Those delighting in the house of God now offer sacrifices of what kind to Jehovah? Why?

21. In what ways, then, can one show that one takes pleasure in the house of God?

pleasure in the house of God by such works as honoring Jehovah with your valuable things, by maintaining spiritual cleanliness, by attending and participating in Christian meetings and by joyfully praising Jehovah all day long. Let your attitude toward Jehovah, his worship, and the

house of God, be like that of David, who declared: "One thing I have asked from Jehovah—it is what I shall look for, that I may dwell in the house of Jehovah all the days of my life, to behold the pleasantness of Jehovah and to look with appreciation upon his temple."—Ps. 27:4.

Have You Invited Your Marriage Mate?

IN MARRIAGE unions where both partners are dedicated Christians, there is no difficulty about what to do when assembly time comes around. But what of the situation where one is not dedicated to God? This is a question that must be faced this year by many married couples. To the Christian mate, attendance at one of the international assemblies of Jehovah's witnesses is vital for spiritual health and welfare. But what about the undedicated mate? Must it be taken for granted that there will have to be a separation for a few days? Why? Is there no alternative?

The dedicated Christian would dearly love to have the other partner go along. But is that love strong enough to extend

a frank, warm invitation? Perhaps that is all that is needed. The large assemblies of Jehovah's people are, in a sense, quite different from local Kingdom Hall gatherings. That is, most of those assembling have never met one another before. So an undedicated mate would be at no disadvantage. Both marriage partners could make new acquaintances together.

At these large conventions the location lifts matters out of the familiar locale of one's hometown. It lends a note of newness, of interest, to the experience. And at these assemblies the variety of race, nationality and background represented is always fascinating. So there are reasons why an undedicated mate might be willing to come along. Have you invited your marriage mate?

LOVE FINDS THE WAY

Of course, a Christian, though deeply attached to a marriage mate, still has to keep in mind the primary obligation to Jehovah God, the One who instituted marriage in the first place. Worship of God must always take first place—ahead of all else. And the undedicated mate should see the propriety of this, if he or she is animated by genuine love for the other mate. Such mate can appreciate how unwise it would be to challenge God's right to have first claim on his creatures.

Nevertheless, genuine love should prompt marriage partners to be reciprocal in their dealings with each other. There

can be give and take on both sides, without compromising the position of either one. Indeed, concessions graciously made to each other really give evidence of the bond of love that exists between them. So it is not at all impossible that the undedicated mate might consent to attend one or more sessions of the assembly, such as the public lecture or some of the realistic Bible dramas that are enacted on the platform.

The dedicated partner, on the other hand, would not want to insist on the other mate's being at all sessions of the assembly program. There would surely be recognition of the fact that one who is not as

yet deeply concerned about God's kingdom and its activities would be interested in other things such as sight-seeing, shopping or some form of relaxation. But at least, if husband and wife travel to the assembly city together and see each other night and morning, it is much better than being completely separated for a few days.

Even the undedicated mate can observe that the other partner to the marriage is greatly upbuilt mentally and spiritually from having enjoyed the associations at the assembly. This cannot but reflect on the physical life too. A marriage mate who is spiritually happy can be expected to develop and maintain a good disposition—a boon in any marriage partnership.

ADVANTAGES TO BOTH

A married couple, under these circumstances, may find it advantageous to combine a brief vacation with attendance at the assembly. What an array of subjects both will be able to talk about for weeks to come—conversations in which both are interested, their having been through the experiences together! A vacation of this

kind affords opportunity to enjoy together hours that are relatively free from everyday concerns. Both mates need such a refreshing change from the daily routine.

In this way there would be time for sight-seeing, shopping and various other forms of relaxation. At the same time the few days of the assembly would be a fine opportunity for both to give some care to their spiritual need. And who knows? If the undedicated mate decides to sit in on

one or more of the assembly sessions, he or she is just as likely to derive benefit as anyone else. The discussions of God's Word, the Bible, are always hope-inspir-

ing, upbuilding, comforting, and they are powerful in the way of molding people's thinking, bringing a fresh outlook on life.

It is a fact that undedicated mates often appraise the Kingdom work and those associated in it on the basis of a few persons they have met in their own home district. An assembly offers the opportunity to observe personally how Jehovah's witnesses are drawn together from all walks of life and unified in the one unselfish work of performing God's will. Housewives, businessmen, tradesmen, professional men and women, farmers—all can be found at the large assemblies of Jehovah's witnesses. No need to take anyone's word for it. There they can be seen, row on row, as the audience fills up the auditorium or grandstand.

A WARM INVITATION

Why not, then, invite your marriage mate to this year's international assembly, even if he or she professes little interest in the Bible at this time? Even if such partner agreed to attend but one session of the assembly, would not that be a source

COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- Listen to Daniel's Words for Our Day.
- Crushing All Nations in Our Day by God's Kingdom.
- How to Pray and Be Heard by God.
- Have You Been Studying for Six Months?

of satisfaction, a cause for gratitude? And be encouraged by reports that show how undedicated persons have been deeply impressed through attending only one assembly. One friendly, undedicated man, for example, wrote to Witnesses who were guests at his home during an assembly: "The manner in which you conducted yourselves, the happiness, the fact that you did not preach at me all the time, the talks at the convention, the conduct of the people there—I believe it was all this that made me come to the conclusion that this is a pretty fine thing."

The public lecture, on the subject "The Approaching Peace of a Thousand Years," is specially suited to newly interested ones and even those who profess to have little interest. Your marriage mate, though undedicated, is likely to find that from one quarter to one half of the audience at this particular session is made up of persons not professing to be Jehovah's witnesses.

There are others, too, who might be invited to come along. What about those relatives and acquaintances who have shown themselves to be favorably disposed toward the Kingdom message? A weekend visit to the convention might be something they would really enjoy. But the invitation should be given well in advance so that they will have time to make their plans. And it may aid them to reach a favorable decision if you can mention some other interesting things to do or see while visiting the assembly city. What is true of these friends is true also of your own mate. Help them to have an enjoyable time, so that they will want to come to some future assembly too.

You love your marriage mate. No need, then, to take it for granted that he or she will not want to accompany you to the assembly city. Why not open the door? A cordial invitation may suffice. But whatever the outcome, you will have the satisfaction of having tried.

KEEP FAITH GROWING BY GOD'S WORD

What causes the faith of some to stop growing and even to wither and die?

God's Word says that "faith is the assured expectation of things hoped for, the evident demonstration of realities though not beheld." (Heb. 11:1) Many point to materialism as the cause of failure to have such faith. Others say that it is pleasure-seeking, and still others that it is fear that causes faith to stop growing but instead to wither and die. While such things may be involved in causing the faith of some to weaken, when one looks a little closer one finds that this condition is basically due to a failure to keep on feeding on God's Word.

Yes, "faith follows the thing heard," and to be a fine minister one must be "nourished with the words of the faith." One must pay "more than the usual attention" to God's

Word if one would not drift away. This is what the Thessalonian Christians did, and for this reason the apostle Paul could write them: "Your faith is growing exceedingly."—Rom. 10:17; 1 Tim. 4:6; Heb. 2:1; 2 Thess. 1:3.*

How can one check to see that his own faith keeps on growing exceedingly by God's Word?

Just as a home requires continual maintenance if it is to be kept in good repair and serve its owner well, so with one's faith. To keep on growing exceedingly in faith one must 'keep testing whether one is in the faith.' (2 Cor. 13:5) How can this be done? By asking oneself such questions as: "Am I or my family studying less? Do I find my explanations of Bible subjects a little hazy in understanding? Is my public ministry a hurried, get-it-over-with program? Has Bible truth be-

* For details see *The Watchtower*, April 1, 1968.

come commonplace with me because it is so easy to obtain?"

If your answer is "yes" to any of these questions, then DO something about it! Call to mind the zeal you once had and put Kingdom interests first in your life! Establish a dependable program for taking in spiritual

food, buying out the time for Bible reading, for preparing lessons and your assignments in the Theocratic Ministry School, service meeting or for a public talk. Jehovah says: "'My righteous one will live by reason of faith,' and, 'if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him.'"—Heb. 10:38; 12:2.

GRATITUDE is very scarce in this era wherein selfishness has gone to seed. Parents often neglect to set a good example and train their children in this respect. Even in the presence of visitors some children will loudly and bitterly complain when things do not go right, but when matters improve they can seldom be heard expressing appreciation. Lacking good, sound counsel, the children turn out to be ungrateful for whatever they do receive, taking it all more or less as something due them.

If there is any material giving, to charities for instance, it is because there is need to salve a conscience, or because one's reputation is at stake. There is very little giving of the kind referred to by Christ Jesus when he counseled: "Do not let your left hand know what your right is doing." (Matt. 6:3) God's Word, the Bible, foretold that "in the last days . . . men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, . . . unthankful."—2 Tim. 3:1, 2.

In view of these conditions that have come upon the world it is truly refreshing to hear about the four-year-old whose mother had taught him to appreciate God's

Giving thanks always for all things

provisions for human-kind, for the present and for the future. He wanted to do something to demonstrate his appreciation. When a hen in their backyard hatched a brood of chicks, this little fellow set one of them aside, saying: "This one is for Jehovah." He guarded it and raised it until it was marketable. Then he sold it and brought its price—the equivalent of 75c (U.S.)

—with the request that it be forwarded to the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society as his very own contribution toward the spread of Bible education throughout the world. His little face beamed with joy and contentment at having some share in supporting the Society's activities.

Without yet fully understanding it, that youngster was in fact complying with God's counsel given by inspiration and expressed by that zealous servant of Jesus Christ, the apostle Paul: 'In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ give thanks always for all things to our God and Father.'—Eph. 5:20.

CAN YOU PROMOTE THANKFULNESS?

What moved this little child to such an expression of appreciation? Example.

Can you not just hear the enthusiastic mother telling him how good and wondrous and generous the great heavenly Father is, in that he has made such grand preparations for the everlasting happiness of his earthly sons and daughters? Not only that, but the youngster must also have witnessed some specific demonstration of generosity on the part of his mother. Perhaps he even heard some discussion about wise use of our material goods for the furtherance of the Kingdom-preaching work.

But stop and think now! Was not that mother's teaching effective? Do you inculcate in your children, or in the young people with whom you are familiar, this fine attitude with its excellent fruitage? You can, you know. If you are open-handed and generous toward the interests of God's kingdom-preaching work on the earth, then it is possible to train your young people to have the same attitude.

But what advantage will it have for them, you may ask, in such a selfish, thankless world? Well, who was it that said, "God loves a cheerful giver"? Was it not the apostle Paul, and is it not a fact that being the object of God's loving care is worth more than all else?—2 Cor. 9:7.

SMALL GIFTS ACCOMPLISH MUCH

A little boy's contribution of 75 cents is hardly worth mentioning, someone may say. But wait! Whom did Jesus commend after he had stood for a time observing those making contributions at Jerusalem's *temple*? Was it those who came in rich apparel and dropped sizable sums of money into the box? No, but it was the poor widow who gave all she had—two coins of very little value. (Mark 12:41-44) Her giving was from the heart.

Today that is what keeps the worldwide preaching activity of Jehovah's witnesses moving forward—the multitude of small

donations from generous ones who give, perhaps out of already tight budgets. Think of what is accomplished by all those modest contributions to the Watch Tower Society: Millions of books and magazines containing the explanation of God's Word are distributed at small cost to truth-hungry people of all nations; missionaries are trained and sent out to many distant fields; support is given to other full-time preachers, "special pioneers," so that they can go into thickly populated areas where there is a shortage of ministers of the "good news."

The point to have in mind in all of this is that Jehovah God is the One who has made these provisions possible. This is the time when he is having the good news of the Kingdom preached in all the inhabited earth. (Matt. 24:14) This is the time when he is giving all nations warning about disaster ahead—the complete end of this entire wicked system of things. This is when he bids those who love him, "Lift your heads up, because your deliverance is getting near." (Luke 21:28) There is opportunity for multitudes of humble persons to give evidence, by word and deed, of their heartfelt appreciation for God's grand purpose.

WHAT CAN I DO?

If you are associated with a congregation of Jehovah's witnesses at a Kingdom Hall, you will certainly want to share in some way the expense of maintaining that fine center of Bible education. You do not need to be asked to do so, for you can plainly see the need. And besides, you have noticed that in the true Christian congregation collection plates are never passed around. Begging for funds just is not done. The Kingdom Hall does have a contribution box into which those who wish may drop their modest donations when moved to do so by the spirit of gratitude to God

for his loving provisions for their spiritual welfare. Too, it may be that that congregation, after caring for local expense, is able also to make a direct contribution to the nearest branch office of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. It would thus be sharing in the upkeep of the Society's countrywide activity.

On the other hand, you may choose to mail your own modest donation direct to the office of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society in the country where you reside. In the United States contributions may be sent to 124 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, New York 11201. Whatever you decide, we are sure that you will experience a deep satisfaction that your material things are being used for the advancement of the life-giving spiritual things.

If you are not in association with a congregation of the Witnesses, it may be that you are a regular reader of this magazine. You are therefore in a position to appraise the excellent diet of spiritual food provided in these pages for those who hunger and thirst after righteousness. (Matt. 5:6) Perhaps your appreciation will move you to share what you are learning with others—even providing them with some of the same publications. There can be no greater evidence of your thankfulness to Jehovah and your concern for the lasting good of fellow creatures than to share with them the spiritual treasures you are enjoying.

At the same time we would like to urge you to seek out the Kingdom Hall nearest to your home and find there regular association with others who value *The Watchtower* as a real help in gaining an accurate knowledge of the deeper truths of the Bible. Each Sunday there is a discussion of the main article in *The Watchtower*. You will be amazed to find how much more you can learn through listening to such a discussion. There too you

will see how persons at all stages of progress in Bible knowledge aid one another toward a deeper appreciation of God's kind provisions.

APPRECIATION IS THE KEY

Appreciation is, in fact, the key that opens up many avenues for expressing our thanks to God. The more we understand the details and preparations that God made long ago for the ultimate blessing of all those who please him, the more we find ourselves motivated to express gratitude by our minds, by our mouths and by our material possessions. We come to the same conclusion as the inspired psalmist, namely: "What shall I repay to Jehovah for all his benefits to me? The cup of grand salvation I shall take up, and on the name of Jehovah I shall call. My vows I shall pay to Jehovah, yes, in front of all his people." —Ps. 116:12-14.

Obviously, we cannot really "repay" Jehovah for all his loving-kindnesses, for everything already belongs to him. But surely we should always remember that we are constantly the recipients of his goodness. There is not one thing that we have that was not given to us. So we can meditate on Jehovah's generosity, on the fact that from his open hand all creatures can be satisfied with good things. (Ps. 104:28) And we can speak about this generous Creator and recommend him to others as the worthy object of their worship and service.

Finally, we can all make "token repayment" to Jehovah. How? By "giving thanks always for all things" in a material way, in a way that brings us a measure of satisfaction not otherwise obtained. Without doubt that satisfaction stems from the knowledge that we are using our material things for the honor of God. It is not the amount that counts; rather, it is the spirit of the donor.

Social Events

need CHRISTIAN MODERATION

JEWISH wedding feasts in ancient times were joyous occasions, with music, dancing, eating, and drinking. From

John, chapter two, we learn that Jesus Christ and his disciples attended such a feast in Cana of Galilee. While the Bible does not specifically say that Jesus shared in all the things just mentioned, he did add to the festivities by miraculously producing wine, a beverage that makes man rejoice.—Ps. 104:15; John 2:1-11.

Does this mean that Jesus thought that “anything goes” at social events? No. First Timothy 3:2 says that Christian overseers, who are to set a good example for the rest of the congregation, are to be “moderate in habits.” And Jesus condemned the Pharisees for their “immoderateness.”—Matt. 23:25.

Christians are happy people who serve the “happy God.” (1 Tim. 1:11) They enjoy having upbuilding association with one another. When, in their busy lives, they have fellowship at social gatherings, they find it pleasant. Of course, they know that, because of human imperfection, improper things could develop at gatherings; they strive to avoid such by being moderate.

In what ways do social events need to reflect Christian moderation? We can illustrate the proper position by considering social events that relate to marriage.

RECEPTIONS OR WEDDING FEASTS*

The fact that Jesus attended a wedding feast shows that it is not improper for a Christian bride and groom to invite their close friends and relatives to share the joy of their wedding by attending a reception. Christ even wove three illustrations around the setting of marriage feasts.—Matt. 22:1-13; 25:1-13; Luke 14:7-11.

However, we should not conclude that a wedding feast is essential. It is not. If a couple desires to have a reception, and circumstances permit it, they may do so. But many Christians

have married happily without having a wedding feast after the ceremony. And for those who plan to hold a reception, the matter deserves careful thought so that what is done will manifest Christian moderation.

Worldly receptions are frequently marked by one outstanding thing—excess! First there is excess in cost; a New York newspaper reported: “From June 1968 to June 1969, [Americans] will have spent about \$7.2 billion on some 1,800,000 weddings that a good many of them cannot really afford. . . . Most of all, the money buys a catered reception.” Then there is excess in eating, drinking and entertainment. It is vital that Christians avoid such immoderateness.

How large should a wedding feast be? That is something that the couple can decide. Two parents in North America spent so much on their daughter’s wedding that

* In this discussion the terms “reception” and “wedding feast” are used interchangeably, though we realize that in some places, such as Denmark, they apply to two different events.

they had to move to another location to find extra employment to pay for it. Does this resemble Christian moderation, or is it rather "the showy display of one's means of life" that "does not originate with the Father, but originates with the world"?—1 John 2:16.

An overseer in western Africa mentioned a factor that adds to this problem: "Once it is known that the marriage is to take place, the whole congregation and some from nearby congregations feel that they must be at the reception, whether invited or not. Some think that those being married are obligated to have a reception and provide abundant food and drink for all present." However, such a viewpoint is not in harmony with Jesus' teachings. In two of his illustrations involving wedding feasts, he mentioned "invited" guests. (Matt. 22:3; Luke 14:8) He even spoke of some being turned away when there were no provisions for them to join the feast.—Matt. 25:11, 12.

After a wedding in Toronto, Canada, the couple shared a "sit-down" meal with only a few very close friends and relatives, and they later had "open house" with light snacks for the congregation in general. Following a wedding in Düsseldorf, Germany, just sixteen were at the feast in a restaurant. This allowed for relaxed conversation. The money saved by having a small gathering was wisely put to use by the couple in their new assignment as special pioneer ministers. True, others might have liked to be at the celebration, but they understood that the couple could not, as the groom put it, "invite all." However, they were pleased to share in the couple's happiness by being at the Kingdom Hall for the marriage talk.

So whether a wedding feast will include many people, or just a few, whether it will be by invitation only, or "open house," or whether a reception will be held at all,

can be decided by the couple getting married. Those who have cultivated Christian moderation will "live with soundness of mind and righteousness and godly devotion amid this present system of things."—Titus 2:12.

MODERATION IN ACTIVITIES PLANNED

Should there be specific arrangements as to activities at the reception? Yes. At the feast in Cana there was a "director of the feast." (John 2:8) Of course, in the final analysis the groom is responsible for the reception, no matter who finances it. But he may have someone to help him see that "all things take place decently and by arrangement." (1 Cor. 14:40) A spiritually mature Christian in Rhodesia remarked: "The larger the group, the more organization is needed if everything is to operate smoothly. A scheduled program is a big help."

Two Christians who married in Elsinore, Denmark, had relatives who were not true worshipers. They felt that if these worldly relatives were invited to the feast it would be difficult to be sure that moderation would prevail. Hence, they were guided by the groom's statement: "On that occasion we wanted to be with our spiritual brothers." During the meal, his father, one of Jehovah's witnesses, asked various ones who had been notified in advance to make brief remarks. These—sometimes light, sometimes serious—were enjoyed by all in the small group. Later the husband happily said: "If I had it to do over, I'd do it exactly the same."

"In Chile, a wedding reception without dancing is not considered much of a *fiesta*," said a Christian in South America. Would it be wrong for dancing to take place at a Christian wedding reception? Well, dancing is not wrong. But there are dangers connected with it that should be recognized. An overseer in Nigeria ob-

served that what is clean and proper can give "way to popular worldly music which usually appeals to sex and creates a desire for sexy dancing. This would be detrimental to those present."*

Realizing that this can occur, especially if a worldly band is hired, a minister in Nova Scotia made a tape recording of the music to be played at his reception. Thus the dancing was in harmony with Christian morality and moderation. Many at that reception enjoyed sharing in the group square dancing.

Another notable point about that reception was the fact that no alcoholic beverages were served. It was not that these are forbidden to Christians, for Jesus even provided wine at Cana. But in this case the groom felt that some in that area might be stumbled if alcoholic beverages were served. He thought of the words: "It is well not to eat flesh or to drink wine or do anything over which your brother stumbles." (Rom. 14:21) If at a reception such beverages are served, there should be ample provisions for those who prefer "soft" drinks. Apparently it was not uncommon for Jews in Jesus' day to get intoxicated at wedding feasts. (John 2:10) Great caution, then, should be exercised by Christians today that such happy occasions are not spoiled by overindulgence. —Prov. 23:20, 21.

Need the celebration go on until very late to be a success? No. An overseer in one Latin American country said that occasionally "receptions go into the early hours of the morning. A full-course meal is served about 11:30 p.m. It is well known that groups meeting to share in the field ministry the next morning are very poorly supported." Even if it is common in one's land to celebrate at such lengths, need Christians follow customs that would leave

them so tired the next day that they could not properly serve their Creator? Would that be demonstrating moderation? To the contrary, the arrangements that spiritually mature Christians make harmonize with the counsel: "Whether you are eating or drinking or doing anything else, do all things for God's glory."—1 Cor. 10:31.

So if Christians choose to hold a social gathering such as a wedding feast, it should not be patterned after the boisterous, immoderate feasts of the world that are plagued with overindulgence. Rather, it should be a well-arranged, happy gathering that manifests Christian moderation. The Christian from Nova Scotia mentioned above said: "Three years later we visited the congregation, and they still remembered the reception as a good example." How pleasant are the fruits of Christian moderation!

WEDDING "SHOWERS"

In some lands it is common for friends and relatives of the bride and groom to hold a gathering sometime before the wedding. It is often called a "shower," for those in attendance may, in a manner of speaking, "shower" the couple with gifts.

Again, this is by no means a necessity, nor need persons in countries where this is not common think that it must be instituted. But if such a social event is planned, it should also reflect Christian principles, including moderation. What has been said above about food, drink and entertainment* would apply.

Special comments, though, are in order regarding gifts. How sad it would be if any Christian invited to a "shower" felt he or she could not accept the invitation because of being unable to give an expensive gift, or any gift at all. Would true Christians want to put one in such a

* See *The Watchtower* of January 1, 1965, pages 31 and 32.

* Additional suggestions about entertainment appeared on pages 20-23 of *Awake!* of February 8, 1966.

position? A gift is supposed to be a spontaneous expression of affection. Such an expression can take many forms, and a tangible gift at a specific event should not be an obligation.

In some places when such "showers" are held, the gifts are grouped together without the names of the givers being attached. Why? Those Christians are conscious of Jesus' counsel that gifts should not be given to glorify the giver. (Matt. 6:1-4) They feel that if one did not bring a gift, another brought a small token of affection, and yet another an expensive gift, unloving comparisons of who gave what might be made.—Matt. 7:12.

Does this mean that it is wrong to identify oneself as the giver of a certain present? No, that is not the point. In other places Christians at weddings and "show-

ers" deliver gifts personally or sign cards attached to the presents. But if the presents are opened or displayed, the givers are not publicly announced. Thus there is no embarrassment.

Today people who do not worship Jehovah often hold immoderate social events that identify them as "lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God." (2 Tim. 3:4) But servants of Jehovah, guided by his inspired Word, demonstrate their mature appreciation of the comment, which bears repetition: "Whether you are eating or drinking or doing anything else, do all things for God's glory." (1 Cor. 10:31) Thus they come away from social events, not with troubled consciences, but with the satisfaction of having had enjoyable relaxation and at the same time having been spiritually upbuilt.

Do You Remember?

Have you read the recent issues of *The Watchtower* carefully? If so, you should recognize these important points.

● What twofold fruitage should a baptized Christian seek to produce?

The fruitage of God's spirit outlined in Galatians 5:22, 23, and the fruitage of Kingdom preaching, which results in new disciples.—P. 51.*

● How are we to understand the words at 1 Timothy 2:15, that women would "be kept safe through childbearing"?

Bearing children would be a safeguard in keeping women occupied with worthwhile activities about their homes. Coupled with their ministry, such would help them avoid the troubles that trap untheocratic women.—Pp. 63, 64.

● In the matter of dress, how can Christians avoid stumbling others?

By dressing in a way that is acceptable from the standpoint of one's ministry rather than following the latest worldly fashion.—Pp. 115, 116.

● Since adults who are studying the Bible will often hold back from asking questions that are in their minds, what can be done to help them understand matters they are being taught?

It is important to get them to express themselves and to draw them out by asking additional questions besides those in the textbook being used.—Pp. 144, 145.

● Why should one follow the Christian standard set out in the Bible in making decisions?

Because otherwise one will be influenced by the fleshly tendencies of selfishness, fear, pride and jealousy.—P. 168.

● What today is the "word behind" us, as mentioned in Isaiah 30:21?

It is what Jehovah God speaks to us through his written Word and through his organization.—P. 202.

● How does Thucydides, the only "classical" historian who is noted for his accuracy of statement, stand in regard to Bible chronology?

He offers testimony that supports rather than challenges Bible chronology.—Pp. 221, 222.

* All references are to *The Watchtower* of 1969.

Gilead's Spiritual Harvest

“WE ARE approaching a final harvest-time,” pointed out F. W. Franz, vice-president of the Watch Tower Society, on Sunday morning, March 9, 1969. The occasion was the graduation of the 47th class of the Society's missionary school, Gilead. The ninety-seven graduating students, and over two thousand of their friends and relatives who gathered for the special day wondered what final harvest the speaker meant and how they personally were involved.

The answers came quickly. The dynamic speaker quoted Jeremiah 8:20: “The harvest has passed, the summer has come to an end; but as for us, we have not been saved!”

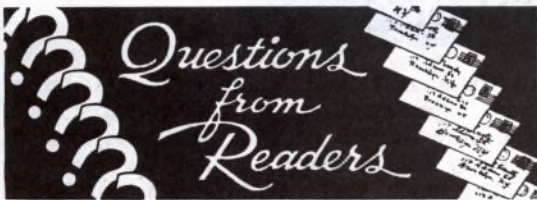
Making the spiritual application, he showed that Christendom has failed to produce the spirituality that might allow her to be preserved alive in the future. In joyful contrast, the spiritual harvest now going on among Jehovah's witnesses has been abundant, as indicated by Amos 9:13. (Lev. 26:3-5) Because the work of the spiritual Christian harvesters had God's blessing, a great fruitage has resulted.

Thus when the final destruction comes at the war of Armageddon, those who have this abundant spirituality will be saved into the new order.

The high point of the day was a talk by N. H. Knorr, the president of the Society, entitled “The Implanting of the Word.” It was based on James 1:21, which reads: “Put away all filthiness and that superfluous thing, moral badness, and accept with mildness the implanting of the word which is able to save your souls.”

“This implanting of the word is not only to be done to the persons outside, it is to be done in ourselves.” This was important, he stressed, for it would mean the saving of our lives.

Too soon the pleasant day came to its end, and the final song and prayer were over. But students and visitors alike had greatly benefited from the special occasion. All were determined to let the word take even deeper root in their hearts and to have a full share in the spiritual harvest now so that they might enjoy God's rich blessings forever.



- What does 1 Corinthians 13:8 mean in saying that ‘knowledge will be done away with’? —R. M., U.S.A.

An examination of the context reveals that the apostle Paul meant that the supernatural **knowledge** that was a miraculous gift of the holy spirit would in time cease.

In the previous chapter Paul wrote about the “varieties of gifts” of the spirit. The miraculous gifts included healing, prophesying, speaking in different tongues, and speech of knowledge. (1 Cor. 12:4-11) These were not ordinary abilities, such as healing or speaking in tongues because of studying medicine or various lan-

guages. They were miraculous abilities. Consistently, then, the “knowledge” mentioned was not ordinary knowledge obtainable through experience, observation or study of books, even the Bible. It was a supernatural knowledge provided by means of the holy spirit.

Illustrating that Jehovah could give supernatural knowledge are these examples: At the death of Lazarus, Jesus' traveling companions had not learned that sick Lazarus had died, yet Christ knew it. (John 11:5-14) On an earlier occasion, a Samaritan woman at a well recognized Jesus as a prophet because he had supernatural knowledge of her past and present marital status.—John 4:16-19.

Note this case involving the apostles after Pentecost 33 C.E.: When Ananias secretly played “false to the holy spirit,” the apostle Peter miraculously knew about it.—Acts 5:24.

Though the Bible does not describe in detail the use of miraculous “knowledge,” it seems likely that it was used in another way too. During Christianity's infancy God might have supplied supernatural knowledge to strengthen

congregations. Though early Christians were intensely interested in the Scriptures, copies of God's Word were not as available as they are today. Nor would congregations have published reference books dealing with the Bible and setting forth the understanding held by the "governing body" of apostles and older men in Jerusalem. Furthermore, means of communication were limited. It might take months to get a reply to a question sent by letter or messenger to an apostle or the "governing body."—Acts 15:2, 30; 16:4.

So at a meeting of a congregation in some isolated location amidst a pagan community, a miraculous display of supernatural knowledge would greatly upbuild and encourage the Christians. There might be a question or problem, and God could supply the solution through one having the gift of "speech of knowledge." That one might recall and grasp the application of a Bible text that he read before, even though the congregation did not have the scroll available.

Would this supernatural knowledge always be present among Christians? No. In fact, not all had it in the first century. (1 Cor. 12:28-30) Furthermore, in time Christianity would be

firmly established and organized. Then the need for the miraculous gifts, including "knowledge," would end. Hence, Paul wrote: "Whether there are gifts of prophesying, they will be done away with; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will be done away with."—1 Cor. 13:8.

Today the Bible is available world wide in hundreds of languages. Unlike the earliest Christian congregations, we now have the complete Christian Greek Scriptures, containing prophecies that we can see being fulfilled as well as information on the application of Hebrew Scripture prophecies. Numerous books and magazines with Scriptural material prepared by the "faithful and discreet slave" class of anointed Christians are accessible to true worshippers.—Matt. 24:45-47.

Hence, even though God is not now providing the miraculous gift of knowledge, we are in no way at a loss. We have much to study as we seek the accurate knowledge that leads to life. (John 17:3) And shortly we will experience the time when "the earth will certainly be filled with the knowledge of Jehovah as the waters are covering the very sea."—Isa. 11:9.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

(2 Thess. 1:3) Well, what is faith? It is not mere expectation but is *assured* expectation. The only way to get this assurance is from a study of the Word of God. By regularly feeding upon God's Word, one's expectation regarding all of God's wonderful promises gets all the more certain. Jehovah's witnesses are keenly interested in helping all persons who wish to get more faith. To do this, they offer a free home Bible-study course of *six months*, using as an aid for such Bible discussion the book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life*. They will be using this book during the month of May in their house-to-house ministry, offering it for only 25c.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

May 18: "Serve Jehovah with Rejoicing." Page 264. Songs to Be Used: 4, 111.

May 25: "Taking Pleasure in the House of My God." Page 270. Songs to Be Used: 41, 99.

FIELD MINISTRY

"Give us more faith"—this is the request made at one time to Jesus Christ by his apostles. (Luke 17:5) But how can one get more faith and keep it "growing exceedingly"?