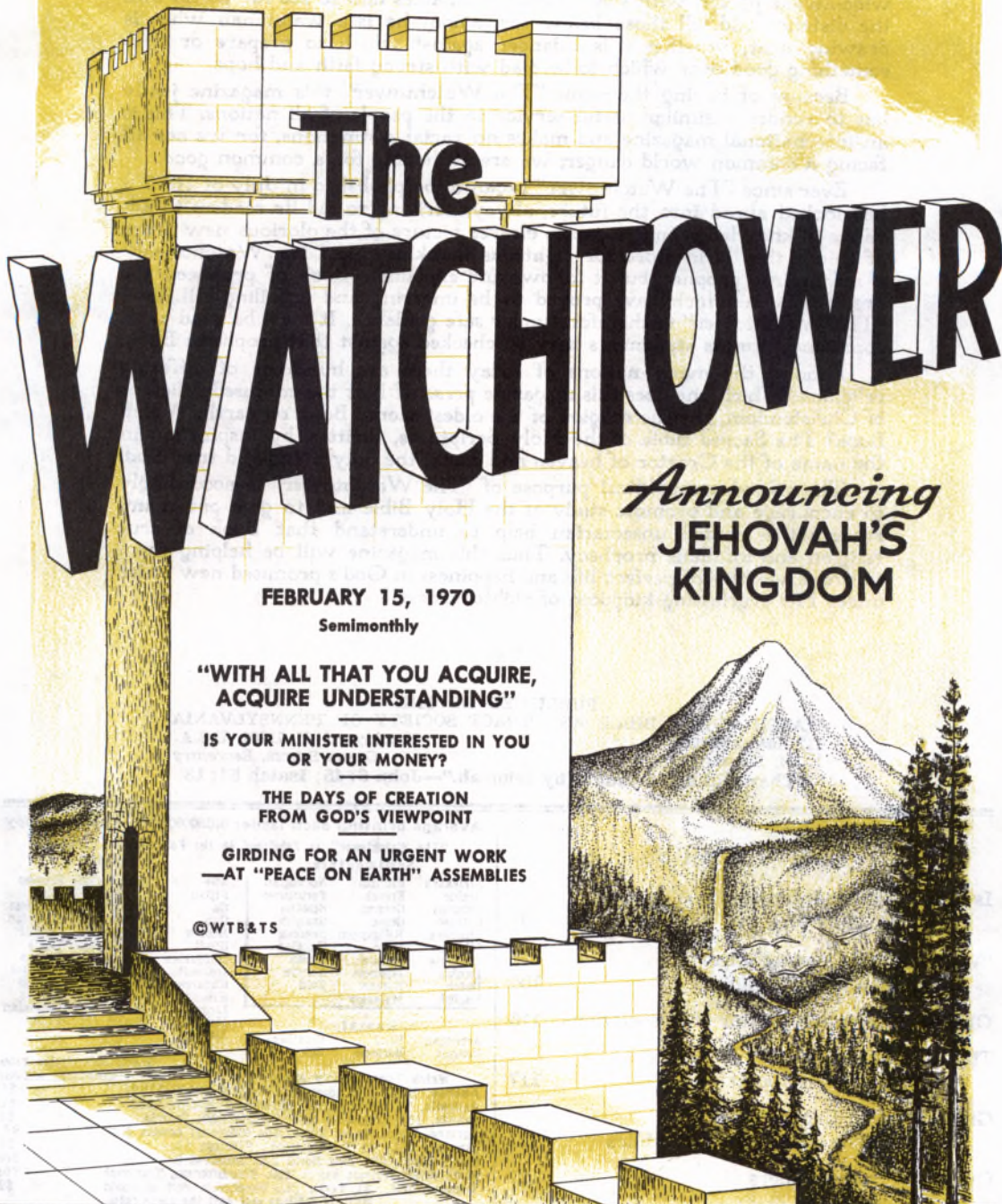




The WATCHTOWER

Announcing
**JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM**

FEBRUARY 15, 1970

Semimonthly

**"WITH ALL THAT YOU ACQUIRE,
ACQUIRE UNDERSTANDING"**

**IS YOUR MINISTER INTERESTED IN YOU
OR YOUR MONEY?**

**THE DAYS OF CREATION
FROM GOD'S VIEWPOINT**

**GIRDING FOR AN URGENT WORK
—AT "PEACE ON EARTH" ASSEMBLIES**

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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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IS YOUR MINISTER INTERESTED IN YOU OR YOUR MONEY?

IF YOU belong to a church of Christendom, does that question start you thinking? You may respond: "Of course my minister is not interested in just my money!" Yet, you at least may know of some people who have stopped attending church because they did not like the constant and varied pleas for money.

Ask yourself, 'Why do I associate with my church? Is it not to gain spiritual upbuilding, a stronger faith, Christian counsel to help me to deal with life's many problems? Yet when was it that my minister last called at my home, or sat down with me elsewhere to discuss with me and my family some of our problems and give us helpful counsel from God's Word? Was it this past month? Was it during the past year? The past five years? Has he ever done it?'

On the other hand, has your minister ever taken time to write to you or call on you personally about the matter of making contributions to the church or some church project? How often has this happened? In what is your minister really interested?

CHURCH INTEREST IN RAISING MONEY

True, some funds are necessary, but many clergymen are overtaxing their ingenuity in figuring out ways of collecting more money. *Time* magazine had this to say on the subject: "Where once they had only to pass a plate among Sunday attenders, churches nowadays raise money in ways that range from bingo to bonds. Fund raising brings up questions of taste, discretion, prudence and donor psychology that stir heated debates across the land." Some churches hire high-pressure fund raisers, motivation psychologists who work out many different ways of pressuring money out of church members. What do you think of such methods?

The vicar of All Saints Church in Luton, Bedfordshire, England, gave out £1 notes to members of his congregation, requesting that they put this money to work betting on horses or playing bingo, and then give the winnings to the church. The Catholic Church in Tunbridge Wells in Sussex, England, operated a football gambling pool that made a profit of more than £50,000 in six years. A pamphlet put out



Do these fund-raising methods reflect Bible Christianity? Are they used by your minister?



by the Parish Service Company tells churches how to double or triple Lenten offerings with Lenten self-denial folders. "The coin slots in our Lenten Folders are 'Dated' too! No haphazard giving on the part of your members." Do you think these methods reflect Bible Christianity?

Many are the churches that raise money by means of church suppers and bazaars. The book *Money and the Church* tells of one minister who calls bazaars "an honorable kind of thievery." Is it any wonder that even America's leading Protestant magazine, *The Christian Century* (July 29, 1959, p. 867), said this:

"One need not travel far in American Protestantism to find money-raising schemes that approximate the Roman Catholic Church's exploitation of games of chance, which we deplore and protest. Thousands

of Protestant Church bazaars, carnivals and 'summer fairs' are slightly more respectable than Las Vegas. The practice of wringing 'advertising' dollars from merchants, particularly from those who are not members of the churches in question, to finance church bulletins and magazines and dedication folders is also ripe for reform. Let's call it what it is: Extortion."

How do you feel in church when the collection plate is passed? How do you feel when a minister visits you to persuade you to contribute more? This is one of the things an editor of a South African magazine wanted to find out. He devoted a year to a painstaking inquiry on the subject "The Church, the People and the Gulf Between." Summing up his findings, the editor wrote:

"The Church seems to have developed a compulsive habit of appealing for funds-without-end-amen, whether they be for building churches or halls, for repairs, organs, bells, salaries, pensions, Lent, Easter, Christmas, etc. etc. . . . Now the Church seems to take pledges and appeals for granted, and sometimes as many as three

are running at the same time. . . . This preoccupation with money has also made some people take a second look at the Church, and ask themselves whether they really want to participate after all."—*Femina*, May 18, 1967, pp. 58, 61.

Is it not understandable why some are taking a second look at the churches? The Bible makes it clear that giving should not be done "under compulsion" but from a 'readiness of mind according to what one has.' (2 Cor. 9:7; 8:12) So while it is not wrong for a minister to inform his congregation of reasonable church needs, the methods used ought to be in harmony with Christian principles outlined in the Bible.

But more important, you associate with a church because you want spiritual guidance, is that not so? A church should pro-

vide spiritual upbuilding all the time. It should not be like fire insurance, which covers loss only in case of a fire, but like a provision for counsel on fire prevention. Are you getting the needed and continual counsel personally from your minister? Or do you feel you get personal attention only when additional funds are needed?

THE EARLY CHRISTIANS SET RIGHT PATTERN

When Jesus Christ sent out his apostles to preach about the kingdom of God he said: "You received free, give free." (Matt.

10:7, 8) There was no counsel on a fund-raising campaign. The Bible account states that the Christian overseers in the early congregations were to 'shep-

herd the flock of God willingly, not for love of dishonest gain, but eagerly.' (1 Pet. 5:1-4) They were to keep watch over souls. (Heb. 13:17) They strengthened the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to remain in the faith. (Acts 14:21, 22; 11:22-24) The apostle Paul taught publicly and from house to house, telling all the counsel of God; he did not covet anyone's silver or gold or take up collections for supporting himself. (Acts 20:18-25) When the congregation came together it was to build up faith, not funds; right works and not riches.—Heb. 10:23-25, 35-39.

As for the expenses of presiding ministers in the early congregation, the book *Early Church History* says: "In her days of pristine simplicity, the ministers of the church supported themselves by their own labour." To cover other expenses voluntary contributions were given. Writes historian John F. Hurst in *History of the*

Christian Church: "In every place of worship, however small, there was a box, where all worshippers deposited their offerings." Tertullian, who became a convert to Christianity about 190 C.E., wrote: "Even if there is a chest of a sort, it is not made up of money paid in entrance-fees, as if religion were a matter of contract. Every man once a month brings some modest coin—or whenever he wishes, and only if he does wish, and if he can; for nobody is compelled; it is a voluntary offering."

The Bible tells of the time when the first-century Christians in Antioch learned of a famine that was about to bring hardship on their Christian brothers in Ju-

THE NEXT ISSUE

- What Is the Future of Today's Youth?
- Bible Truth About the Dead Gives Hope.
- What Are You Doing About What You Have Learned?

dea. Of their own will they sent financial help, each one according to what he could afford, without persuasion. (Acts 11:27-30) Later when further hardship was experienced in Jerusalem, other congregations in Macedonia begged for the privilege of making a contribution to help, and those in Corinth had great readiness of mind. There was no need for any motivation strategy. The apostle Paul stressed the principle for them: "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; 8:1-24) In this we have a proper example for true worship today.

CHRISTIANITY TODAY LIKE THAT OF EARLY CHRISTIANS

Some may argue that it costs more money today to carry out the functions of a church, and if voluntary contributions do not cover expenses, then some means must be used to raise the money. But think a

moment. Bible principles do not change, do they? If God enriched the first Christians and moved their hearts to generosity, will he not also do that today among true Christians, and that without high-pressure persuasion? (2 Cor. 9:8-14) But is there a body of Christians today who follow Bible principles when it comes to money, and who work zealously to aid others spiritually?

Today there are more than 25,000 congregations of Jehovah's witnesses functioning in more than 200 countries throughout the world, and for nearly 100 years these Christian witnesses have never taken up a collection, operated a bazaar, bingo or lottery. Nor have their presiding ministers visited those associated to solicit for money. Yet the congregations provide facilities for regular meetings, Jehovah's witnesses distribute millions of Bibles and Bible-study-aid books world wide at prices even the poorest can afford, and they provide for the sending of missionaries out to all parts of the world, all to help people gain knowledge of God and how to serve him. All that, and yet no collections are ever taken.

More than ninety years ago the very second issue of this magazine stated: " 'Zion's Watch Tower' has, we believe, JEHOVAH for its backer, and while this is the case it will never *beg* nor *petition* men for support. When He who says: 'All the gold and silver of the mountains are mine,' fails to provide necessary funds, we will understand it to be time to suspend the publication." How is it possible for the Witnesses these many years to operate without 'begging or petitioning men for support'?

The presiding ministers and ministerial assistants in the congregations provide for their own financial needs as was done in the first century. Congregations are kept relatively small in size, from fifteen per-

sons up to perhaps 160 to 180. Smaller congregations can easily meet in private homes, and the larger can meet in modest halls rented or built by Jehovah's witnesses to provide seating for 40 to 200. Halls of this size can be financed with unsolicited contributions of those associated without undue burden. When a Kingdom Hall is built, much of the building work is often contributed by craftsmen and others in the congregation. All expenses are met from voluntary contributions and there is no pressure applied. In each meeting place, as with the first Christians, there is a contribution box available where those who wish may privately put in their contributions as they are able. No "money envelopes" are used, and no names are connected with the contributions. What a person gives is his own private matter.

More important, because of the modest size of the congregations, it is possible for the presiding ministers and other mature Christian ministers assisting him to give personal, individual attention to the spiritual needs of all persons associated with the congregations. In addition, Jehovah's witnesses make personal visits on all homes in the area of their congregation, encouraging also these people individually with spiritual discussion.

During the past year as many as 1,336,112 Witnesses spent more than 239 million hours in calling on other people to encourage Bible discussion. They made more than 106 million return visits on persons not Jehovah's witnesses to render spiritual encouragement. And they conducted more than one million Bible studies with individuals or family groups. Such Bible studies are usually held once each week. All this attention to the spiritual needs of others has been given by Jehovah's witnesses free of charge.

That Jehovah's witnesses follow the pattern of the early Christians in their min-

istry is acknowledged by others, as can be seen in the following statement by Elton Trueblood in *Presbyterian Life* of January 20, 1951:

"If we care about the Christian enterprise we must deal realistically with the fact that, in this particular comparison, the Christian organization enjoying the least social standing, having the shortest history, occupying the least fashionable district, and guided by the least trained ministry is going ahead of the others, not only in numbers, but also in zeal, in commitment, and in proportionate giving. . . . Small but vigorous bands of Jehovah's witnesses meet in their modest quarters called Kingdom Halls. . . . There can be no doubt that these vigorous and unrespectable sects which now flourish so mightily in our land are, in many respects, far closer to original Christianity than are those of us who represent the conventional movements of Christendom. We call ours the older tradition, but in this we may be inaccurate. Perhaps they represent what is truly old in the Christian witness. . . . We are already in decay."

WHO SHOWS INTEREST IN YOUR SPIRITUAL WELFARE?

In the beginning of this article we asked readers the question, How long has it been since you were visited by your minister for the purpose of helping you spiritually? Now we would like to ask, How long has it been since you were visited by one of Jehovah's witnesses? How often has this happened? Did the Witness ask you for money to put up a religious building or support a missionary fund? Or did he or she try to discuss the Bible with you, perhaps offering a free home Bible study? Now, who do you think has shown real interest in your spiritual welfare?

Do you think your spiritual needs are being met by your minister? The Bible shows that the Christian must be built up

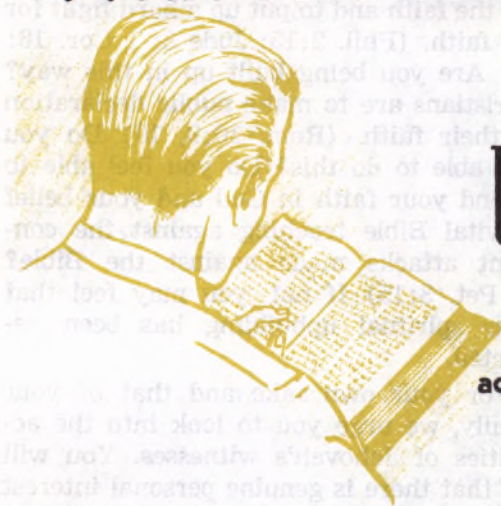
spiritually so as to be able to stand firm for the faith and to put up a hard fight for the faith. (Phil. 2:15; Jude 3; 1 Cor. 16:13) Are you being built up in this way? Christians are to make public declaration of their faith. (Rom. 10:9, 10) Do you feel able to do this? Do you feel able to defend your faith in God and your belief in vital Bible teaching against the constant attacks made against the Bible? (1 Pet. 3:15) If not, you may feel that your spiritual upbuilding has been neglected.

For your own sake and that of your family, we urge you to look into the activities of Jehovah's witnesses. You will see that there is genuine personal interest in helping others to serve God. Why not get in touch with one of Jehovah's witnesses and ask to have a free Bible study in your home, say, for six months? It will be provided without any cost to you. See for yourself if you do not grow in Bible knowledge and spiritual strength with each weekly study. Go to the meetings in the nearest Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses and see for yourself if it is not true that congregation activity is based entirely on the Bible and designed to help individuals grow spiritually.

No collections will ever be taken. But you will find that the presiding minister of the congregation and all those assisting him, yes, all of Jehovah's witnesses will be genuinely interested in you and your family. They desire to help you to gain that great happiness and contentment that come to those who practice true worship now with the hope of everlasting life in God's new system of things. Truly, Jehovah's witnesses are interested in you, not your money.



"With All That You Acquire, **ACQUIRE UNDERSTANDING"**



"Wisdom is the prime thing. Acquire wisdom; and with all that you acquire, acquire understanding."—Prov. 4:7.

TODAY, we live in a century that has witnessed a virtual explosion of knowledge. In all fields of science and learning, information accumulates at an astonishing rate. By laboratory research, by exploration on land, deep into the sea, far out into space, new data pour in faster than men can digest and evaluate them.

² In the Bible we are told: "Wisdom is the prime thing. Acquire wisdom; and with all that you acquire, acquire understanding." (Prov. 4:7) Does the research just described fulfill those words? Has it resulted in the wisdom we should pursue as "the prime thing"? Well, is it solving earth's major problems? Has it led people to healthier, happier, more secure, peaceful and productive lives? Has it helped man to get along better with his neighbor? You know the answer. Today we live in a sick, mixed-up world, in times of unprecedented frustration, in a day when the very existence of man and all

creatures on this planet is seriously threatened. And, paradoxically, much of man's modern research has contributed to this very state of affairs.—Eccl. 8:17; Job 28:4-21; Jas. 3:13-18.

³ While the majority allow their attention and time to be occupied with the knowledge this world's systems offer, a steadily increasing number of persons are looking elsewhere. They now feel a definite and urgent need for gaining a clear understanding of the Bible. They want knowledge that is solid and reliable, facts on which to base their convictions and hopes. They seek a guide to help solve the everyday problems of life, to aid in making right decisions in times of crisis. And, above all, they are interested in God's promise of everlasting life and in knowing his requirements. This information the Bible will give them, but they need to understand what they read.—Ps. 119:105, 160; John 17:3.

⁴ The Bible was meant to be understood. God offers to help us understand it. But

1. What is taking place in all fields of learning in our day?

2. (a) At Proverbs 4:7, what is "the prime thing" that we are encouraged to pursue? (b) Has the world's research resulted in the kind of wisdom spoken of there?

3. What knowledge that this world's systems do not offer are many sincere persons seeking, and what do they need besides knowledge?

4. To gain understanding of the Bible, what attitude must we show?

we need to show a right attitude, a willing spirit. At Psalm 32:8, 9, Jehovah says: "I shall make you have insight and instruct you in the way you should go. I will give advice with my eye upon you. [But] do not make yourselves like a horse or mule without understanding, whose spiritedness is to be curbed even by bridle or halter before they will come near to you." God will not cajole us into drawing near to him. We must gladly and willingly draw near by studying his Word, finding delight in doing so, and putting what we learn to work in our lives.—Prov. 2:10, 11.

⁵ Is that the way you feel in your heart? Then you can and should join with the psalmist in saying: "Instruct me, O Jehovah, in the way of your regulations, that I may observe it down to the last. Make me understand, that I may observe your law and that I may keep it with the whole heart. . . . Make my eyes pass on from seeing what is worthless; preserve me alive in your own way."—Ps. 119:33-37.

KNOWLEDGE, WISDOM AND UNDERSTANDING

⁶ Reading the Bible will bring us knowledge. Knowledge, however, is not enough. "Wisdom is the prime thing. Acquire wisdom, and with all that you acquire, acquire understanding. Highly esteem it, and it will exalt you. It will glorify you because you embrace it. To your head it will give a wreath of charm; a crown of beauty it will bestow upon you." (Prov. 4:7-9) Knowledge alone will not do this.

⁷ Knowledge means, simply, acquaintance or familiarity with facts, gained by observation and experience or by reading and study. Knowledge is basic; without it we are ignorant. But wisdom, as the book of Proverbs says, is "the prime

thing." Why? Because wisdom means the putting of knowledge to work in a way that brings good results, desirable results. It is the "prime thing" because without it our knowledge—life itself—would be of little value. By wisdom we attain the goals we aim at, the purposes we pursue.—Prov. 8:4-21, 32-36; Eccl. 7:11, 12.

⁸ Where, then, does understanding fit in? And why does the Bible say that with all our acquisition of wisdom we should acquire understanding?

⁹ Understanding means to see facts as they relate to one another. It implies discernment and insight, seeing into the whys and wherefores of a matter. With understanding we see, not just the isolated points of a matter, but the whole picture. We can, in effect, "put two and two together" and come up with the right conclusion.—Dan. 9:22, 23.

¹⁰ We might illustrate this by the use of a Bible concordance. If we look up a certain word in the concordance, say the word "faith," we will find many texts listed under the word. If we read them we gain knowledge. If we can see how they relate together, how they harmonize with and illuminate one another, how they affect our relationship to our Creator, then we have gained understanding. And if we then effectively apply these truths in our own lives and use them to aid others, we are exercising wisdom.—Prov. 15:2, 7; Eccl. 12:9, 10.

¹¹ Understanding helps us both in gaining knowledge and in exercising wisdom. Proverbs 14:6 says that "to the understanding one knowledge is an easy thing." Why is this? It is because the understanding person is able to relate new facts to previous knowledge, see where they

5. With the Bible psalmist, what request is it appropriate that we make to Jehovah?

6, 7. How does wisdom differ from knowledge, and why is wisdom "the prime thing"?

8, 9. Explain what understanding is.

10. Illustrate the meaning of understanding and of wisdom in connection with the use of a Bible concordance.

11. Why is knowledge "an easy thing" to a person who has understanding?

connect up and fit in. By his thus tying them in with such previous knowledge the new facts make a lasting impression on his mind and are remembered. And to really "know" something we must remember it, not simply hear or read it and forget it. Besides this, the understanding person sees things in sharper focus. He sees how they relate to God and his purposes and how they affect him himself. So understanding establishes knowledge, makes it more firm.

¹² Understanding likewise fortifies wisdom. That is why the proverb says, "Acquire wisdom; and with all that you acquire, acquire understanding." A person may have the knowledge and wisdom to drive an automobile. But if he understands how the automobile is put together, how the different parts work and what is the function of each, he will be a better driver, a wiser driver. So, too, with the Bible. A person may read in the Bible that he should do a certain thing. Because it is in the Bible, he accepts it as instruction from God and does it. This is the course of wisdom. But if he fortifies this wisdom with increased understanding, learning why God wants such an action performed, the purpose it serves, how it relates to God's other purposes, then his conviction and resolve to continue on in faithful performance is greatly strengthened. With understanding he can truly love and serve God with his *whole* heart, his *whole* soul and his *whole* mind.—Matt. 22:37.

AID TO BIBLE UNDERSTANDING

¹³ We have great need for increasing our understanding of the Bible today. We live in the foretold "time of the end." By

12. Explain how understanding fortifies wisdom and, therefore, why it is so important to acquire understanding.

13. (a) What did Jehovah foretell through Daniel as to understanding in this "time of the end"? (b) How can understanding of the Bible help us when we undergo persecution?

his prophet Daniel, Jehovah prophesied concerning his servants: "And as regards those having insight among the people, they will impart understanding to the many. And they will certainly be made to stumble by sword and by flame, by captivity and by plundering, for some days." "Many will cleanse themselves and whiten themselves and will be refined. And the wicked ones will certainly act wickedly, and no wicked ones at all will understand; but the ones having insight will understand." (Dan. 11:33; 12:10) Jehovah permits the enemy to attack his servants, testing them as to their integrity. Under such tests our knowledge must be clear and sharp. If our understanding and insight are strong, this will help us endure, having firm conviction, and we can come through clean, strengthened by the experience.—1 Pet. 5:8-10.

¹⁴ The governing body of the Christian congregation of Jehovah's witnesses appreciates the importance of gaining an ever clearer understanding of God's Word in these critical times. Many tests are yet ahead. The concern felt by the governing body for all of God's servants earth wide is like that expressed by the apostle Paul in his letter to the Colossians, chapter 1, verses 9-12: "[We] have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the accurate knowledge of [God's] will in all wisdom and spiritual discernment, in order to walk worthily of Jehovah to the end of fully pleasing him as you go on bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the accurate knowledge of God, being made powerful with all power to the extent of his glorious might so as to endure fully and be long-suffering with joy, thanking the Father who rendered you suitable for your

14. (a) What concern expressed by the apostle Paul in his letter to the Colossians does the Christian governing body feel today? (b) In harmony with this, what new publication has been prepared?



G. Suiter releases "Aid" book at Atlanta. Instead of taking a critical view of the Bible as many reference works do, "Aid" accepts the Bible as the main authority

participation in the inheritance of the holy ones in the light." In harmony with such prayer and to help sincere persons to gain increased spiritual discernment and be made powerful so as to endure fully with joy, the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society has prepared a new publication entitled "Aid to Bible Understanding."

¹⁵ The first volume of this publication was released on July 9, 1969, at the "Peace on Earth" International Assembly of Jehovah's Witnesses, which was then in session in New York, Buffalo and Atlanta. When completed, the entire work will contain thousands of articles arranged alphabetically beginning with "Aaron" and continuing on through to "Zuzim." It will contribute toward greater understanding of all the many features that go to make up the Bible account. These include *people* of many races and nations: what they said and did, their customs, emotions and their right or wrong worship;

15. (a) When the entire work is completed, what features of the Bible account will it include in its coverage? (b) Why is it beneficial for us to study such matters?

places: including lands, cities and villages, mountains, rivers and torrent valleys, with their native trees and plants, birds and animals; *notable events:* the rise and fall of empires and kingdoms, political conspiracies and oppressions, major battles; and, most important, the *record of God's dealings with men:* his mercy and miraculous saving acts, his judgments, promises and prophecies—all these things and many more have their place in the Bible record. They all

have significance, and the more we know about them the clearer God's overall purpose can become to us.—Ps. 78:1-4; Rom. 15:4.

¹⁶ Recognizing the value of a reference work that would provide a comprehensive presentation of such information, five years ago the Watch Tower Society began the preparation of such a publication. Some 250 mature Christians in over 90 countries were invited to contribute to the research involved. Within the course of a year the material they gathered was sent to the headquarters of the Society. A special staff then began the checking of this material and doing much additional research. The facilities of the Watch Tower Society's own specialized libraries, containing thousands of volumes, as well as the facilities of several large libraries of New York city were used. Some forty different translations of the Bible, in many different languages, were consulted and are cited in this work. The foreign-

16, 17. How extensive has been the research involved in the preparation of *Aid to Bible Understanding*, and how many years has it taken?

language departments of the Society helped with the research in non-English publications. In this way the best scholarship, including the results of the most recent research, could be brought to bear on each subject.

¹⁷ The work involved in the preparation of *Aid to Bible Understanding* has been immense. Five years later there is still much to do. However, the Watch Tower Society was happy to be able to present to the conventioners the first volume of 544 pages, of the size of the *Watchtower* magazine, covering subjects under the letters A, B, C, D and most of E, as far as the subject "Exodus."

THE NEED FOR SUCH AN AID

¹⁸ In view of the fact that there are many reference works available today in the form of Bible commentaries and dictionaries and other encyclopedic works, one may wonder why such a time-consuming project was undertaken. Though such available reference works do contain much that is helpful and useful, they also contain much that is unreliable, inaccurate or even false. In many Bible dictionaries and reference works there is a steady trend toward modernism and higher criticism of the Bible. It is viewed as merely the work of men, not an inspired document. Therefore the conclusions of historians and archaeologists are often accepted as equal to or greater in authority than the Bible. Older works generally support the Bible's authority to a greater degree. But such older works are often not available to the average Bible student. Furthermore, even such older commentaries and dictionaries often proceed on the assumption of the reliability of religious traditions and doctrines that either are not mentioned in the Bible or are not

supported by it. So a good portion of the material in these publications is colored by sectarian doctrines and religious creeds. This greatly reduces their value and benefit to one who is a minister of God.

¹⁹ There is, therefore, great need for care and caution in using all such reference works, older or more recent. While claiming to contribute toward a better understanding of God's Word, they either openly or subtly deny its accuracy and thereby undermine faith in it. An example of open denial is found in Volume 1 of *The Interpreter's Bible*, page 501. Commenting on chapter 3 of Genesis, it states: "Man was forbidden on pain of death to eat of [the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil], the reason for the prohibition being God's fear that man, acquiring knowledge of good and evil, might become like him and, approaching too near his throne, might endanger his supremacy. But the serpent, a demon hostile to God, told the truth. He was thus no subtle tempter but, in intention, at least, a benefactor of the human race." Now, contrast this statement with that of the apostle Paul, who, in expressing his concern for the Christians in Corinth, said: "I am afraid that somehow, as the serpent seduced Eve by its cunning, your minds might be corrupted away from the sincerity and the chastity that are due the Christ." (2 Cor. 11:3) Jesus called the one symbolized by the serpent, namely, Satan the Devil, a "liar and the father of the lie," as well as a "manslayer." (John 8:44) He did not call him a "benefactor of the human race."—Compare 1 John 4:1.

²⁰ Or, consider the recent book *The Bi-*

18. What characteristics of many Bible dictionaries and reference works diminish their value to a teacher of God's Word?

19. (a) Give an example of open denial of the truthfulness of the Bible by a modern-day Bible reference work. (b) In contrast, what viewpoint did the apostle Paul and Jesus Christ express concerning this incident related in the Bible?

20. (a) What impression as to the trustworthiness of details in the Bible does the book *The Bible as History* give? (b) Is that viewpoint reasonable?

ble as History (by Werner Keller). In the introduction (page xxi), the author says of the Bible, "The events themselves are historical facts and have been recorded with an accuracy that is nothing less than startling. . . ." This sounds like a fine commendation of the Bible. Yet, farther along in the book (pages 167, 168, British ed.; page 161, Revised American ed.), when discussing Abraham's time, the book states: "We must eliminate the camel from our conception of life in the ancient world of the Orient. References to [camels] in the book of Genesis must have crept in at a later date. The attractive scene, for example, where we meet Rebecca for the first time in her native city of Nahor must make do with a change of stage props. The 'camels' belonging to her future father-in-law, Abraham, which she watered at the well were donkeys." We may be sure, however, that Moses, who wrote the Genesis account, and God, who inspired him, knew the difference between a camel and a donkey!

²¹ The tendency in many such reference works is to discredit any intervention or direction of matters by God. An effort is made to attribute everything to purely human sources or causes. Thus, under the subject of the Temple, *Harper's Bible Dictionary*, page 732, says: "Solomon's Temple was built by Phoenician craftsmen from the model of a Phoenician-Canaanite . . . chapel . . . though Egyptian and other Near Eastern influences also left impacts on its design." Yet the Bible specifically says that David gave to "Solomon his son the architectural plan of the porch and of its houses and its storerooms and its roof chambers and its dark inner rooms and the house of the propitiatory cover; even the architectural plan of everything

that had come to be with him by inspiration."—1 Chron. 28:11, 12.

'HOLDING FAST TO WHAT IS FINE'

²² Long ago, the apostle Paul wrote: "Now we received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is from God, that we might know the things that have been kindly given us by God. These things we also speak, not with words taught by human wisdom, but with those taught by the spirit, as we combine spiritual matters with spiritual words. But a physical man does not receive the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot get to know them, because they are examined spiritually." (1 Cor. 2:12-14) Despite their much study and learning, men who take a fleshly viewpoint toward God's Word are unable to grasp its meaning and often pervert it. As the apostle put it, they do not perceive "either the things they are saying or the things about which they are making strong assertions." (1 Tim. 1:7) When considering the "strong assertions" of men whom this world recognizes as "authorities" we should not be overawed or pressured into accepting their unfounded ideas and theories. The editing staff of *Aid to Bible Understanding* has been careful to "make sure of all things; hold fast to what is fine." (1 Thess. 5:21) They have endeavored to sift out the wheat from the chaff as regards the information to be found in reference works, encyclopedias and dictionaries.

²³ In this regard, *Aid to Bible Understanding* differs from all other publications of a similar nature, for it consistently accepts the Bible as the principal

22. Why is it that these worldly men, though having much learning, often fail to grasp the meaning of God's Word?

23, 24. (a) In what basic way does *Aid to Bible Understanding* differ from all other similar publications? (b) How has research into early languages been used beneficially in this publication, but into what pitfall do some lexicographers fall?

21. Why do such reference works often conflict with what the Bible says? Illustrate.

authority and is guided by it. It is true that knowledge of the original languages of the Bible—Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek—has been greatly increased by the research of lexicographers. Their research has been considered and often used in this new publication. There are other Semitic languages besides Hebrew, such as Arabic and also the ancient Akkadian language (the language of the Assyrians and Babylonians). Such languages are called “cognate” languages with Hebrew because they proceed from the same root or stock. For that reason a comparison of certain Hebrew words of uncertain meaning with similar words in Arabic or Akkadian may often give a clue as to their meaning. This is true of many of the names of animals, birds and plants mentioned in the Bible.

²⁴ However, lexicographers at times carry this too far. They even represent certain Hebrew religious terms as being drawn from the language of the pagan Assyrians and Babylonians. For example, the expression ‘Almighty God’ comes from the Hebrew *’El Shad-da’y*. Some translators and lexicographers, however, try to derive this from the Akkadian word *shadu* meaning “mountain.” So they would render *’El Shad-da’y* as the “Mountain God,” instead of Almighty God. The wrongness of such imaginative conjecture is made clear in *Aid to Bible Understanding* under the article “Almighty God.”

²⁵ Archaeological excavations in all Bible lands—Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, and many others—have contributed helpful information. Literally hundreds of thousands of clay tablets have been found with writing in cuneiform. The word “cuneiform” means “wedge-shaped” and describes the form of the letters impressed into soft clay. Papy-

rus scrolls from Egypt have also been found in considerable number. Besides this, other interesting artifacts—household items, tools, warfare equipment—have been unearthed which give some idea of the way life was during the time the Bible was being written.

²⁶ Such information has also been considered in preparing *Aid to Bible Understanding*. There is an eight-and-a-half-page article on “Archaeology” itself. Again, however, the editing staff was careful to avoid the error many reference works make of giving exaggerated importance to such archaeological finds. In reality, archaeologists are much like detectives who try to assemble a case from the evidence they find. While their findings may seem very impressive—huge monuments, temples and tombs, ancient writings thousands of years old, some of them engraved in stone—yet we should remember that grave errors are committed in modern times when detectives try to go simply by circumstantial evidence without reliable witnesses to give the true meaning to that evidence. How much greater is the possibility for error when dealing with evidence that is thousands of years old. We should realize that many of the archaeologists’ conclusions are based on conjecture, even imagination. It is therefore unwise to try to build understanding, conviction and faith on an archaeological foundation. The apostle Paul says: “We are walking by faith, not by sight,” and our faith is based on God’s Word and our own experience in our relationship with God and his people.—2 Cor. 5:7.

²⁷ To illustrate how uncertain many of the archaeologists’ interpretations of their

26. In preparing *Aid to Bible Understanding*, why did the editing staff use caution as to the conclusions set forth by archaeologists?

27. (a) Illustrate the uncertainty of archaeologists’ interpretations of their findings. (b) Did this change of viewpoint affect the reliability of what the Bible says?

25. What helpful information has archaeology made available?

findings are, we may take the case of Ezion-geber down by the Gulf of Aqabah. During excavations there from 1937-1940 a prominent archaeologist claimed to have found the ruins of a huge copper-smelting industry which he described as the 'Pittsburgh of old Palestine' in King Solomon's time. (*The Other Side of the Jordan*, 1945, Nelson Glueck, pages 91-98) For over twenty years this interpretation of the findings at Ezion-geber was generally accepted and published in many reference works. Then in 1965, in the face of more evidence, the archaeologist acknowledged that his interpretation was incorrect. The building he thought to be the center of a copper-smelting complex was now thought to be merely a "storehouse-granary structure." (*The Biblical Archaeologist*, Vol. XXVIII, September 1965) Actually, the Bible itself makes no mention whatsoever of a copper industry at Ezion-geber. It describes only the casting of copper items at a site in the Jordan Valley, north of the Dead Sea.—1 Ki. 7:45, 46.

²⁸ By keeping a balanced approach to matters, the editing staff of *Aid to Bible Understanding* has endeavored to "keep holding to the pattern of healthful words," staying true to the Bible facts while taking into account other sources of information. (2 Tim. 1:13) We believe that you will find the information presented to be both factual and thought-provoking. We can be happy, indeed, to have such an aid that is reliable and trustworthy, one that will build up our faith and confidence in God's Word, not tear it down.

BENEFICIAL USE OF THE NEW BOOK

²⁹ How will this volume help you in gaining greater understanding of God's

Word? It will be especially valuable in home Bible reading and study. Whenever you come across a term in the Bible that is unfamiliar, or about which you are not fully informed, you will find it very profitable to look it up in this publication. With very few exceptions, the subjects contained are words and expressions found in the Bible itself. In the complete work, we will endeavor to consider every person, place, plant and creature mentioned in the Bible. To save space and also to give the reader a greater wealth of information, some closely related subjects are grouped together under a general heading, such as "Arms, Armor"; "Attitudes and Gestures"; and "Dress."

³⁰ Consider some examples of the benefits of using this publication. Likely you have read the book of Acts. But did you realize that the writer of Acts (Luke) either refers directly or alludes to some 109 different geographical regions and places? Do you know where those 109 areas and sites are? Think how much greater your appreciation of the ministry of Peter, Paul and other faithful witnesses of that time can be if you learn something about each of these places and understand their relationship to one another. In some of them congregations were formed, and Paul wrote letters to several of these congregations. If we understand something of the situation and historical background of each place, we can appreciate better why certain statements or expressions appear in those letters.

³¹ The same is true of geographical references in the Hebrew Scriptures. We may read, for example, at Isaiah 35:1, 2 that the desert plain is to blossom as the saffron and that 'the glory of Lebanon and

28. What is the result of the approach to matters taken by *Aid to Bible Understanding*?

29. (a) How can this book be used to gain greater understanding of the Bible? (b) What should usually guide one in selecting the subject under which to look for information in the book?

30. How can use of the *Aid* book enlarge one's understanding of the Bible book of Acts?

31, 32. Using material from the *Aid* book, explain the significance of the reference to "Carmel" at Isaiah 35:1, 2.

the splendor of Carmel and Sharon will be given it.' Only if we know something of the fertility of Lebanon, Carmel and Sharon can we appreciate the significance of this prophecy. Concerning Mount Carmel, we read in our new publication:

³² "Its slopes, washed by the sea winds, still contain fruit orchards, olive groves and vines, and in the spring are carpeted with a magnificent display of flowers. The Shulamite maiden's lover in the Song of Solomon (7:5) likened her head to Carmel, the simile referring either to the luxuriance of her hair or to the way in which her shapely head rose majestically upon her neck. The majestic appearance of Carmel, particularly the headland that sweeps dramatically upward from the coast, . . . was also used [at Jeremiah 46:18] to represent the imposing figure of Nebuchadnezzar advancing to the conquest of Egypt."

³³ In the articles dealing with persons, *Aid to Bible Understanding* draws your attention to the individual's relationship or association with other prominent Bible personages. It highlights particular qualities and attitudes displayed. It endeavors to underscore any issues involved, and to bring to bear details of time, place and circumstance that throw light on the actions, speech or attitude of the individual—points that might otherwise pass unnoticed.

³⁴ Many questions have been written in to the Watch Tower Society on the subject of chronology. In *Aid to Bible Understanding* you will find twenty-seven pages on this subject covering, not only Bible chronology, but also the chronologies of Egypt, Assyria, Babylon and Persia. Much of the information published in recent

Watchtower articles was drawn from this source.

³⁵ You may know that Bible texts indicate that the period from Israel's entry into Canaan to the beginning of Saul's reign was 356 years. Yet in reading the book of Judges, if we add up the years there listed for the various oppressions and judgeships we find they total 410 years. How can this be explained? In addition to an explanation of this matter, a helpful chart is included showing one of the ways in which these figures may be harmonized. Back in 1946 the Society published the book "*Equipped for Every Good Work*," with a chart of the kings of Judah and Israel. Since then much study and research has been done and in *Aid to Bible Understanding* you will find a new chart covering eight pages of the "Chronology" article.

³⁶ You will also enjoy using the chart of the Hebrew calendar with each of the months listed, along with the festivals and celebrations, the weather conditions, the crops, and other features of each month. When you read in the Bible of an event taking place in the month of Sivan you can remember the festival of Pentecost on Sivan 6 and think of the approach of summer, the occasional blowing of hot sirocco winds, the time when the wheat harvest begins in low-lying areas, when the early figs and the almonds ripen, when honey is gathered in the Jordan Valley and oleanders are blossoming. When you read of the autumn month of Bul you can think of the rainy weather, the farmers sowing their wheat and barley, the shepherds bringing their flocks back in from the fields for the winter.

³⁷ Many words are used in the Bible in both a literal and a figurative sense. This

33. What helpful information does the new book give as to persons mentioned in the Bible?

34, 35. (a) How extensive is the book's coverage of chronology? (b) What chronology charts are included?

36. From the chart of the Hebrew calendar in the *Aid* book, what can one learn about (a) the month Sivan? (b) the month Bul?

37. How is the figurative use of words treated in the book?

is true of parts of the body (such as the eye, the ear, the feet) and also of different animals, birds and plants. The figurative usage is often more important to understanding than the literal meaning, as in the prophetic symbolisms of Daniel and Revelation. To aid understanding, our new publication shows the sense of the figurative expressions. It does this by a study of the context, related texts and the existing circumstances. Under the heading "Beasts, Symbolic" a handy chart is given of various creatures, showing what characteristic or quality each is used to represent and how they are employed as symbolisms, both of desirable things and of that which is bad and undesirable. —Gen. 49:14; Luke 13:32.

³⁸ In *Aid to Bible Understanding* you will find satisfactory explanations for many so-called contradictions, which are only superficially so. This does not mean that the publication tries to resolve all problems or clarify every detail in the entire Bible record. There are many points that cannot presently be resolved with certainty. This is so for the simple reason that the Bible does not provide detailed information on the subject or because reliable facts are not available from secular sources. Where this is the case it is frankly acknowledged.

³⁹ Back in the period when the Bible writers were being used to set down the Scriptures, they were dealing with facts — persons, places, events and dates — that were doubtless generally well known to those then living. Many of the persons who read or heard the Scriptures back then had seen, perhaps lived in or traveled through many of the very places men-

tioned. They understood the customs of the time, the forms of speech, the methods of counting time, the cooking utensils, the weights and measurements, the business methods, the court trials, and the thousand and one other items and practices of daily life in those lands involved in the Bible record.

⁴⁰ Today some of these things may remain somewhat obscure for us. We may find it difficult to understand certain geographical points, perhaps certain boundaries of the tribal inheritances. Or, some genealogical information may not be clear to us. For example, *Aid to Bible Understanding* lists twenty-six individuals under the name "Azariah." Were some of these twenty-six identical? Perhaps so. However, we should have the assurance that the points that are really vital to our being able to carry out Jehovah's will are amply clear for our needs—if we put forth the proper effort to gain understanding. The other points will also become clear in God's due time. Some points may wait for the return of God's servants of the ancient past by means of a resurrection.

⁴¹ All of us who read English should want to make full use of this Bible-study help, recognizing it as a provision from Jehovah God. How does it fit in with our other publications? We will continue to find our principal channel of Bible instruction in the *Watchtower* magazine. Due to its objective viewpoint, *Aid to Bible Understanding* may show the fulfillment of prophecy in ancient times but generally will not go into the modern fulfillment, as do many of our other publications. It may aid the reader to see principles involved in a certain account or in a Bible personage's life. But it is generally left up to the reader to make the

38. What help is offered with so-called contradictions, but why is it not possible to resolve all of them with certainty?

39, 40. (a) Why are some points that were clear to persons living at the time the Bible was written obscure to us today? (b) Until when may we have to wait for some of these details to be cleared up for us?

41. (a) How should we view this new Bible-study help? (b) As to prophecy and principles, what does *Aid to Bible Understanding* include, and what does it generally not cover, and why?

application of those to his present-day circumstances. So *Aid to Bible Understanding* replaces none of our present publications. Rather, it complements them all and can make our enjoyment and the benefit derived from any of the publications that much richer.

BENEFITS TO PARENTS AND YOUTHS

⁴² *Aid to Bible Understanding* can be of great use in the home. Today parents are faced with a difficult task indeed, that of bringing up their children in a world where corruption has gone to seed. Television and other things compete with Bible study. Jehovah God's Word tells us that we should be "babes as to badness; yet become full-grown in powers of understanding." (1 Cor. 14:20) There is so much to fill our minds with the badness of this present system. *Aid to Bible Understanding* will help us to grow up in our powers of understanding as we get a sharper, clearer picture of what is involved in each account and learn more of the way life was in ancient times. Young people should be helped to realize that in their youthful years—

42. (a) How can our new book help family members to become "full-grown in powers of understanding"? (b) What golden opportunity should parents help their children to appreciate?

before they have to take on a full weight of responsibility—they have an excellent opportunity to do much reading and studying. Parents should help their children to appreciate this golden opportunity while it is available. The new book will help.—Eccl. 12:1.

⁴³ What are your children learning at school? Have you taken time to find out? Many times material that is included in

their school textbooks openly contradicts the Bible or subtly downgrades it, misrepresenting the facts. *Aid to Bible Understanding* will help correct many of these points in the child's mind. It does not matter what age the children are; there is much from which they can benefit. Why, the very subject "Alphabet" is considered in the new book. And how many children in school know that the word "alphabet" itself can be traced back to the first two Hebrew letters: 'A'leph, Behth?

⁴⁴ Young folks in school have many homework assignments.

Often these are on some subject where Bible material can be worked in—in classes such as botany, biology, or

43. (a) Why is it important for parents to take time to find out what their children are being taught in school? (b) In what way can the *Aid* book be used to overcome problems that arise?

44. How can young folks in school use material from the *Aid* book for classes where plants, animals and the human body are studied?



Conventioners at Vancouver show delight with the "Aid" book's wealth of information. It has 27 pages on chronology alone

history. Why not encourage your children, help them, to look up points in the *Aid* book? Perhaps they have to write a report on some animal, on parts of the body, on foods. Why not include something from the Bible, which deals with so many animals, including the antelope, ape, ass, badger, bat, bear, boar, camel, dog, and dozens of others? And virtually every part of the human body is considered in some part of the Bible.

⁴⁵ So, too, with history. The Bible actually contains more genuine history than any other ancient document, more genuine and reliable history than any modern work. It covers a longer period of time, yet its application and value are timeless. Generally schoolchildren learn the history of their native land; they often memorize the names of the rulers or presidents of their country. Why should not Christian children learn the far more important history of the events involving God's servants in Egypt, Canaan, Arabia, Assyria, Babylon, and other lands? Why should they not learn the names of the kings of Judah and Israel? Which information is the more important, the more valuable? Schoolchildren learn of certain men, such as Washington of the United States, Benito Juárez of Mexico, or others, who are given the title of "father of the country." Yet such were not the literal fathers of all those living in their land. Abraham, on the other hand, was the father of all the nation of Israel, as well as of the Ishmaelites and of a number of Arabian tribes. He and other faithful men who served God in ancient times will one day be resurrected and many no doubt will serve in princely positions as earthly representatives of God's heavenly kingdom. There is every reason to be keenly in-

terested in them and their history.—Ps. 45:16.

⁴⁶ Since the Bible deals with all facets of human life and all manner of subjects relating to our earth and its contents, there is no end to the possibilities for using such material. By working such points in his presentation, the schoolchild not only will be helping to increase Bible knowledge for others but also will remember for long the points he uses. He can thus have a share in defending the truth of God's Word. If the teacher questions some statements made orally or in written form, the student can take the *Aid* book along and show that he has an up-to-date and reliable source of information. Perhaps the teacher will be interested in further examining the book.

INCREASING

YOUR KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

⁴⁷ And since the Bible holds out hope of living forever on a paradise earth under righteous conditions, why should not we all, young and old, learn all we can about it now—its lands, rivers, hills, flowers, animals and birds? (1 Ki. 4:33; Matt. 6:26, 28) True, the Watch Tower Society does not encourage spending time at worldly colleges or universities, the so-called "schools of higher learning." But that does not mean that we are to be narrow in our knowledge. We have every reason to desire a broad knowledge, embracing many subjects. But we want it to be on things that have true value, that will enhance our appreciation of God's Word. As Paul prayed, so we pray "that your love may abound yet more and more with accurate knowledge and full discernment; that you may make sure of the

45. Why is it truly beneficial for Christian youths to learn about the events and persons of Bible history?

46. What may result from the use of material from the *Aid* book in school discussions?

47. For what reasons should we be interested in acquiring a broad knowledge of the places, plants and creatures referred to in the Bible?

more important things." (Phil. 1:9, 10) This is the course of wisdom and "wisdom is the prime thing." Therefore "acquire wisdom; and with all that you acquire, acquire understanding." Our lives will be fuller and richer if we do this. Our new book will help us.

⁴⁸ We do not know how many years remain for this present system of things, but time is definitely running out. May we all make wise use of the remaining time, concentrating on increasing our understanding of the upbuilding things of God's Word. Many non-English-reading Christians around the world would be delighted to have this new book in their language. However, material from it will be used in the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines, as some already has been used, and so all of God's servants everywhere will benefit from this new aid.

⁴⁹ It is the Society's hope to complete the preparation of this work within the

48. How can our use of the *Aid* book help us to make good use of the years that remain for the present system of things?

49. Why was a portion of *Aid to Bible Understanding* published before the entire work was complete?

next year or so. If this can be done, then we will publish the complete work in one volume. But rather than hold this valuable material in the present volume until the complete work is ready, the Society felt it better to publish this much now so that you can begin to make use of it. There is such an abundance of material that you will have only begun to assimilate it by the time the complete work is presented.

⁵⁰ The Bible is the most absorbing and interesting book on earth, the most profitable to read and study. *Aid to Bible Understanding* has been designed with the aim of increasing, not only Bible knowledge and understanding, but also a heart appreciation of Jehovah, the Creator and Almighty God, and to bring praise to his name in the minds and on the lips of all who use the book. It is our earnest prayer that it may serve to help hundreds of thousands of persons to open their hearts more widely toward Jehovah God in full devotion to him.—1 Chron. 29:10-13.

50. Besides increasing our Bible knowledge and understanding, what else has this book been designed to accomplish?

Obeying God in the Matter of Associations

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES know that "bad associations spoil useful habits." (1 Cor. 15:33) The experience of this young man who was not a Witness demonstrates the value of heeding this principle:

"There was a girl that I liked very much, for I knew her very well in school before she became one of Jehovah's witnesses. When she began studying the Bible with Jehovah's witnesses, she told me that she could not go out with worldly boys, neither could they come to her home to see her. Despite her studying the Bible regularly and even getting baptized, I was determined to try to break her integrity to God. All this failed. I even began to lie to her and try to fool her that I too liked the Bible's truth. Yes, I went to various meetings at the Kingdom

Hall. I also went out in the preaching work even in the snow. I thought that I had her now because I was doing these things.

"I would call or write to her almost every day because I worked out of town. I would send her gifts and beg her to keep them, but she would never keep them. Then I said to myself that there must be something about her new religion because I used to have my way with every girl except this one. So I began to ask Bible questions, and the more I asked the more I enjoyed the answers. I began to study the Bible in earnest and soon I dedicated my life to Jehovah God. Yes, I am now one of Jehovah's witnesses and this faithful young lady is my wife. How thankful and happy I am that she obeyed God's principles so faithfully."



THE DAYS OF CREATION

from God's Viewpoint

GOD'S viewpoint! How far that towers above man's viewpoint! God is infinite, without limitations. We are finite, very much limited. Well does Jehovah God say: "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."—Isa. 55:9.

No wonder the psalmist David asked: "When I see your heavens, the works of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have prepared, what is mortal man that you keep him in mind?" Fittingly the prophet Isaiah exclaimed: "Look! The nations are as a drop from a bucket; and as the film of dust on the scales they have been accounted. Look! He lifts the islands themselves as mere fine dust."—Ps. 8:3, 4; Isa. 40:15.

Unfathomable as is the greatness of Jehovah God, so also is his existence unfathomable. He has always existed. As "the King of eternity" he is God "from time indefinite to time indefinite." Not without good reason does the prophet Daniel describe Jehovah God as "the Ancient of Days."—1 Tim. 1:17; Ps. 90:2; Dan. 7:9.

"DAY" IN THE SCRIPTURES

Clearly this ever-living Creator, Jehovah God, would view time differently from the way we mere mortals do, with our lifespan of seventy or eighty years. Does not a young child view time differently from the way a person well along in years views it? To a child twelve months might seem

to be a very long time, but to an elderly person the years just seem to fly by. How much differently, then, must the "Ancient of Days" view time from the way we mortals do! Obviously, when Jehovah in his Word speaks of a "day" or "days," we should not conclude that he always means days of twenty-four hours. He may be referring to such and he may not.

Thus we find that the Hebrew word for "day," *yohm*, is used in a variety of ways in the Bible. In the very account of creation we have "day" used to refer to three different periods of time. "Day" is used to refer to the daylight hours, as when we read: "God began calling the light *Day*, but the darkness he called Night." It is used to refer to both day and night, as when we read: "There came to be evening and there came to be morning, a first *day*." And "day" is also used to refer to the entire time period involved in creation of the heavens and the earth: "This is a history of the heavens and the earth in the time of their being created, in the *day* that Jehovah God made earth and heaven."—Gen. 1:5; 2:4.

Then again, on more than one occasion Jehovah God used a day to represent a year. This he did in connection with the Israelites in the wilderness and with his prophet Ezekiel. His Word says: "A day for a year, a day for a year, you will answer for your errors." "A day for a year, a day for a year, is what I have given you." (Num. 14:34; Ezek. 4:6) Likewise in re-

gard to Daniel's prophecy that foretold the coming of the Messiah at the end of sixty-nine "weeks." The Messiah came, not at the end of sixty-nine literal weeks, or 483 days, but at the end of 483 years. (See *The Watchtower*, 1966, p. 379.)

Not only one year, but even a thousand years are at times represented as one day in God's Word. As the prophet Moses mused: "For a thousand years are in your eyes but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch during the night." The apostle Peter expresses it even stronger: "Let this one fact not be escaping your notice, beloved ones, that one day [Greek, *heme-ra*] is with Jehovah as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day."—Ps. 90:4; 2 Pet. 3:8.

Yes, in the Christian Greek Scriptures "day" is also used to refer to other periods of time, not just to twenty-four hours. For example, Jesus on one occasion said: "Abraham your father rejoiced greatly in the prospect of seeing my day, and he saw it and rejoiced." Likewise we read of such expressions by his followers as "Christ's day," "Jehovah's day," and "the great day of God the Almighty." Surely none of these are meant to be limited to just twenty-four hours. (John 8:56; Phil. 2:16; 1 Thess. 5:2; Rev. 16:14) The foregoing makes it clear that a "day" from God's viewpoint is not necessarily limited to twenty-four hours.

TWENTY-FOUR HOURS IN LENGTH?

However, many in Christendom, in particular the so-called Fundamentalists, insist that the days of creation mentioned in Genesis, chapter one, were just twenty-four hours long. Of course, since Jehovah God, the Creator, is all-wise as well as all-powerful, he could well have created all things mentioned in the account of creation in six twenty-four-hour days. But from such evidence as that found in the

rocks of the earth and by astronomers' telescopes, it does not seem that he did so.

Concerning these days of creation *A Religious Encyclopædia* by Schaff says: "The days of creation were creative days, stages in the process, but not days of twenty-four hours." Similarly Delitzsch says in his *New Commentary on Genesis*: "Days of God are intended, with Him a thousand years are but as a day when that is past, Ps. 90:4 . . . The days of creation are, according to the meaning of Holy Scripture itself, not days of four and twenty hours, but aeons . . . For this earthly and human measurement of time cannot apply to the first three days."

Some do not even care to consider seriously the length of the days of creation. Typical of such are the editors of *Harper's Bible Dictionary*, who state: "It is futile and unnecessary to try to reconcile the Genesis Creation account with modern science." And *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* (1962) speaks of the creation account as mythological.

Jesus Christ, however, credited the Genesis account with being factual, for he quoted that Genesis account as authoritative, saying: "Did you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and his mother and will stick to his wife, and the two will be one flesh'?" The apostle Paul was of the same mind, for he said that God "made out of one man every nation of men" and that "Adam was formed first, then Eve." So it is to our interest, and not at all futile, to concern ourselves with just how long the days of creation were.—Matt. 19:4, 5; Acts 17:26; 1 Tim. 2:13.

But before considering the length of these days of creation it seems well to clear up a common misunderstanding. That misunderstanding is that the earth itself

was created during the six "days" of creation. The Bible record indicates that the universe, the starry heavens, as well as this planet earth, were created before the first of earth's creative days began.

Thus Genesis 1:1 tells of the creation of the starry heavens as well as this planet earth, and says: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." When this "beginning" took place, the Bible does not say. It is not until later in the Bible that we read of what God created on the first "day." The six creative "days," therefore, involve the creative acts of God in preparing the already-existing earth for human habitation, and not the creation of the earth itself. There is nothing in the Genesis account, then, to contradict the scientific conclusions of modern scientists that the material universe, including the earth, may be many thousands of millions of years old.

Then, how are we to understand the words of the Fourth Commandment, about God making the heavens and the earth during six days? (Ex. 20:11) It helps us when we understand that, just as Bible writers used the term "day" in more than one sense, so they also used the terms "heavens" and "earth" in more than one sense. Thus at times the atmosphere in which the birds fly is referred to as "the heavens." (Jer. 4:25) This atmospheric expanse or "heavens" was made on the second "day" of the creative week. Also, it was not until the third "day" that dry land appeared. So it can be said that the earth, meaning the dry land, also was made during the creative week, but this not meaning that the earth, the globe or planet itself, was created then.—Gen. 1:6-10, 13.

LENGTH OF THE CREATIVE DAYS

Just how long, then, were these "days" of creation? The Bible gives us a clue as

to the length of the seventh day. Since these "days" were all part of one 'week,' it would be reasonable to conclude that all these "days" were of the same length.

As regards the length of the seventh day it is indeed of interest that the Bible says nothing about 'an evening and a morning,' a beginning and an end to the seventh day as in the case of the other six days. This is a meaningful omission. The record simply states: "God proceeded to bless the seventh day and make it sacred, because on it he has been resting from all his work."—Gen. 2:3.

The only logical conclusion that we can reach is that the seventh day has continued right on. Does the Bible support this conclusion? Yes, it most certainly does, for it speaks of Jehovah God as still resting thousands of years after creation. Thus at Psalm 95:8-11, we read that Jehovah said to the Israelites in the wilderness that they would not enter into his rest because of the hardness of their hearts. This shows that God had been resting from works of the sort described in Genesis chapters one and two from the creation of Eve to that time, more than 2,500 years.*

The psalmist David, some 400 years later, at Psalm 95:8-11 speaks of entering into God's rest in his day. And then more than a thousand years after David's time the writer of Hebrews speaks of Jehovah God as still resting in his day. He counsels Christians not to be like the Israelites in the wilderness who failed to enter into God's rest, but that they should do their "utmost to enter into that rest," Jehovah's rest. In this connection he says that "there

* According to Genesis 5:3-29; 7:6, from the creation of Adam to the Flood 1,656 years elapsed. Genesis 11:10-12:4 shows that 427 years elapsed from the deluge until God's covenant with Abraham. And Galatians 3:17 shows that 430 years elapsed from then to the giving of the Law, making upward of 2,500 years. See "All Scripture Is Inspired of God and Beneficial," pages 284, 285.

remains a sabbath resting for the people of God." And as the words of the apostle Paul are applicable to Christians today, it follows that Jehovah has been enjoying his sabbath or rest from physical creation almost six thousand years now.—Heb. 4: 9, 11.

This accounts for 6,000 years. Is that the length of the seventh day? No, because we read that "God proceeded to bless the seventh day and make it sacred." Its outcome must be "very good," and that is not true of present world conditions; so the "day" must still be continuing. Actually these six thousand years have been, as it were, man's workweek, in which he labored by the sweat of his face. But he will get rest during the coming thousand-year reign of Christ, which Bible chronology and fulfillment of Bible prophecy show is to begin very soon.—Gen. 2:3.

The seventh one thousand years of the seventh "day" will thus in itself be a sabbath. During it Satan and his demons will be bound. Christ and his anointed followers will rule with him as kings and priests. With what result? That all God's enemies will be put beneath Christ's feet. By means of this sabbath the seventh day will truly be sacred, for it will cause righteousness to flourish.—1 Cor. 15:24-28; Rev. 20:1-6; Psalm 72.

Thus we find the seventh "day" of the creative week to be seven thousand years long. On the basis of the length of the seventh "day" it is therefore reasonable to conclude that each of the other six "days" also was a period of 7,000 years. This length of time would be ample for all that the Bible tells us took place on each of the six days of creation.

AN EVENTFUL 'WEEK'

Thus gradually on the first "day" light appeared on the "watery deep" that en-

veloped the earth. During the second 7,000-year "day" the atmosphere was formed between two layers of water. On the third "day" the dry land gradually appeared, and Jehovah God created all manner of vegetation, grasses, shrubs and trees.

On the fourth "day" the luminaries, the sun and moon and stars, for the first time became visible from the earth's surface, preparing the earth for the appearance, on the fifth "day," of marine life and flying creatures. On the sixth "day" God created land animals and, toward its end, man.

There is, as we have seen, good reason to believe that the days of creation were each 7,000 years long. Now the fact that we are living at the end of six thousand years of the seventh "day" is of the greatest interest and importance to us. When Jesus Christ was on earth, he performed many of his miraculous cures on the sabbath. To those who were offended by this he pointed out that he was "Lord of the sabbath." By this he was pointing forward to the sabbath of a thousand years during which he will bring back mankind to perfection of body and mind. He will do for all mankind what he did for his people Israel back there. This will include even the raising of the dead, for "all those in the memorial tombs will hear his voice and come out."—Matt. 12:8; John 5:28, 29.

Thus, our appreciating the days of creation from God's viewpoint is not only seen to be Scriptural, reasonable and harmonious with such facts as men of science have been able to produce, but also inspires in us the hope of soon enjoying the Lord's sabbath of God's rest day, a day when health, life and happiness will be restored to humankind. Truly God's ways and thoughts are infinitely superior to man's thoughts and ways.—Rev. 21:3, 4.

Girding for an Urgent Work at

“PEACE ON EARTH” ASSEMBLIES

“AMAZING!” That word has expressed the consistent reaction on the part of observers at any one of the “Peace on Earth” Assemblies of Jehovah’s Witnesses in 1969. Whether the gathering was in the Orient, in Southeast Asia, in the islands of the South Pacific or in the Americas, the story was the same. What they saw was hard to believe.

What so amazed the onlookers? It was the brotherly unity, the peace, the complete absence of racial or class distinction, the evident and genuine love that binds the Witnesses together. But it was more than that. It was their earnest conviction that they have a God-given work to do among the nations. It was their zeal for that work and for the training that will improve their ministry. It was the sense of urgency that motivates them.

That sense of urgency stems from the knowledge, gleaned from the Bible, that soon now, not many years hence, Jehovah’s judgment against a wicked system of things on earth will be executed. Meantime peoples of all nations and races must be warned and given opportunity to separate from the doomed world and take their stand for God’s sovereignty as represented in his kingdom under Christ.

Reports and experiences from these “Peace on Earth” Assemblies are thrilling to read, while also reflecting the spirit and tone of the assembled throngs.

CONSCIOUS OF NEED TO ACQUIRE POWER

An eminent educator of nineteen hundred years ago advised his pupil to “keep on acquiring power in the undeserved kindness that is in connection with Christ Jesus.” It was because of recognizing this need that tens of thousands of Mexicans, as well as delegates from twenty-eight other lands, rendezvoused at the Mexico Arena, Mexico City, late in December. The occasion was one of ten cultural assemblies held simultaneously throughout Mexico.

“Peace on Earth” was the delightful theme of these assemblies. Readings, lectures, dramas, personal experiences, all combined to produce a wonderful program—one well calculated to equip conventioners for effective activity in the urgent times that are now with us.

A unique feature at these assemblies was the discussion topic “Using the Art of Reading and Writing to Praise Jehovah.” Man, at creation, was originally gifted with this art, and so it was surely appropriate to develop and use that gift to the utmost in honor of the Creator. Indeed, during the past twenty-three years Jehovah’s witnesses had aided 36,262 Mexicans to master this art!

Many from remote regions of the country plainly demonstrated their consciousness of the need to acquire power in a spiritual sense. No effort was too much,

no distance too great, so as to prevent them from getting to the assemblies. For example, one group of distant villagers walked for two days over the mountains to get to a bus route.

Another family planned well in advance, set aside a parcel of land on which they grew a crop the proceeds from which were to be devoted to their getting to the assembly. One man was refused time off from secular work to attend this educational convention. So, the day before the assembly he resigned. To his surprise, on the last day of the assembly came a phone message asking him to report back to work.

Then, there were two young girls who had to be away from home for three months prior to the assembly. Why? They went coffee picking in order to meet the cost of the assembly trip. And there was a seventeen-year-old boy who walked twenty miles over mountain paths to get to a bus. Also a mother and daughter walked just as far, at times with mud up to their knees because of the heavy rains.

The confidence of all these appreciative ones was not misplaced. The assemblies truly strengthened them and equipped them the better to share in the spread of true education. And at each assembly there were many who demonstrated that they had made satisfactory progress in education, for they signified their determination to devote themselves to God, not cooped up in convent or monastery, but

out among their fellow Mexicans, aiding many more to learn the value of knowledge founded on God's authoritative Word.

By nature happy, affectionate, hospitable, the Mexican people have their serious moments too. Many have come to realize that their entire future depends on their taking in knowledge of God and Christ, on being in a peaceful relationship with the Source of life. The "Peace on Earth" Assemblies showed them how to attain that goal. It means not only learning but doing the will of God, while also being a blessing to fellowmen. In Mexico there

are somewhat over 43,000 Witnesses. Is it not, then, astonishing to note these total figures reported from the ten "Peace on Earth" Assemblies?—Attending main lecture: 89,239. Signifying dedication: 2,757.

NEED OF ENDURANCE

"You have need of endurance," wrote the apostle Paul to fellow Christians. (Heb. 10:36) It is

wonderful to find many examples of endurance and the fine fruit it produces in the Far East. Visitors at the "Peace on Earth" Assembly in Seoul, Korea, heard how traveling representatives of the Watch Tower Society in that land must get around without benefit of automobiles, in severe cold and humid heat. But what a reward to find that their visits to the congregations are appreciated, attendances often running as high as 200 percent of the number of local Witnesses.

At Seoul, too, delegates had the opportu-



Five on right endured prison and torture in Japanese-occupied Korea; still zealous Witnesses

nity to meet five faithful women who had been imprisoned seven years on account of their faith during the Japanese occupation. To try to cause them to break integrity with God, their jailers mistreated them, even chained them literally. Two of them are now in their seventies, one of them still devoting as much as 150 hours each month to preaching the good news of peace by God's kingdom. Imagine their joy when they discovered that one of their erstwhile jailers is now interested in God's kingdom and attended with them some of the assembly sessions.

In Tokyo's Korakuen Cycling Stadium English-speaking visitors heard reports of expansion of the preaching work in Japan. During twenty-six consecutive months there had been reports of increases in the number of Witnesses. And while the visitors listened, they had evidence right before their eyes of the fact that Japanese Witnesses are girding for greater efforts in the immediate future. On the other side of the stadium a special session of instruction for full-time preachers of the message of peace was going on—attended by 1,200 Japanese of both sexes and all ages.

It is not easy for Japanese to break away from traditions and formalisms of the Oriental family. Yet many are doing so and enduring hardship as a result. Why, one woman from Hiroshima traveled the six hundred miles to the Tokyo assembly with her five young children, despite the fact that her unbelieving husband would give her no assistance.

Delegates from Canada, the United States, Germany, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, the Philippines and Israel were happy to assemble at Taipei, Taiwan, with Witnesses from that island's three ethnic groups, the Taiwanese, the Chinese and the Amis. They, too, are preparing for a



Philippine householders hear a Bible sermon

greatly enlarged work ahead. A new branch office and missionary home has been provided, and there is evident increase in the number of those who are sharing in the preaching of the Kingdom.

Hong Kong's City Hall was the site of another assembly of this series. It proved to be highly beneficial to the local Witnesses as well as to the many visitors from other lands. It is true that the Chinese people are not responding to the Kingdom message to the extent noted in Korea and Japan. Nevertheless, every preparation is being made to extend the Bible's message of hope to all who will hear. There is such a great field here, and for this reason it was heartening to see seventeen new Witnesses submitting to baptism, as evidence that they have undertaken the training that will gird them for the work ahead.

Yes, endurance is what is needed, and endurance is what is being displayed by some of those Witnesses of the Orient. Here are some interesting figures relating to their assemblies:

	WITNESSES	PUB. MTG. ATTEND.	BAPTIZED
Korea	10,610	14,644	1,511
Japan	7,637	12,614	798
Taiwan	1,087	799	27
Hong Kong	225	678	17

MINDS TRANSFORMED IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

One whose mind is not conformed to the Bible's right standard of conduct cannot hope to be successful in spreading the message of peace to others. Christendom's record in this respect is well known. However, there are multiplying proofs that the work done by earnest Witnesses in Southeast Asia is bearing an abundant fruitage. Filipinos, Papuans, and inhabitants of many islands are truly transforming their minds. And the change is noted even by outsiders.

In Manila, local citizens were happy to open their homes temporarily to the great crowd of delegates who came from all parts of the Philippines and from twenty-four other lands. A lawyer in a suburban area offered the use of his home, free meals and a car to convey delegates to and from the convention site. A former provincial governor offered his home free of charge. A Protestant bishop gave free rooms too, because, as he commented, "I know Jehovah's Witnesses and can trust them."



In Papua, some of the candidates on way to immersion; 120,905 baptized world wide last year

Many Philippine Witnesses are aware of the urgency of these times, for more and more of them, as they can so arrange their affairs, are taking up the full-time preaching as "pioneer" Witnesses. At the Manila assembly 4,106 of them received helpful counsel on how to make the most of this ministerial career of their choice. The Watch Tower Society's vice-president told them of his own experience since entering the full-time ministry fifty-five years earlier.

Tremendous future expansion of the Kingdom work in the Philippines is foreseen. At the assembly 1,835 persons were baptized, and during the past year there has been an average of 500 baptized each month. These, too, are girding themselves for an urgent work.

Said one visitor in Manila: "I never realized that such a tremendous work was taking place in this small country." That was after hearing some experiences and learning that the number of Witnesses had risen from 1,000 right after World War II to the present figure of more than 49,000!

At Port Moresby, Papua, the convention site was cleared and buildings were constructed by Witnesses themselves in the bush some fourteen miles from town. Here the same heart-searching Bible dramas, discourses and experiences were eagerly heard by audiences averaging some 1,000 persons. Many of those attending had learned the Bible's vital message through pictures drawn by Witness missionaries. Illiteracy had been overcome. More importantly, superstitions had been put aside.

Among the seventy who offered them-

selves for baptism in the nearby river was an ex-Methodist minister. Another pastor of one of Christendom's sects, who is just about to sever all ties with Christendom, lived happily among the Witnesses throughout this assembly. Both want to be trained as effective ministers for this "time of the end."

Jehovah's spirit is moving natives of Southeast Asia to render themselves for his service, as these convention figures testify:

	WITNESSES	PUB. MTG.	ATTEND.	BAPTIZED
Philippines	49,257	64,715		1,835
Papua	486	1,116		70

STEPPED-UP TEMPO IN AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

Melbourne's Showgrounds, just within a few miles of the city's two and a quarter million inhabitants, with its grandstands and many other structures on twenty-one acres of territory, comfortably housed another "Peace on Earth" Assembly. For that event, October 26-31, throngs of Australian Witnesses came, so much so that 25,837 heard the assembly's public lecture. That is over 5,000 more than the total number of Witnesses in the land!

An excellent orchestra of 150 musicians supplied music, while a chorus of 208 led the songs of praise to Jehovah. It was also arranged for the orchestra to play at the world-famed Olympic Pool as a long line of baptism candidates went into the water. Over 7,000 spectators watched the actual immersion, and according to the *Melbourne Herald*, "The ceremony caused the biggest early morning traffic jam in Swan Street, Richmond, since the Olympic Games in 1956."

The stepped-up tempo of things here having to do with the Kingdom-preaching work was noticeable in the larger attendances, in the efficiency of the assembly organization, in the crowd of baptism candidates, in the 2,154 Witnesses who attended the special meeting for full-time preachers. "We are amazed to see how many are here," said a representative of the *Melbourne Newsday*, "but what amazes us most of all is how spotlessly clean everything is. It's the people themselves, they don't throw anything down!"

Another assembly of this same series was held in Auckland, New Zealand. It, too, was marked by a feeling of greater urgency, for swift expansion was again evident. For example, 421 offered themselves



Display at Melbourne assembly shows how the urgent work of Kingdom preaching has spread on this island-continent

for baptism. They know the time allotted for the preaching work is now greatly reduced. They want to have a larger share.

The public lecture, "The Road Back to Peace in Paradise," was attended by 8,400, indicating that over 2,000 newly interested ones had come from the Auckland area to hear.

As in so many other convention cities, the Witnesses are being viewed with greater respect by those who appreciate peace and good order. An official letter of the

Auckland Trotting Club said: "As your convention has now drawn to a close, may I take this opportunity to express my Committee's appreciation to you and to all your delegates for the outstanding way in which your meetings at the Alexandra Park Raceway were conducted."

That Australians and New Zealanders are grasping for opportunities to share in a ministry that must soon be accomplished, may be noted from these interesting figures:

	WITNESSES	PUB. MTG.	ATTEND.	BAPTIZED
Australia	20,624	25,837		1,315
New Zealand	5,266	8,400		421

ISLAND PEOPLE KEEN TO SHARE

Populations of distant island groups were also reached by the "Peace on Earth" Assemblies—in such places as Fiji, Tahiti and Hawaii. People in these islands are hearing the message, and they too are showing themselves willing to shoulder responsibilities for the urgent preaching work that must soon be accomplished.

Delegates came to Suva, Fiji, from seventeen different lands as well as from many scattered islands of the Pacific, Samoa, Tonga, and so on. To local inhabitants the attendance of 1,621 at the assembly's public lecture was a real eye-opener. Imagine their surprise, too, when 77 persons indicated that they were willing to be girded for the urgent work ahead by offering themselves for baptism! Why, not even that number had been baptized in the entire year ending August 31, 1969!

What a colorful throng the conventioners made, dressed in their national costumes, as they fed on the same spiritual food from Jehovah's table! Even though language barriers sometimes prevented them from freely conversing, each one knew the reason for the other's joy.

At Papeete, Tahiti, features of the as-

sembly program were presented in French and Tahitian. For the first time many islanders had the pleasure of meeting fellow Witnesses from foreign lands. Twelve different countries were represented, and the number of visitors outnumbered the local Witnesses 180 to 132.

From New Caledonia forty delegates had traveled 4,000 miles by plane and ship to be present at Papeete. Among them was a family of ten, the youngest just eleven days old. It took this family two years to save enough to meet the expense of the trip, but to judge from their expressions they had no regrets.

Over 2,000 of Hawaii's approximately 3,000 Witnesses volunteered their services to make the "Peace on Earth" Assembly in Honolulu a time of joy and happiness to hundreds of delegates, many of them from foreign lands and far-flung islands. They surely succeeded. And what a pleasure it was to sit in the International Center with so many others of different national background, all peacefully united in love for Bible truth!

Foreign visitors participated in delightful tours, one of them to the Watch Tower Society's branch office. They learned that J. F. Rutherford, former president of the Society, visited here in 1935 and initiated the establishment of a branch office complete with an auditorium that was called a "Kingdom Hall." That was the start of the practice, now widely known around the earth, of calling the meeting places of Jehovah's witnesses Kingdom Halls.

Visitors were also introduced to many Witnesses from the Micronesian islands. Groups representing the Marshall Islands, Ponape, Yap, Guam, Saipan and Palau extended greetings in their respective native tongues. Some of these islanders sang Kingdom songs delightfully in their own languages.

A feature writer in Honolulu's largest newspaper, *The Sunday Star-Bulletin & Advertiser*, wrote: "Jehovah's witnesses impressed more people here than any other big convention outfit that ever has come to town. . . . Neat, clean, well-behaved, polite . . . All sorts of people—black and white, ranging to those well off and those of very modest means . . . They have kept the HIC [International Center] immaculate and even picked up rubbish that all other convention-goers left."

Even more outstanding, however, is the willing spirit of the youth of Hawaii's Witnesses to leave these beautiful islands and take up missionary work in other lands. It is believed that Hawaii has contributed more missionaries than any other state in the Union.

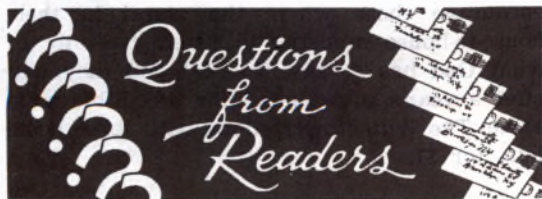
The assembled delegates derived immense satisfaction from the knowledge that the greatest witness ever had been given in Hawaii and the name of Jehovah had made a tremendous impact on the population of Honolulu and its environs.

The peoples of the islands are witnessing a fine growth in the Kingdom activity and preparation for still more urgent work in the immediate future. Note how these figures bear this out:

	WITNESSES	PUB. MTG. ATTEND.	BAPTIZED
Fiji	403	1,621	77
Tahiti	132	488	29
Hawaii	2,980	15,443	314

At all of these "Peace on Earth" Assemblies of 1969 the most striking feature was the very practical counsel provided for Witnesses of all ages, so they might be equipped for greater privileges in the service of Jehovah's kingdom. Here are some of the thought-provoking titles of discourses and dramas presented from the platform: How Do You View Authority? Show Respect for Jehovah's Appointments. What Are You Living For? Making My Home a House of God. "With All That You Acquire, Acquire Understanding." Should There Be a Generation Gap in the Christian Home? What Is Your Security? How to Stand Firm in This Time of the End.

Conventioners, one and all, regardless of race or color, now have a stronger conviction that Jehovah is directing the ministry of his witnesses in all the earth and girding them now for joyous privileges in the short time now remaining before Jehovah's earth-wide judgments against Babylon the Great and at Armageddon. How comforting, how strengthening to know that Jehovah is backing up his own great witness work with illimitable power!



● Was not Jesus showing disrespect for his mother by saying: "What have I to do with you, woman? My hour has not yet come"? —C. B., U.S.A.

○ Jesus said this at a wedding feast in Cana early in his ministry. The account reads: "When

the wine ran short the mother of Jesus said to him: 'They have no wine.' But Jesus said to her: 'What have I to do with you, woman? My hour has not yet come.' His mother said to those ministering: 'Whatever he tells you, do.'"—John 2:3-5.

First, let us consider Christ's use of the term "woman." In modern speech, to address one's mother as "woman" might sound disrespectful. Yet, as translator E. J. Goodspeed observed, the Greek word used in John 2:4 "is neither as distant as [the modern word woman] nor as affectionate as" mother. It has a wide range of force and, as used in the case found here, it carries a degree of respect

or affection.—*Greek-English Lexicon* by Liddell and Scott.

Both angels and the resurrected Jesus used this word in addressing Mary Magdalene as she was weeping in sorrow at Christ's tomb; surely they would not have been harsh or disrespectful. (John 20:13, 15) And on the stake Christ used the same form of address for his mother when he showed his concern for her, placing her in the care of his beloved apostle John. (John 19:26; see also John 4:21; Matthew 15:28.) Consequently, Jesus was not being disrespectful when he used this word in Cana. Rather he spoke, we can be sure, with an awareness of his Scriptural obligation to honor her, just as he later emphasized to the scribes and Pharisees.—Matt. 15:4.

The expression, "What do I have to do with you," is an ancient form of question often found in the Bible. (2 Sam. 16:10; 1 Ki. 17:18; 2 Ki. 3:13; Mark 1:24; 5:7) It can be translated literally: "What do we [or, I] and you have in common?" and it is a repellent form. Its severity would, of course, depend on the tone of the speaker. It indicates objection to the

thing suggested.—Compare Ezra 4:3 and Matthew 27:19.

When Jesus used that expression he was already the Christ and God's King-designate. He was not a young child living in his mother's house and under her immediate supervision. Now he took his directions from God who sent him. (1 Cor. 11:3) Thus, when his mother, by her statement, in effect began telling him what to do, Jesus resisted or objected. In regard to his ministry and miracles he was not to be directed by friends or family. (John 11:6-16) Christ's reply showed that when it was time for him to act in a certain situation he would do so. He knew the time for action in this matter and did not have to be prodded.

Evidently Mary did not regard Jesus' words as a stern rebuke but understood his tone. She wisely left the matter in her son's hands. It might be added that "in the Greek any abruptness in the question was softened, not heightened, by the use of the word [woman] with it, as a term of affection or respect."—*Problems of New Testament Translation*, p. 100.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

pure worship we certainly want to be listening intently, as when God's Word is discussed. (Isa. 55:2) Being well informed can save your life, so there is every reason to listen to God's Word and learn of the life-preserving provisions that he has made for obedient mankind. During the month of February, Jehovah's witnesses will encourage those whom they meet in their house-to-house ministry to listen carefully to what God has to say. To that end they will offer a year's subscription for this Bible magazine, *The Watchtower*, along with three booklets, for \$1.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

March 8: "With All That You Acquire, Acquire Understanding," ¶1-25. Page 104. Songs to Be Used: 5, 42.

March 15: "With All That You Acquire, Acquire Understanding," ¶26-50. Page 110. Songs to Be Used: 9, 78.

FIELD MINISTRY

Being a good listener is essential to our being well informed. If we do not listen intently we often do not get the sense of what has been said. Have you not found this to be true from your own experience? In matters pertaining to