The WATCHTOWER

Announcing JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

JULY 15, 1970
Semimonthly

MEETING THE DIVINE REQUIREMENT OF OBEDIENCE

APPRECIATING YOUR PARENTS

GOD HAS A NAME

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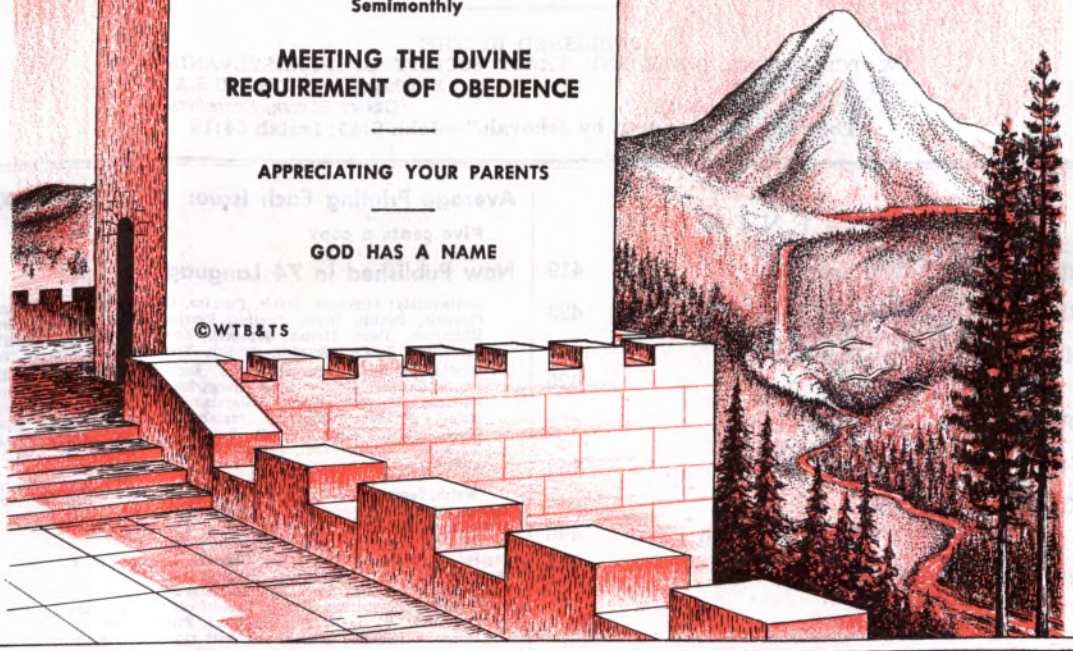

"YOU ARE MY WITNESSES," SAYS JEHOVAH.—Isa. 43:12

THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER"

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Announcing JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM
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Appreciating Your Parents

Which is better: To appreciate them when they are dead or when they are alive?

AN OPPORTUNITY lost! Has that been your experience? It has been the experience of millions of persons. And what is this lost opportunity? It is that of showing full appreciation for one's parents—yes, showing appreciation for them while they are yet alive.

After the death of their parents people often say in effect: 'I wish I had done more for them! There were opportunities to give them things they may have needed or enjoyed, but in the rush of things I overlooked doing it. How often I should have visited them or written a letter—but didn't!'

Yes, many tend to ignore their aging parents while they are alive, but after they are gone the children feel remorse. They wish they had been more thoughtful when their parents were alive.

Showing appreciation for your parents is often not so much a matter of big things as of little things. Little kindnesses. These mean much. And yet they are so often overlooked. For instance, in one family, the son knew that his semi-invalid father was especially fond of ice cream. Yet the son often brought home ice cream for himself but only rarely shared it with his father. After his father's sudden death, he felt great remorse that he had not shown greater thoughtfulness to his father, who had done so much for him.

What do you do? Do you let your parents fade out of the picture? Do you just forget them? Since people tend to forget the many things parents have done for them over the years, how fine it is when children appreciate their parents while they are yet alive and show it by their deeds!

LACK OF RESPECT INCREASING

If a person really appreciates his parents, he will show them respect. But today lack of respect is increasing world wide. It is not a trend limited to the Western world.

"But in the Orient there is ancestor worship," one may say. "Does not that

ensure respect for parents?" No, not if one is thinking in terms of *living parents.*

The fact is that in the Orient youths are showing less and less respect for their living parents. In Hong Kong, for example, it is common for one to hear a Chinese mother or father lament: *"Kui m-teng wah ke,"* which means that their child does not listen to them anymore.

Parents, in fact, notice a growing disregard for any kind of parental authority and discipline. This has led to many tragedies. For example, a fourteen-year-old girl in Hong Kong quarreled with her young brother over television instead of doing her homework. The mother promptly switched off the TV. Because of being disciplined, the girl said, "I'll kill myself." With that she headed for the balcony of their fifth-floor apartment and plunged to her death on the street below.

There is no doubt that greater respect and appreciation for one's living parents would have prevented the death of that young Chinese girl. But such a tragedy is not an isolated case. Newspapers in the big cities of the Orient report similar actions of young persons despite centuries of ancestor worship. It reflects a growing lack of respect for parents.

A look at mainland China reveals that after Communism came to power, ancestor worship was discouraged. But the Communists did not encourage respect and appreciation for living parents. Instead youths were taught: "Love your country—not your father and mother."

This slogan discouraged appreciation for one's parents. The result? Well, what took place during mainland China's recent cultural revolution? Why, youths resorted to full-scale lawlessness and violence, with many parents not being spared. Realizing how bad this was, Communist China is currently promoting a new slogan, to try to bring back some honor for one's parents. The new slogan says: "Love your father, love your mother—but especially love your country."

Does this not show up the weakness in human philosophies and traditions? So many of them fail to stand the test of time and are found to be wanting.

REALLY, WHICH IS BETTER?

Buddhists, Confucianists, Shintoists, and countless numbers who profess no particular religious faith, worship their dead ancestors in one way or another. In the home there is a family altar. Most altars are painted bright red, with the family name written in gold on either side. Joss sticks burn continually in front of the altar. Often food is placed before the altar. Prayers are chanted as the family members bow before it.

For generations Chinese parents in many parts of the world have taught their children to honor the dead. From the time the young children are able to walk they are taught to bow before the altar in worship of the dead ancestors. Any tendency on the part of the young child to neglect this duty is quickly and firmly corrected.

Parents take care to engrave indelibly on the minds of their children this family duty because they believe that when they die the honor their children pay them will guarantee them happiness and peace in "another world." It is also believed that if the living fail to pay homage, the dead ancestors will become hostile spirits and will return to curse them. Despite centuries of ancestor worship, it has not brought real happiness to living parents.

So, which is better: Ancestor worship, or respect and appreciation for *living* parents? How do you feel? Would you rather be honored after you are dead or would you prefer to have the loving association

and respect of your children while you live?

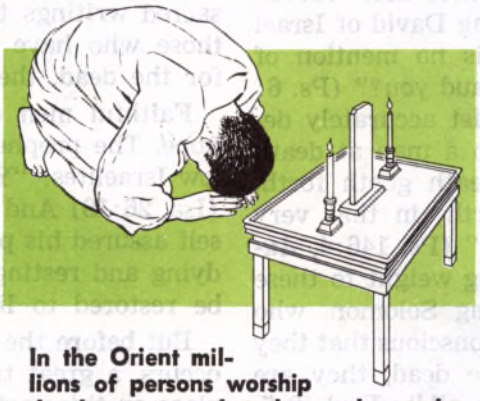
BIBLE WAY THE BETTER WAY

Sometime ago a Chinese mother was confronted with such questions. She had complained that one of her sons was not like the others because he did not engage in family rituals. She was thinking that this son would not be paying homage to her after she died. Yet the son was showing appreciation for his parents.

It was pointed out to this Chinese mother that her son had bought his parents an apartment in which to live. He was also giving them a monthly allowance from his wages so that they did not have to work in their old age. The son was doing this despite the fact that he had a wife and two children of his own to support. Thus the mother was helped to see that she was being appreciated *while she was alive.*

Why is it that this woman's son is different? Why is he in a very loving and practical way providing for his parents while they are alive? It is because this young man believes and is practicing what he learned from the oldest of sacred writings—the Holy Bible.

This Book encourages appreciation for one's living parents. It says: "Honor your father and your mother, just as Jehovah your God has commanded you; in order that your days may prove long and it may go well with you."—Deut. 5:16; Eph. 6: 1, 2.



In the Orient millions of persons worship dead ancestors, but those who study the Bible are learning something better

Really, is not the Bible way the better way? Would you not prefer to have the love and respect of your children now while you are alive? Yes, would you *not* prefer their appreciation of you now rather than to have merely the satisfaction of knowing that after your death they would make some bow or gesture before the family altar?

This young man is not teaching his children to bow to a family altar. In fact, no such altar has a place in his home. Rather, he is following the Bible's sound advice to go on bringing his children up "in the discipline and mental-regulating of Jehovah." (Eph. 6:4) They are being taught to obey, honor and appreciate their parents while they live rather than to honor them after they are dead. Parents who inculcate these fine principles in their children have no regrets. They are rewarded with a closely united family in which each member contributes to the happiness and well-being of the others.

So if you are a believer in ancestor worship and you find that your children are studying the Bible, you do not need to worry. Your children will appreciate you more, and they will be better children, more respectful, more loving.

WHY FEAR DEAD ANCESTORS?

Are you one who believes in ancestor worship? If so, why do you believe in it? Can a dead ancestor actually smell the burning incense? Can the dead ancestor really partake of the food and benefit from it? Can a dead ancestor actually

harm a living person? One reason why you may believe in ancestor worship is that you think there is "another life" after death. But is there "another life"?

No, not according to the Holy Bible.

More than four hundred years before the days of Confucius and Buddha, Bible writers testified that when man dies he does not go on to "another life." Moved by the spirit of God, King David of Israel said: "In death there is no mention of you; in Sheol who will laud you?" (Ps. 6:5) Another Bible psalmist accurately described what happens to a man at death when he said: "His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish." (Ps. 146:4, *Authorized Version*) Adding weight to these words are those of King Solomon, who wrote: "The living are conscious that they will die; but as for the dead, they are conscious of nothing at all."—Eccl. 9:5.

These ancient Bible writings have stood the test of truthfulness. What they have said about the condition of the dead remains true today. The scientists and surgeons have found no evidence of any conscious, living part of man that survives the death of the body.

The idea that there is "another life" after death is not taught by the Bible. Dead ancestors thus cannot harm or curse anyone, because they are asleep, unconscious, not alive in "another world."

If you are a youth whose parents believe in ancestor worship you may find that they are not pleased when you start studying the Bible. How can you help them? Explain that the Bible shows the dead are asleep, not conscious in "another world." Explain also that what you are learning will make you a better son or daughter. Help them see that it is more desirable to be loved and respected while one is alive than merely honored through rituals after death. Yes, help them see that the Bible encourages you to appreciate your parents more while they are *living*.

A FUTURE FOR DEAD ANCESTORS

But what of those who have lost their parents to death and who wish now they had appreciated their parents more when they were alive? They too can take hope, in harmony with the Bible. For those same sacred writings that tell the truth about those who have died also reveal a hope for the dead, the hope of living again.

Faithful men of old treasured such a hope. The prophet Isaiah assured his fellow Israelites: "Your dead ones will live." (Isa. 26:19) And the Creator of man himself assured his prophet Daniel that, after dying and resting in the grave, he would be restored to life.—Dan. 12:13.

But before the resurrection of the dead occurs, a great transformation must take place on this earth. It is God's purpose to sweep this planet clean of all those who ruin our beautiful earth. (Rev. 11:18) That time is now very near.

Then, according to God's time schedule, he will restore the dead to life by means of his Son, Jesus Christ. And the words in the Bible at John 5:28, 29 will be realized: "Do not marvel at this, because the hour is coming in which all those in the memorial tombs will hear his voice and come out."

What a grand blessing that will be! Imagine the joy of living with your loved ones on a paradise earth!

So, why spend valuable time in honoring the dead and teaching your children to do likewise? How much more rewarding it is to use that time in worshiping the true God, Jehovah! He alone can bring back our loved ones from the dead. Then both parents and their offspring will have the opportunity to show love and appreciation for one another throughout eternity, even forever.

RICH SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS *in Ghana*

IF YOU had been in Accra, the capital of Ghana, early this year you would have found many of the townspeople amazed. It was the occasion of a six-day assembly of Jehovah's witnesses, and it was the largest of its kind ever to be held in Ghana.

For the main session the grounds of Accra's International Trade Fair were packed with an audience of 32,023. For every twenty persons in the city, at least one was at the assembly. That was remarkable enough. But who were all those people? There are only some 13,000 Witnesses in all of Ghana. But among them were others whose serious attention had been arrested by the diligent ministry of the Witnesses, and they too wanted to enjoy rich spiritual blessings.

FROM MANY TRIBES

Consider some of the Witnesses present. They can be spotted, for they are wearing identification badges showing with which of Ghana's 281 congregations of Jehovah's witnesses they are associated. Here is Atonkontaba from Bolgatanga in the North, his face delicately etched with tribal markings. You see, his parents did not know Jehovah, the God of peace. Bukari of the Gruma tribe is over here too, grinning in evident delight and flashing his pointed, filed teeth. Those teeth let you know that it is not long that he has been studying the way of the true God.

It is refreshing to meet humble, appreciative folk like Amma Bempong from the Kwahu hills. She left her small cassava farm and her thatch-roofed home far off in the forest in order to be here with other worshipers of Jehovah to enjoy rich spiritual blessings. Big muscular Fanti fishermen from the coast contrast strangely with the slight, alert Ashanti farmers from the Kumasi area. A small group has also come in from the Ivory Coast, where they enjoyed their own assembly in Abidjan in December.

This Accra convention not only impressed onlookers, but motivated many of them to make diligent inquiry. A Trade Fair official declared: "I do indeed admire the discipline of Jehovah's witnesses. You are a clean people." A head teacher from Senya Beraku, who attended with his family of seven, was so deeply moved by the assembly program that he has since regularized his marriage and begun to share in the Kingdom-preaching activity of the Witnesses.

PROMOTING BIBLE KNOWLEDGE

While other religious teachers are ignoring or downgrading the Bible, the Witnesses uphold it as the only reliable guide for man and the only true basis for spiritual blessings. People are getting to know this. Among themselves the Witnesses have promoted knowledge and understanding. Only 39 percent were literate ten years ago; now almost 70 percent are literate. Reading and writing classes continue to offer newly interested ones the opportunity to learn how to read and appreciate the Bible for themselves.

What blessings have come to many as a result! For example, an illiterate housewife at Agona Duakwa was a member of the Methodist Church for many years; then she began associating with Jehovah's witnesses. In time she desired to share her rich spiritual blessings with others by going from house to house with the Bible. One day she was challenged by a church leader who questioned her qualifications to teach others. In response, she reminded him that she had been illiterate during all the time she was with his church. Then she proceeded to talk to him about true faith that brings great blessings, backing up her points from the Bible. He could readily see the fine progress she had made in Bible knowledge since leaving the church; he evidently regretted having challenged her.

The Watch Tower Society's publication "The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life," released for the first time in Ghana at their recent assembly, is in big demand. In less than two months almost 80,000 copies were shipped out from the Society's branch office in Accra. Heretofore, the highest number of books sent out by the branch in a whole year was 54,206! One full-time minister distributed copies of this new book to all schoolteachers in his town. Most of them are now attending meetings regularly in the local Kingdom Hall of the Witnesses and making fine progress in their study of the Bible.

So many are the requests for Bible studies to be conducted in people's homes that there is

People in front of the Ghana branch of the Watch Tower Society

often a waiting list. One Witness reported that on his way to his territory a man called out and insisted that he stop by. It seems the man had attended the assembly and now wanted to have a Bible study conducted in his home. Said he: "I want to reduce my staff." What did he mean? He had three wives, and now knew that in order to be at peace with God he would have to stick to one wife only.—1 Tim. 3:2, 12.

The number of these studies has increased tremendously throughout the country. Indeed, there are now 12,465 of these studies on the average each month.

Another factor behind the rich spiritual blessings in Ghana is the strong conviction that moves many of these humble people to share increasingly in the spread of the good news of God's kingdom. One year ago, in April, 20 percent of all Witnesses in the land were spending 75 or more hours in the ministry during the month. Even now some 600 are devoting one hundred or more hours per month in proclaiming the Bible's message of peace and hope.

RAPID GROWTH BUT MORE TO DO

Much has been done to help the people in Ghana learn God's truths. For example, ten years ago in Accra there were 1,260 Witnesses, a ratio of one Witness to every 308 persons. They have grown rapidly so that today twenty-seven congregations have been organized and there are 2,500 Witnesses. This is a ratio of one to every 186 persons in the city.

Further, out of the 5,200 towns having a population of 200 persons or more, Jehovah's witnesses regularly preach from house to house in 2,510. At least once a year they are able to reach about 500 additional places. But there is still more to be done in Ghana.

Indicating future growth and spiritual blessing was the assembly baptismal service, a thrilling one, as row after row of candidates stood up to answer "yes" to the questions put to them by the speakers. The seashore was not far away. High on a twenty-foot cliff a great throng of onlookers rejoiced to see 1,657 submit to baptism amid the crashing of the breakers. This was more than the total number baptized in Ghana during the previous service year!

Each candidate had studied the Bible carefully and was able to discuss intelligently over eighty points of Bible doctrine and principles. Prior to their dedication many had had to clarify their marriage status by registering with the local government agencies. They were happy to make these adjustments in their lives so as to be fully pleasing to their Creator. Soon now, they too will be effective sharers in the spread of Bible education.

Most amazing of all is the unifying effect of the Bible's message on honest hearts. Those speaking Twi, Ga, Ewe, Frafra, Kasem and English are drawn together as genuine brothers, spiritual brothers. They can confidently expect further rich spiritual goodness in the future with Jehovah's blessing on their wholehearted service.

Meeting the Divine Requirement of OBEDIENCE

"Obey my voice, and I will become your God, and you yourselves will become my people; and you must walk in all the way that I shall command you, in order that it may go well with you."
—Jer. 7:23.

LIKE a rare jewel, obedience is hard to find in this twentieth-century world. Governments have tried many things to bring this desirable quality to the fore in their subjects. Law-enforcing agencies find that fear and force do not produce obedient citizens. Religious organizations find much disobedience in their flocks. Regardless of geographic location, financial standing, or social status, the home proves to be a place where strained relations are found, where tensions reach the breaking point, where the young flaunt the older, and where love slowly fades into the background. At the bottom of this grave situation is found the matter of obedience. Subjection to husbands has caused women to fret, because it meant being obedient wives. Obedience to God has been pushed aside with man-made theories, so much so that the majority of humankind do not know what God requires of them.

[2] Disobedience is not a new thing. It has been here on earth almost as long as man. We can read the pointed description of its arrival at Romans 5:19: "Through the disobedience of the one man many were constituted sinners." From the time of Adam's disobedience down through the stream of time disobedience has been growing among mankind at such a rate that obedient men of God have stood out as different and as worthy of note. The Bible mentions some of these at Hebrews chapter eleven. Of one of these, Abraham, verse eight says: "By faith Abraham, when he was called, *obeyed.*" Another outstanding obedient man, Jesus, said that the time would come when, "because of the increasing of lawlessness the love of the greater number will cool off." (Matt. 24:12) It looks as if we have reached far into that time.

[3] So for nearly six thousand years disobedience has increased, growing to such a point that it can be compared to the polluted water and air of the earth. Careless men continuously dump undesirable waste into their water and air supply, and yet they may complain about the poor quality of these life-sustaining essentials. From man's early rebellion to this date he has neglected pure worship and contributed to disobedience both by inherited sinful traits and also by his willful desire to go his own independent way.

[4] The dictionary defines obedience in this way: "Act or fact of obeying, or state of being obedient." To obey is "to be ruled or controlled by; to follow the guidance, operation, etc. of; as, to obey reason; to obey the law of gravitation." The Bible has a way of

1. (a) What situation exists today regarding obedience? (b) With what result?
2, 3. What has resulted to disobedient men from the start until now, and where are we now?
4. (a) Define obedience. (b) How does fear enter into our obedience to God?

putting it: "The conclusion of the matter, everything having been heard, is: Fear the true God and keep his commandments. For this is the whole obligation of man." (Eccl. 12:13) Some object to this matter of obeying God out of fear. Still we obey the laws concerning gravity, and every day of our short life we have a fearful respect for this force. We do it as a part of living, accepting it, and rarely do you hear anyone complain; yet it is rigid and exacting. If we would understand God's requirements as well as we do gravity's operation, we would find Psalm 112:1 describing our attitude: "Happy is the man in fear of Jehovah, in whose commandments he has taken very much delight."

"To obey is better than a sacrifice," Judge Samuel told King Saul, who failed to meet God's requirement of obedience

[5] Jehovah God requires obedience of his people. He had Judge Samuel tell disobedient King Saul: "To obey is better than a sacrifice, to pay attention than the fat of rams; for rebelliousness is the same as the sin of divination, and pushing ahead presumptuously the same as using uncanny power and teraphim. Since you have rejected the word of Jehovah, he accordingly rejects you from being king." (1 Sam. 15:22, 23) The Israelites were required to be obedient. (Deut. 10:12, 13) Jesus was. (Heb. 5:8) The apostles obeyed. (Acts 5:29) Thousands of faithful servants of God under all kinds of conditions have been obedient to God.

[6] From where does obedience spring? Is it the same for a Christian as with a child, doing things because he is told to do so by a superior? Is obedience an attitude that only Christians have? Since all men are born in sin, can one actually practice obedience in this present 'lawless' generation? (Matt. 24:12) God's Word brings the answers to us along with much courage-generating counsel.

[7] Turn to Romans chapters five and six. There the apostle Paul is bringing up the matter of obedience. Will obedience be to the Law that had been given to the Israelites and held to by many for a long time, or will it be to the undeserved kindness from God, made available through the provision that helps mankind to become obedient to God, that is, the ransom sacrifice arrangement instituted by Jehovah through Christ Jesus? Today everyone has to decide whether he wants to obey God or go along with the disobedient, lawless crowd of this present system of things. It is not just a matter of choosing between God's old Law covenant and His new covenant, but it is a matter of obe-

5. How did Judge Samuel emphasize obedience?
6. What questions arise regarding obedience?

7. (a) Explain the issue Paul discusses at Romans 2:8-11. (b) From where does Romans 6:17 tell us that godly obedience comes?

dience to the truth from God. Observe the clear-cut description of this at Romans 2: 8-11: "However, for those who are contentious and who disobey the truth but obey unrighteousness there will be wrath and anger, tribulation and distress, upon the soul of every man who works what is injurious, of the Jew first and also of the Greek; but glory and honor and peace for everyone who works what is good, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. For there is no partiality with God." But what is it that motivates a person to be obedient to Jehovah and to do so willingly? Romans 6:17 starts us in the direction of understanding: "But thanks to God that you were the slaves of sin but you became *obedient from the heart* to that form of teaching to which you were handed over."

OBEDIENCE FROM THE HEART

[8] So obedience comes from the heart. With a Christian it is not viewed in the light of one's being forced into adherence to rules or regulations. Psalm 112:1 points out: "Happy is the man in fear of Jehovah, in whose commandments he has taken very much delight." Further, Psalm 119: 33, 34 reveals: "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." If we fill the heart with the wisdom that is now available in Jehovah's Word and keep on taking it in as food, then growth must come. Such knowledge fills the right kind of heart with appreciation and results in willing obedience.

[9] In the chemical fields certain laws operate in a balanced and dependable way to produce changes, and mankind appreciates these. Oxygen produces rust on iron and causes decay of the fallen tree. It is also important in breathing. Plant life releases oxygen, which men and animals breathe in. They get their oxygen from the air; fish take in oxygen that water has absorbed from the air or that has been liberated by green plants growing in water. Oxygen breathed in is taken up by the hemoglobin of the blood and carried throughout the body. Tissues slowly oxidize and heat is produced and keeps the body warm. These processes have been there since Jehovah set them in operation, but it takes investigation to find them and to acquaint ourselves with their effect on us before we can cooperate fully. Full use of these things in our lives produces greater contentment and happiness. These rules are not changed to suit man. Perchance he is too lazy or stubborn to comply. Rather, man changes to comply with the fixed principles of creation's operation. Obedience to these set rules of operation actually means life to the receiver as well as to the giver. Obedience cannot be bad, then, but means good to those recognizing their purposeful operation.

[10] It is readily seen that obedience to God requires investigation proving beyond doubt that God exists and is interested in those wanting to serve him. Examination of visible creation around us in detail soon establishes that fact. Only an extraordinary intelligent person with a variety of qualities could produce the countless items on display in earth's shelves of knowledge. Bible prophecy, history written in advance, also proves God's existence. More evidence than is really

8. Why is obedience to God not a course to be dreaded?
9. (a) Describe some of the physical laws that we observe in operation. (b) What do they mean to us?
10. What reasonably precedes a course of obedience to God, and where can the needed proof be found?

needed is found everywhere in creation to prove the existence of God.—Isa. 45:18; Rom. 1:20; Ps. 19:1-4; Isa. 40:26.

[11] Since the Bible is Jehovah's word, it is an individual's responsibility to prove this the authentic inspired communication of God. In spite of the unfounded gossip that it contradicts itself, the Bible continues to be unified and presents a clear picture of God's purposes and what he expects of man. Continued comparison of our Bible with discoveries of manuscripts, land features of Bible lands, archaeological finds, and artifacts brought to light, all verify the truthfulness of the Bible accounts. (See *"All Scripture Is Inspired of God and Beneficial,"* page 331.)

[12] There are examples in the Bible of obedience to Jehovah's desires. The book of Ezra highlights obedience more than once in its record of the return of the exiles to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple and repair the city. Of Ezra, chapter seven verse ten reads: "For Ezra himself had prepared his heart to consult the law of Jehovah and to do it and to teach in Israel regulation and justice." Here was a man who refused to depend on man's wisdom or strength but, rather, faithfully obeyed Jehovah's word, looking to him for protection. Ezra said when he was ready to start the long trip to Jerusalem: "I felt ashamed to ask a military force and horsemen from the king to help us against the enemy in the way, because we had said to the king: 'The hand of our *God is over all those seeking him* for good, but his strength and his anger are against all those leaving him.'" —Ezra 8:22.

[13] Well, Jehovah did protect Ezra and his small group carrying a rich treasure back to Jerusalem. "The very hand of our God proved to be over us, so that he delivered us out of the palm of the enemy and the ambush by the way." (Ezra 8:31) On arriving at Jerusalem Ezra delivered the gold, silver and the temple utensils to the priest there and the king's laws to his satraps.

[14] Then Ezra learns that those exiles, including their leaders that had returned previously, now living in Jerusalem about sixty-nine years, had not obeyed Jehovah's commandments. They had married into five of the seven nations that Jehovah commanded them to avoid. (Deut. 7:1-4; Ezra 9:1, 2) Ezra in a most contrite spirit says: "O my God, I do feel ashamed and embarrassed to raise my face to you, O my God, for our errors themselves have multiplied over our head and our guiltiness has grown great even to the heavens." —Ezra 9:6.

[15] This same humble man had hoped for blessings from Jehovah now that things were going so well, as he said: "And now *for a little moment favor from Jehovah our God has come* by leaving over for us those who escape and by giving us a peg in his holy place, to make our eyes shine, O our God, and to give us a little reviving in our servitude. And now what shall we say, O our God, after this? For we have left your commandments." (Ezra 9:8, 10) Ezra acted promptly and proceeded to clear up the matter, putting this matter first in his life until obedience to God's law was accomplished.

[16] Jesus Christ was a most mild-tempered and lowly hearted man. (Matt. 11:29) He continually offered encourage-

11. What responsibility does the individual have concerning the Bible?
12, 13. How does Ezra point up obedience to God? Describe the outcome.
14, 15. What do we learn from Ezra's handling of matters in Jerusalem on his return there?
16. (a) Describe Jesus' view on obedience. (b) How did the apostles respond to Jesus' teaching in this regard?

ment to be obedient. He did so both by word and actions. In fact the scripture at Hebrews 5:8, 9 reads: "Although he was a Son, he learned obedience from the things he suffered; and after he had been made perfect he became responsible for everlasting salvation to all those obeying him." Some years later Paul explains how energetic the apostles were in teaching obedience: "For we are overturning reasonings and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God; and we are bringing every thought into captivity to make it obedient to the Christ; and we are holding ourselves in readiness to inflict punishment for every disobedience, as soon as your own obedience has been fully carried out."—2 Cor. 10:5, 6.

17 Was it to be a hard thing? Does it sound like entering a prison term when one decides to serve God? Man would have it that way with his many rules and regulations. With man's tendencies toward making rules for everything, coupled with the increased modern means of analysis by records, many have departed from the plain, simple teachings of God's Word and obedience from the heart. (Ps. 119:11, 12; Rom. 6:17) 1 John 5:2-4 points the way, and yet it recognizes the problems and gives the solution, saying: "By this we gain the knowledge that we are loving the children of God, when we are loving God and doing his commandments. For this is what the love of God means, that we observe his commandments; and *yet his commandments are not burdensome,* because everything that has been born from God conquers the world. And this is the conquest that has conquered the world, our faith."

18 The big thing in our life then in serving our God Jehovah is this loving devotion, in building and maintaining faith forever. We are not serving because this old system has a short time to live, or because another imperfect sinful creature is watching us. (Titus 3:3-6) If we are obedient to God because we love him then we are going to derive pleasure from working together with our Christian brothers and will enjoy them to the full.

19 Ponder a little: If you are hurriedly serving God because you have suddenly looked at the time clock, what will you do when this old system is gone and thousands of years lie ahead? If you are observing God's commandments because another human creature keeps urging you to go to meetings, or to study, or to preach the Word, what are you going to do when that person stops urging you or when it is time to act from the heart? If you are zealously spending much time in the preaching of the good news of God's kingdom, being constantly concerned about getting in your hours, what would your actions be if you were not to turn in reports? Many brothers have survived years of persecution, working in an underground way with chief concern on maintaining faith, not reports, and Jehovah surely blessed them. If there be any other reason than loving devotion in your worship, put that reason under the exposing power of God's Word and examine it closely.

20 Look back to the early Christians, to the apostles. These faithful brothers were trained by Jesus Christ. Time was precious then too. There were many reasons for urgency in their work, and they were urgent. But they were never too busy to practice love toward one another. Theirs was a simple manner of worship, not complicated by modern methods of transportation or communication. Why allow pres-

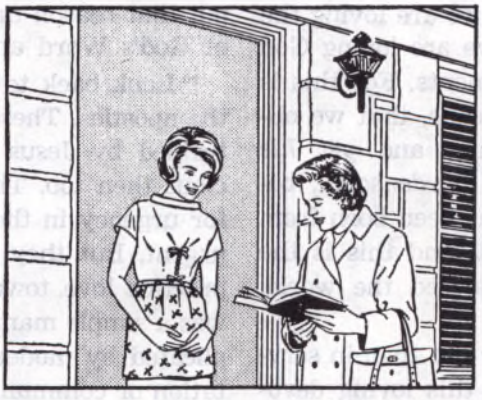
17. Should we feel that obedience to God is burdensome?
18, 19. What is the most important thing in our life, and what wrong viewpoints could get in the way?

20. (a) Where can we find examples and counsel that will guide us in a balanced way? (b) As shown by Jesus, is serving God complicated?

sure from the frenzied system of today to change things? We use the same Bible, worship the same God and follow the same leader, Christ Jesus. Just because fast, efficient and available mechanical gadgets are popular in the world today, backed up by specifications of all kinds, exacting obedience from millions, this does not mean we have to become business Christians. Christ Jesus is our perfect example and he set the course, he himself stating: "For my yoke is kindly and my load is light."—Matt. 11:30.

[21] If our concern, then, is serving Jehovah with loving devotion we will be anxious to keep our faith strong by regular feeding on spiritual food. In teaching others we will support all the ideas we bring to these new ones with Scriptural evidences. As progress is made and as obedience to God is made stronger, it will be from the heart. (Heb. 4:11, 12) Notice how Paul shows the need for one to be motivated by loving devotion, saying: "And he will render to each one according to his works: everlasting life to those who are seeking glory and honor and incorruptibleness by endurance in work that is good; however, for those who are contentious and who *disobey the truth* but obey unrighteousness there will be wrath and anger . . . For there is no partiality with God." (Rom. 2:6-11) Mechanical equipment should be a servant to man if it is going to help him. So Christians should view it as such and not wake up to find themselves tied down to filling the needs of a machine and its associated regulations.

21. What should be our main concern, then, and how can we cultivate this in others?



One who truly loves Jehovah does not need constant urging from others to keep active in the service of God

MOTIVATED BY LOVE

[22] Illustrate it this way. A wagon is a means of transportation, but it is not self-propelled or self-powered. To get somewhere the horse, ox or other means of power must be used to pull or push it. Without power the wagon is a piece of worthless equipment. As Christians we need to be motivated by loving devotion to Jehovah, which is readily recognized by the desire to do God's will. We may need some loving pulls or pushes to get us started on the way of obedience, but it does not seem reasonable that a Christian minister would have to be pulled or pushed to every Bible meeting or feature of the Christian ministry. We need to be motivated by an inside desire; our wish is to serve Jehovah; it becomes our life. Instead of fretting when obedience is required, appreciation for guidance will draw us closer to our heavenly Father.

[23] Remember Psalm 112:1: "Happy is the man in fear of Jehovah, in whose commandments he has taken very much delight." Such a one will be not an inactive or indifferent individual, but one that has decided he wants to serve Jehovah forever in any circumstances. This motivation does not come from man, regardless of the pressure he may bring to bear or the enticement offered, but rather it comes from Jehovah, through his Word and as applied by his spirit.

22, 23. What is the proper motivation for obedience?

[24] The benefits of such a course are beyond numbering. It allows people to be themselves, not distorting their true, Scripturally trained personality by conforming to their fellowman's shortsighted likes or dislikes. This fills the congregations with such a colorful variety, people with the refreshing quality of being unafraid to be their natural, uninhibited selves. One of the enjoyments of young children is their lack of fear of what others think of them. Jesus loved children and their ways. Reports Matthew 19:13, 14: "Then young children were brought to him, for him to put his hands upon them and offer prayer; but the disciples reprimanded them. Jesus, however, said: 'Let the young children alone, and stop hindering them from coming to me, for the kingdom of the heavens belongs to suchlike ones.'"

[25] Examine the variety of people in the earth's various parts today. They are different from one another. They vary in their habits and customs; they do things in different ways, at various speeds. Yet they are permitted by Jehovah to learn the truth and to serve him. Why smother some variety in your brother with a man-made measuring rule? Another evidence of this compliance with man is the mass following of some fad that sweeps the world, only to be pushed out of the picture by another one. Commercial elements of this system make fortunes by relying on their ability to stifle individual personality by having the people act as a mass.

24, 25. What benefits are there in a Christian's being obedient to God and free from rules of man?

THE NEXT ISSUE

- **Jehovah's Name to Be Declared in All the Earth.**
- **The Foreknowledge of God.**
- **Why the Churches Are Closing.**

[26] Obedience to God eliminates this danger. True, there is a similarity in the way these ministers carry out their work, but the individual expression, the depth of devotion, the degree of progress toward maturity, the ability of the creature, the colorful background of the person, and the purpose behind that individual's work make for a wide variety and an enjoyable association.

[27] Examine in detail the faithful men mentioned at Hebrews chapter eleven. One thing they had in common: their faith in Jehovah. But the individuals had so many different things in themselves and their life. Look at the men used to write the Bible. Faithful and obedient, yes, but in so many other ways different. If Jehovah does not just allow such men to serve him but invites them to do so, why should we try to make robots out of people desiring to serve God today? Peter said: "Be as free people, and yet holding your freedom, not as a blind for badness, but as slaves of God." (1 Pet. 2:16) Now, how do these truths work out in our life as a minister learning obedience to God? How do they affect parents teaching children? Where does the congregation fit into the picture? Does it have any bearing on a wife's relation to her husband? Will it make a difference in working under the various governments of this system of things? We should have these questions in mind as we study the next article, "Obedience the Desired Course."

26, 27. (a) Do Christians have consistency in their manner of worship, and does obedience allow colorful variety in God's congregation? (b) What more is there to this subject?

OBEDIENCE
the desired course

"Take my yoke upon you and become my disciples, for I am mild-tempered and lowly in heart, and you will find refreshment for your souls. For my yoke is kindly and my load is light."
—Matt. 11:29, 30.

HAVE you ever watched the powerful ocean waves beating relentlessly on the seashore? Have you discerned any mercy? Any softness or warmth on their part toward the rocks or sand? Rather, these waves have worn away the sand; they have rubbed the rocks together as with a giant hand until they have become smooth and round. They have worked away at hard stone and chiseled out caverns and holes. Yet the sea has been obedient to many of God's laws, one of which is mentioned at Job 38:8-11. There God says: "Who barricaded the sea with doors, which began to go forth as when it burst out from the womb; when I put the cloud as its garment and thick gloom as its swaddling band, and I proceeded to break up my regulation upon it and to set a bar and doors, and I went on to say, 'This far you may come, and no farther; and here your proud waves are limited'?" But in being obedient or exacting obedience from others should we be like the sea—cold, hard, exacting, relentless and with never-ending drive, wearing away at one another and ultimately getting our way?

[2] Sometimes we hear immature people conclude that if someone points out a fault or error he is a complainer or faultfinder, and they quote the faultfinding course of the Israelites. But there are times to speak up and to make known wrongs that are being carried out, even by your brothers. Proverbs 21:13 speaks up: "As for anyone stopping up his ear from the complaining cry of the lowly one, he himself also will call and not be answered." We do not all have the same wisdom or ability to make a wrong known in the proper places and not incur the disfavor of that one. Instead of being like Nathan before David, we may be blunt, dogmatic and not at all tactful; but a wrong may be there, small or great, and it affects at least one individual. (2 Sam. 12:1-14) Husbands, fathers, and overseers need not be hard about the matter, whether the wrong be insignificant or really a well-founded problem. Being like the sea will in time, with its abrasive power, wear down even the most devoted servant of God and produce a discouraged person that will just go along from day to day, year to year, being indifferent to what is going on and saying, "What's the use anyway?" He may keep on going, having in mind what Psalm 34:15 assures: "The eyes of Jehovah are toward the righteous ones, and his ears are toward their cry for help." (See also verses 16-20.)

[3] Many things affect the obedient attitude of those dedicated to serving Jehovah. One may have been raised in a home that was lawless to the extent that it was a life of constant friction. (Matt. 24:12) Another may have lived in a family atmosphere where Father's word was a rigid law and he was as approachable as

1. How could a person, in his attitude toward obedience, be like the ocean waves?
2. Describe a balanced view toward the giving of counsel on faults.
3. How does a person's background affect his attitude toward obedience?

the cold, deep, powerful sea. Others have the unhappy background in which every move was surrounded by "Don't do that!" "Stop that!"—just a never-ending barrage without any backing of a reason for obedience. Yet some are fortunate to have grown up in a home where parents and children were interested in one another, and it was easy to discuss problems with Father, knowing that help was given with love.

[4] In this present generation parents often look upon their children as being perfect and frankly are not aware that the bent of every child is toward bad, as Psalm 51:5 describes all those born into the earth until now, saying: "Look! With error I was brought forth with birth pains, and in sin my mother conceived me." That puts the young in a difficult position at times. Especially so with parents' high expectations often bolstered by public proclamation of their child's accomplishment.

[5] But can children keep measuring up to your expectations day after day without your understanding help and recognition of frail flesh? Lack of understanding may build a wall between parents and children. It may keep sons and daughters from freely discussing their problems, feeling that they have fallen down on the job. So they may bottle the problems up inside and build a frustrated outlook on life. How pleasant and reassuring, then, to talk things over! Just a few minutes makes everything look different somehow, and gives one a fresh grip on the course of obedience. This kind of encouragement is needed for one to remain in the faith even as it was in early times in the case of Paul and Barnabas, who went "strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to remain in the faith." —Acts 14:22.

4, 5. (a) What common attitude can adversely affect children and their relations with their parents? (b) How can this be avoided?

[6] Association with those not devoted to serving Jehovah will make obedience more difficult. Generally those outside of true worship are inclined to a life free from restrictions and have the tendency to back away from obedience to any kind of laws or principles from God. (1 Pet. 4:3, 4) To keep strong in the faith requires study of God's Word, and this, of course, takes time. Can we continually take time out of our study program to associate with those not obedient to Jehovah and avoid problems? Paul put it very bluntly: "Do not be misled. Bad associations spoil useful habits." (1 Cor. 15:33) On the other hand, if we are diligent in maintaining our faith and have developed the strong desire to serve Jehovah, a desire that is evidenced by our balanced devotion to our heavenly Father, we can work alongside those in this old system. We can preach to them in the ministry, and we can help our unbelieving relatives to learn the truth. And during all of this kind of association we can avoid being swayed from the desirable course of obedience.

[7] Notice the line of balance pointed out for us in the Scriptures: "You are *no part of the world.*" (John 15:19) "Do not be *loving* either the world or the things in the world." (1 John 2:15-17) "You do not continue *running* with them." (1 Pet. 4:4, 5) "Do not become *partakers* with them." "Quit *sharing* with them." (Eph. 5:7-11) But as to the Israelites we read: "They went *mingling* with the nations and took up *learning their works.* And they kept *serving their idols,* and these came to be a snare to them." (Ps. 106:35, 36) Notice how this step-by-step action led the Israelites away from obeying God. "The sons of Israel *dwelt* in among the Canaanites, the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the

6. What can make obedience more difficult?
7. (a) What do the Scriptures warn Christians to avoid? (b) How did the Israelites get into trouble?

Jebusites. And they proceeded *to take their daughters as wives* for themselves, and their own *daughters they gave to their sons,* and they *took up serving their gods.*" (Judg. 3:5, 6, 8) We do not need to take the course of living with those of this present system or loving them or serving their idols in order to preach the good news of the Kingdom to them.

[8] Too high expectations of us from others can take the joy out of obedience. As examples of this, take parents looking for above-average performance from their children, and children expecting parents to do everything for them; husbands forgetting that their wives cannot keep up to the strong determined course of a man; wives failing to realize that men are not so mindful of the little, finer things of life; overseers being so exacting because of their desire for an efficient, producing organization. There are many who are setting a frustrating goal for themselves that does not allow for happiness that comes from contented service.

[9] Take a moment to examine John chapter twenty. The apostle Thomas had missed a very important meeting and as a result did not readily believe the disciples' statement: "We have seen the Lord!" (John 20:25) Well, a week later at a meeting with Jesus he did see and hear the evidence and acknowledged Jesus: "My Lord." Did Jesus deal with him in a stern way, reprimanding him because he missed being with the other disciples and Jesus? Did Jesus refuse to explain the matter again? Did he object to complying with Thomas' desire to see and feel the marks of the nails before he believed? Did he ask Thomas where he was last week? Did Jesus give him a sermon on the value of right association or the importance of being at the meetings with the other disciples? Rather, he was willing to build up his faith and help him. He was the same Jesus who had said: "Come to me, all you who are toiling and loaded down, and I will refresh you. Take my yoke upon you and become my disciples, for I am mild-tempered and lowly in heart, and you will find refreshment for your souls. For my yoke is kindly and my load is light." (Matt. 11:28-30) It certainly was upbuilding to Brother Thomas, and afterward he continued his faithful service.—Acts 1:13.

When Thomas missed a meeting, Jesus did not take the joy out of obedience by scolding him. He helped Thomas to gain the needed faith

8. What can result from having too high an expectation of ourselves or others?
9. Explain how Jesus actually demonstrated to the apostle Thomas the qualities described at Matthew 11:28-30.

SUBMISSIVE WIVES

10 How easy submission is when husbands set a firm but loving example. There is not a perfect wife in the earth anywhere. They have many faults. They are different from men. It takes them longer to get adjusted in many matters or on different occasions. Sentimental emotions pull on them stronger. Family ties are very important to them. Religious feelings are near the surface. Empathy comes readily to the fore. This generally delicately constructed creature takes on what may appear to men to be a tedious and monotonous job and works at it month in and month out without complaining. Men will complain of monotony before women will. There are many more qualities in your wife that you can identify, but these few suffice to show that women are different from men.

11 It would be very difficult to establish what a Christian wife is worth. In a never-ending manner she will care for the needs of the family and face mountain-like problems with courage second to none. What a blessing, then, to assist such a companion to maturity and to recognize the greater value of a quiet and mild spirit above that of the external braiding of the hair or putting on of gold ornaments! (1 Pet. 3:3, 4) How wise the Christian husband is to help his wife cultivate the qualities she may have that are described at Proverbs chapter 31. You probably have noticed that the wife mentioned in Proverbs 31 is tied in very closely to a home. Wives are generally homebodies. This is their field. A Christian husband may be limited in funds and time, but he can make submission a happy lot if he provides a home that gives his wife pleasure, as well as equipment to care for the tremendous job of feeding, housing and clothing a busy, active family. The Bible book of Proverbs recognizes the wife's ability to accomplish many things. If given the opportunity, she can make the bare walls of a humble home come to life and radiate the warm cheerfulness of a Christian home. There are certain things they as human creatures would like to have, and husbands should see to it that they have the opportunity to enjoy them. Granting their wish to manage some activity in the home or with the family does not violate Bible principles of submission.

12 So a full, continuous understanding between husband and wife makes for contentment, ease of mind and enjoyable obedience to God's Word in this vital realm of submission. The home plays such an important place in man's life. He needs it every day. It is his base of operations. It is the meeting place, the most important meeting place for the family. It shelters and protects. It is his own little world. It is where he lives. And to think that for this essential place Jehovah has designed and given to man as his helper the homekeeper. "She is watching over the goings on of her household." (Prov. 31:27) And even if man does not pay her or say "thank you" for all that she does, it may well be that the rich reward that Ruth could look forward to would be hers too, as expressed in these words: "May Jehovah reward the way you act, and may there come to be a perfect wage for you from Jehovah."—Ruth 2:12.

13 Not all husbands bring gifts or remember important anniversary dates, but each one can express appreciation in some way and give needed encouragement to this one who works so hard. The course of the submissive wife should be a happy one. One reason is that she gives so much; daily and continuously she is giving. Acts

10. What should husbands recognize about their wives?
11. How can a husband help his wife to fulfill her role in marriage?

12, 13. (a) Why is homelife so important? (b) How can the husband contribute to a happy homelife?

20:35 declares: "There is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving." If husbands keep the family spiritually strong, they will have another reason for happiness, as stated at Isaiah 65:14: "My own servants will cry out joyfully because of the good condition of the heart." According to Proverbs, the entire family readily recognize the value of a happy wife: "Her sons have risen up and proceeded to pronounce her happy; her owner rises up, and he praises her. There are many daughters that have shown capableness, but you—you have ascended above them all." (Prov. 31:28, 29) It can readily be seen that the desirable course is submission as outlined in the Bible, and how full of happiness this course is when the husband makes it easy by using love all the way. "In this way husbands ought to be loving their wives."—Eph. 5:28.

LOVING HUSBANDS

14 "This is what love means, that we go on walking according to his commandments." (2 John 6) Husbands devoted to Jehovah God have the desire to walk in obedience to Jehovah's Word. Wives have much to do with the happiness that should always be found in a Christian husband's life. All husbands are imperfect; a flawless husband cannot be found in the earth anywhere. (Rom. 3:12) They have many faults. For the most part they, unlike women, are concerned with the weightier matters. They can adjust quite readily. They are not so emotional or moved with sentiment. They may even at times appear to be indifferent. While mother worries about her son climbing trees and would like to stop it for fear of injury, father realizes he is going to climb sometime anyway, and may get hurt doing so, but he will also learn something by it. In men calculation comes before empathy. Men usually rely on the wife to keep in touch with the relatives.

15 There are still more qualities in your husband that you can see in operation every day, but these few are enough to show he is different from the wife in some respects. While men receive salaries in their secular jobs, it would be difficult to determine their worth as family heads, namely, as to having someone to take the responsibility of making the final decision, to take the brunt of troubles, to find a way through problems and difficulties facing the family, to guide the family calmly in a way that brings happiness to each member. However, other members of the family have so much to do with the joy of the family head as he bends his life in obedience to Jehovah. How it contributes to the breadwinner's contentment to return each day to a home that reflects mildness, quietness and love, to a wife who overlooks his many shortcomings and does not keep a list of faults, who does not give constant reminders that he has not improved but keeps doing the same things over and over again. It brings a great deal of happiness to a man when his wife takes hold of her responsibility as a homekeeper, when she keeps the home clean and orderly, when she prepares wholesome meals, and when she produces things with her own hands, just as the scripture said: "She is watching over the goings on of her household." (Prov. 31:27) A wife can do little things that mean so much, as little as sewing a button on a shirt.

16 A very upbuilding attitude to display toward a husband is the positive one. See

14, 15. (a) Is the difference in men when compared to women a hindrance to the family? (b) How can other family members, especially the wife, contribute to making obedience to God a course that the husband will desire?

16, 17. (a) What other consideration can the wife show her husband? (b) Should shortcuts be taken that would tend to diminish love or the intake of spiritual food?

the good things in his idea first. Be careful not to bring unnecessary financial burdens upon him, so causing longer hours at an exasperating job. Contentment with the less expensive things, absence of envy, and appreciation for a contented husband will erase the desire to push him to the top rung on the financial ladder of success. It is said, 'There is room at the top,' but is there happiness there? A man, even the Christian man, is surrounded by competition, other men vying for higher positions of prestige, more pay, less work and a 'good time.' A person has to keep up his guard constantly in most of these places, in order to protect his faith.

17 Just being constantly alert all day long at the job can be very tiring and so a loving wife can increase joy in the home with an atmosphere and an attitude that allow her husband to relax from this strain. No matter how many problems he faces, how great the enemy, the Scriptures urge the use of love: "Stay awake, stand firm in the faith, carry on as men, grow mighty. Let all your affairs take place with love." (1 Cor. 16:13, 14) In the congregation's activity, brothers retain their happiness if they use love in all their dealings with others. When conventions come along, with their short time of preparation and with immaturity urging shortcuts, it is no time to put love on the shelf. If we are being crowded by one thing after another until there is little time left for maintaining faith, it is time to examine our lives. Obedience to God's Word comes first, and in order to find happiness in it, a man has to keep feeding on Jehovah's Word. That feeding cannot be temporarily set aside with the excuse that we have some urgent matter to care for and later we will get back to our studies. Jesus emphatically said: "Man must live, not on bread alone, but on every utterance coming forth through Jehovah's mouth."—Matt. 4:4.

OBEDIENT CHILDREN

18 There are many blessings in raising a family, and with this life there comes the vital matter of obedience. From the first breath and onward children have need for loving guidance. Children are different from adults. They depend on the parents for so many things. They mold easily in their tender years. They are more natural than adults—curious, anxious to see what's going on and figuring out what makes things work. The whole world lies before them as something to investigate, and they usually display great interest in the part that is near them. Children enjoy the company of others and readily group together. If not persuaded otherwise by adults, they adjust easily to differences in race, social standing or any other background affecting families. Children of the same family are different in temperament, and rarely do you find two close to being alike. This is why you find parents handling them differently and giving discipline in a different way. Children desire firm and loving parents. They enjoy a simple life free of complexities. They are quick to ask, Why? They respond readily to fairness. They thrive on love. And there are many other interesting qualities you can find in your children that set them apart from adults.

19 It would be hard to find a subject with more ideas, ranging from hints to hard, rigid rules, than the one in the field of rearing children. Everyone has something to say. Probably the well-known cycle can be illustrated in this way: Years ago a young boy grew up in a family that had to work from dawn to dark

18. Why is the difference in children so enjoyable? 19, 20. (a) Illustrate the course many persons follow in rearing families. (b) How do present-day facts prove that there is need for family training?

on the farm and usually seven days a week. There was no time to pursue play or investigate interesting items in the earth around him. Work and responsibility day after day. Essentials of schooling were often postponed to keep the farm obligations up. He vowed that, should he grow up and have a family, his children would have the full opportunity to enjoy life as youths free of grinding work and taxing responsibility. Time passed and his family became a reality. As a father he worked harder, longer hours to spare his children. They went to school, returning home each day to lunch prepared by mother, free thereafter for hurried homework, television, ball games or other play. No work, no responsibility. Then restlessness and monotony filtered in. Idle hands and brain directed feet to trouble. Senses lost their keenness with overstress on play. The young man in this family made a vow too! Should he grow up and have a family, his children would work, be trained to accomplish things and shoulder responsibility. And so the cycle has been completed many times. Families are reared by past bitter experience of parents.

[20] Another flaw that started with a minor fracture, but has grown to a wide gulf is that where parents farm their children's training out to other people. Sometimes there is total reliance on teachers, schools, baby-sitters, summer camps, child-training organizations and relatives to care for the very needed work of molding the thinking and personality of the adult-to-be. Since the child is away from parental influence so long during the day at public schools, some have tried to overcome this with private tutors. Some religious organizations try to eliminate association with those of other faiths by running their own schools. But all of these ideas have not been the things that have brought happiness to parents as they watch their children grow; rather, problems and many tragedies have marred the family circle.

[21] Not all children turn out the same way or for good. Jehovah's heavenly family had two outstanding sons that are brought to our attention in the Bible—one turned out bad. He made himself Satan the Devil. (Job 1:6; 2 Cor. 11:3, 14; John 8:44; 1 John 3:8; Rev. 12:9) The other one, Jesus, remained a faithful loving son, and his course resulted in untold blessings for mankind. His course in association with his heavenly Father is described in Colossians 1:15: "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation"; Philippians 2:5-8: "Keep this mental attitude in you that was also in Christ Jesus, who, although he was existing in God's form, gave no consideration to a seizure, namely, that he should be equal to God. No, but he emptied himself and took a slave's form and came to be in the likeness of men. More than that, when he found himself in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient as far as death, yes, death on a torture stake"; John 5:19: "Jesus went on to say to them: 'Most truly I say to you, The Son cannot do a single thing of his own initiative, but only what he beholds the Father doing. For whatever things that One does, these things the Son also does in like manner' "; Ephesians 1:7: "By means of him we have the release by ransom through the blood of that one, yes, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his undeserved kindness"; John 3:16: "For God loved the world so much that he gave his only-begotten Son, in order that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life"; 1 John 4:9, 10: "By this the love of God was

21. (a) Have all of God's sons turned out good? (b) Discuss the work and attitude of Jehovah's faithful Son.

made manifest in our case, because God sent forth his only-begotten Son into the world that we might gain life through him. The love is in this respect, not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent forth his Son as a propitiatory sacrifice for our sins"; and Revelation 7: 9, 10, 14-17: "After these things I saw, and, look! a great crowd, which no man was able to number, out of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, dressed in white robes; and there were palm branches in their hands. And they keep on crying with a loud voice, saying: 'Salvation we owe to our God, who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb.' . . . 'These are the ones that come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. That is why they are before the throne of God; and they are rendering him sacred service day and night in his temple; and the one seated on the throne will spread his tent over them. They will hunger no more nor thirst any more, neither will the sun beat down upon them nor any scorching heat, because the Lamb, who is in the midst of the throne, will shepherd them, and will guide them to fountains of waters of life. And God will wipe out every tear from their eyes.' " Both sons had opportunity to serve Jehovah faithfully, bringing honor to their Father and his house for countless ages of time. Notice the result of training and obedience in the case of Jesus. He was used by Jehovah in creation, according to Colossians 1:16, 17 and John 1:1-3, 10: "Because by means of him all other things were created in the heavens and upon the earth, the things visible and the things invisible, no matter whether they are thrones or lordships or governments or authorities. All other things have been created through him and for him. Also, he is before all other things and by means of him all other things were made to exist." "In the beginning the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god. This one was in the beginning with God. All things came into existence through him, and apart from him not even one thing came into existence. . . . He was in the world, and the world came into existence through him, but the world did not know him." He stuck to telling the truth, even when it was not popular. (Matt. 23:13, 16, 23; 15:1-9) Even though he could and did perform miracles, he never became heady or high-minded. (Luke 5:17-25; John 5:19; Matt. 11:28, 29; 21:5) He went to the people and talked to them. (Matt. 19:14; 9:35-38) A real benefit to the people then and a blessing to us now.

[22] Here, then, is a very powerful example of a loving Father and an obedient son and the blessings it brings to others. This example can encourage fathers now, and it can help them to appreciate the good there is in store for those who follow the only safe way to rear a family, and that is to make Jehovah's Word the basis for family operation. Proverbs 1:33 makes this point: "As for the one listening to me, he will reside in security and be undisturbed from dread of calamity." How much is it worth to have a son turn out good? How much time are you as a parent willing to invest? How much time can you spare to give the training and discipline? Can you instill in your young ones a useful goal? Have you found the way to make the course of obedience a happy one? Do your children find serving Jehovah the desirable way, the way they want to go to time indefinite?

22. (a) How can we apply this example to human families? (b) What questions might fathers beneficially consider?

THE VALUE REPRESENTED IN REARING CHILDREN

[23] Time spent in training a family, in providing material and spiritual food, is like putting money in the bank. It is an investment that should pay dividends even at an early time. But teaching children cannot be as mechanical as putting money in the bank. Each child is different and responds to various kinds of discipline. There were years in the past when mankind believed parents had been too strict, both at home and in school. So restrictions were eased. The young were allowed more liberties, to be more on their own, to develop, so the educators said. Do we need to talk about the results or print facts or proof as to the outcome? Everywhere the harvest proves the scripture at Proverbs 29:15 to be true: "The rod and reproof are what give wisdom, but a boy let on the loose will be causing his mother shame." How hard it would be to take one's disobedient child to the older men of the city for execution by stoning as they did in the days of Israel, according to Deuteronomy 21:18-21, where we read:

[24] "In case a man happens to have a son who is stubborn and rebellious, he not listening to the voice of his father or the voice of his mother, and they have corrected him but he will not listen to them, his father and his mother must also take hold of him and bring him out to the older men of his city and to the gate of his place, and they must say to the older men of his city, 'This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious; he is not listening to our voice, being a glutton and a drunkard.' Then all the men of his city must pelt him with stones, and he must die. So you must clear away what is bad from your midst, and all Israel will hear and indeed become afraid."

[25] It would be a difficult move for parents to make in order to follow through on this matter. Yet it could be avoided by loving discipline. It would be difficult to imagine a mother threatening her child: 'If you don't obey, we will deliver you to the older men of the city.' We can readily understand what the wise writer of Proverbs 19:18 had in mind then when he advises how parents could avoid this drastic course. This same advice comes to us in time as we train our children too: "Chastise your son while there exists hope." The best of wisdom came from Jesus in dealing with others, and surely this includes the family circle. As to his own manner of dealing he said: "I am mild-tempered and lowly in heart, and you will find refreshment for your souls. For my yoke is kindly and my load is light." (Matt. 11: 29, 30) Jesus was seeking obedience from all mankind, so if it draws thousands to Jesus in loving obedience, this same manner can draw a family ever closer to a loving head.

[26] Explore and weigh all the facts now, those of you youths who are from the age where reasoning begins, those of you who are still dependent upon your father's direction. How valuable are you? Your parents may even try to determine your worth. They did not keep track of the hours of patient care or the amount of material things needed to bring you this far. It has been a huge investment. Now as you think on the matter, are you bringing some kind of benefits to your parents and the other members of your family? Dividends are paid as a result of a wise investment. Are you a wise investment?

[27] A small newspaper clipping was found

23-25. (a) How can parents work to avoid raising children that will cause them shame? (b) What was done with rebellious children in ancient Israel, but how could it be avoided? (c) What reminder does Matthew 11:29, 30 bring to our attention?

26, 27. (a) How much has been involved in bringing you who are young people up to where you are now in the stream of time? (b) What should young persons show toward their parents?

in a Bible over one hundred years old. There was no author or source of information named, just these few lines that, over the years, have even taken on more meaning and that make this point: "At ten years of age a boy thinks his father knows a great deal, at fifteen he knows as much as his father, at twenty he knows twice as much, at thirty he is willing to take his advice, at forty he begins to think his father knows something after all, at fifty he begins to seek his advice and at sixty—after his father is dead—he thinks his father was the smartest man that ever lived." It took so many years to gain appreciation for the one that had so much to do with their getting into this world and having life. Your parents could have ignored you at birth and turned you over to someone else to feed, house and teach. Some children do have institutions as their guardians, but even in the best of such institutions the love of father and mother is missing.

[28] There may be times when you youths feel dissatisfied with your homelife and you can see so many flaws in the way things are being run. Do you have better ideas? Are you just thinking and not working to help improve matters? Chances are that if you were directing the family it would have the same flaws, since you are a product of your father and mother. You may feel improved methods of education equip you to do better, but wait a minute! The brainy men of this world cannot iron out the problems they face. Higher education and complicated computers have not been the tools to direct the human family to peace and contentment. Whenever you doubt the value of your parents, ask a friend how much he would charge to take on the responsibility of feeding, clothing, housing, nursing, educating, disciplining, entertaining, and helping a small baby from its first breath to when it reaches the adult age. The cost for such an operation would be tremendous, and, keep in mind, this has not included this other quality that you cannot buy—love.

[29] You youths can easily see why the Bible says what it does at Proverbs 23:22: "Listen to your father who caused your birth, and do not despise your mother just because she has grown old."

[30] Some are saying that life is a game, and to keep it from being monotonous they want to make it all fun. But life is serious business; at best you have only a few years to enjoy. A mature man once told others: "Whatever things are of serious concern . . . continue considering these things." (Phil. 4:8) "Women should likewise be serious." (1 Tim. 3:11) "Let the aged men be . . . serious." (Titus 2:2) It is not strange, then, that Jehovah expects mature fathers to train you children "with all seriousness." (1 Tim. 3:4) Life is not all play. You have many excellent qualities hidden in your mind and physical body, and it is not wise to allow them to lie undeveloped and miss out on many enjoyable years with happiness as a result. Discipline, training, work and love bring these qualities out, to your good and enjoyment.

[31] What a pleasure to accomplish things! After receiving instruction and supervision you may have the pleasure of building a piece of furniture for the family's enjoyment. As a result of mother's training, you may have the opportunity to make drapes or curtains for the home. You may cultivate ability as a cook, to be an economical shopper, a painter, a musician,

28. How might young folks increase their appreciation for the guidance and care that their parents provide?

29. What proper attitude does Proverbs 23:22 urge all sons and daughters to have?

30. Why should a person not regard life as being all play?

31, 32. Why should we be interested in training for various skills?

mechanic, builder, gardener, landscape architect, dressmaker, and to have many other very useful as well as enjoyable accomplishments. Not only can you enjoy these activities, but they prove to be useful to the family. Actually in their application you are paying back to your parents dividends on the investment they have in you.

32 Of course, you can appreciate how much happiness this brings your parents. How satisfying it was to three daughters, eight, nine, and ten years old, who prepared and cooked an entire meal for the family and a large group of visitors. The parents were so pleased with the work of their hands. A teen-ager did such a fine job in painting the family house that it was rated far above average, as quality work. Two young boys raised enough vegetables in their backyard garden to supply the family all summer. They had watched it grow from tiny seeds to edible products. You can hold a job where others fail if you strive for quality, to do it right and produce good work. Nowadays it stands out above the generally 'just-get-by' work being done everywhere, and really reflects back on you, your family and your interest in life. Keep in mind that in every respect the principles made known at Proverbs 13:20 apply to our lives, namely: "He that is walking with wise persons will become wise, but he that is having dealings with the stupid ones will fare badly."

HOW IS OBEDIENCE VIEWED?

33 There is another matter to give thought to. How do you view this matter of obedience? Are you finding yourself resentful toward discipline from your parents? True, "no discipline seems for the present to be joyous, but grievous; yet afterward to those who have been trained by it it yields peaceable fruit, namely, righteousness." (Heb. 12:11) Yet we have to have someone taking the lead, giving instruction and setting an example. Were you left on your own, you would be still sucking milk from a bottle. Do you get disturbed when you discern your parents giving discipline differently to your brother or sister? But you are the first to declare that you are not the same as they are, and in this you are right. Then why object to different treatment. Your parents are trying to teach each one according to his ability. This, then, is the place where you can make obedience the desired course for yourself, and so cause it to be pleasant for the other members of your family.

34 Take, for example, those chores you have been assigned to take care of around the home. If you do them readily, without having to be told each time, it is far more pleasant. If you care for them with the idea of improving the operation, you will be developing the quality that is known as initiative. Day after day you handle these matters to the point where everyone in the family recognizes it, and that is what is called dependability. It is a strong indication that you are growing up. If you break something, or do something wrong, recognize the damage yourself and be the first to go directly to your parents and tell them. This is identified as honesty, as being trustworthy. There are many other qualities that you are cultivating, and these find their start early in your life as part of your family circle. You will find some of these listed in the Bible at Galatians, chapter five, verses twenty-two and twenty-three, where we read: "On the other hand, the fruitage of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness,

33. How should discipline be viewed?

34. How can initiative and trustworthiness be shown?

goodness, faith, mildness, self-control. Against such things there is no law."

35 Being alert to counsel for improvement makes life a lot easier too. Rather than your parents' having to impress discipline on your mind with constant going over and over it, and sometimes with strict punishment, why not figure things out and try to improve without drastic measures being used? Young people have an outstanding amount of curiosity about things going on around them. Now, why not ask: 'What will happen in our family if I don't do this thing my parents keep insisting on my doing? How do my actions affect others?' Let us take a look at the situation through an illustration. In any field there are two classes of people, participants and observers. There is more enjoyment, more knowledge of the subject, and more action in participation than in observing. In the family, are you an observer or a participant? It is easy to find people who go through life as observers, and sometimes you wonder if they really enjoy living. Yet, when you look into the Bible, it links life to action. Read one description as found at Acts 17:24, 25, 28: "The God that made the world and all the things in it . . . gives to all persons life and breath and all things. For by him we have life and move and exist."

36 To many young people study sounds like hard work. It is. But it brings rewards, accomplishments, knowledge and happiness. Study is the field of investigation. Under examination you prove things to your own satisfaction. Regarding this, notice Proverbs 18:15: "The heart of the understanding one acquires knowledge, and the ear of wise ones seeks to find knowledge."

35. In what way can youthful curiosity be beneficially used?

36, 37. How does one study and learn from creation?

37 It is true that man has progressed in the mechanical, scientific world of knowledge, and many inventions such as telephones, television, radio, computers, telescopes and others help us to gain information. But men are still studying God's creation and the things in it. Men, before modern advances in machines, had studied these things and were men of learning. You can learn too, and really gain deep appreciation for the things that God created, by investigating them, not just observing them. Pick out an animal, an insect, a bird or a fish and examine its work, its characteristics, its life and its relationship to others, and you will be amazed at your findings. Mankind in general observes earth's vast array of wisdom on display, but mankind rarely goes to the trouble of becoming a participant and investigating. Paul tells, at Romans 1:20: "His [God's] invisible qualities are clearly seen from the world's creation onward, because they are perceived by the things made, even his eternal power and Godship, so that they are inexcusable." You will not be running out of material to investigate for a long while to come, for Ecclesiastes 3:11 reminds us: "Everything he has made pretty in its time. Even time indefinite he has put in their heart, that mankind may never find out the work that the true God has made from the start to the finish."

38 You will find the same thing true of your study of the Bible. Most people are just mild observers and recognize it as a good book, the best seller, a good example, literature, and the book that tells of God. Participants dig into it and find it rich with wisdom, as Proverbs 2:4-6 tells us: "If you keep seeking for it as for silver, and as for hid treasures you keep searching for it, in that case you will understand the fear of Jehovah, and you will

38. What benefits come from studying God's Word?

find the very knowledge of God. For Jehovah himself gives wisdom; out of his mouth there are knowledge and discernment." Now, as a young person filled with curiosity, that desire to understand, is there not a challenge before you? Really, if you feel that life is monotonous, it is you that are, because you are literally walking on never-ending fields of variety every day.

[39] So obedience should be the desirable way to go. It should always be closely tied in with happiness. You who are parents, be wise, follow the example of Christ Jesus, who said: "I am mild-tempered and lowly in heart, and you will find refreshment for your souls. For my yoke is kindly and my load is light." (Matt. 11:29, 30) Do not delay discipline. Apply it with love.

39. What atmosphere should there be in the home, as illustrated by the sea?

Our modern world is filled with mechanical wonders and gadgets that may keep us busy working to meet the payments therefor. Why wind up with a house full of modern machines, and with parents so tired and frustrated that they have no time to clothe the home with love? As you watch the pounding surf on the rocks, and the rollers building up to come in swiftly to crash on the shore, running back out to come in again, you feel the sea is in such a hurry that it cannot draw you close. But somewhere else the same sea is so calm, quietly lapping at the shore in a gentle manner. Its warmth reaches out to you. You feel like staying. Its undisturbed attitude will bring you back to its own contented atmosphere time after time. So will your home be, where obedience is the desirable course because of love.

GOD HAS A NAME

An article specially designed for parents to read with their children

WHAT is your name? You have a name. So do I. The first man on earth had a name. God called him Adam. The first woman was named Eve. Every man, woman and child has a name.

God gave the angels in heaven names too. Do you know the name of the angel whom God sent to earth to tell about the birth of his Son? That angel's name is Gabriel.

Look up at the many, many stars at night. Do you think they have names? Yes, God gave a name to each star in the sky. The Bible tells us: "He is counting the number of the stars; all of them he calls by their names."—Ps. 147:4.

People, angels and stars all have names. So do you think that God has a name? Jesus said that he does. Jesus once said in prayer to God: 'I have made your name known to my followers.'—John 17:26.

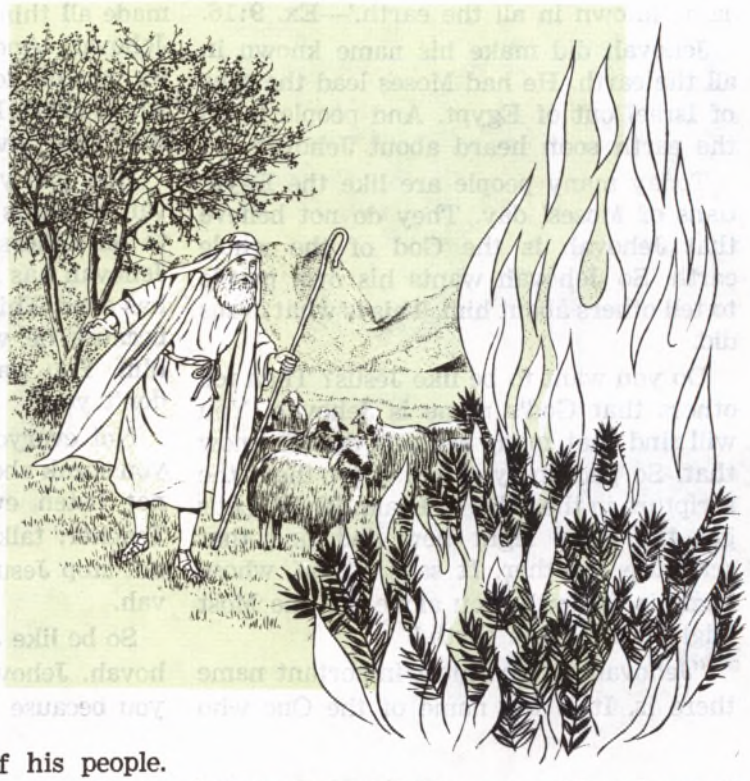
Do you know God's name? God himself tells us what it is. He says: "I am Jehovah. That is my name." (Isa. 42:8) So God's name is JEHOVAH.

Do you like it when others remember your name? People like to be called by their name. And Jehovah wants people to know his name too. So you should use the name Jehovah when you talk about God.

Jesus used God's name Jehovah when he spoke to people. One time Jesus said:

"You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart."—Mark 12:30.

Jesus knew that "Jehovah" is a very important name. So he taught his followers to use God's name. He even taught them to speak about God's name in their prayers. Jesus knew that God wants all people to know his name Jehovah.



Long ago God showed the importance of his name to the man Moses. Moses was one of the sons of Israel. The sons of Israel lived in a land called Egypt. The people of that land were known as Egyptians. They made the sons of Israel slaves and were very mean to them. When Moses grew up, he tried to help one of his people. This made the king of Egypt angry. He wanted to kill Moses! So Moses ran away from Egypt.

Moses went to another land. It was the land of Midian. There Moses got married and began to raise a family. He worked as a shepherd. A shepherd is a person who takes care of sheep. One day Moses was busy caring for sheep near a mountain. There he saw an amazing thing. A thornbush was on fire, but it was not burning up! Moses went closer to take a look.

Do you know what happened? Moses heard a voice from the middle of that burning bush. The voice called, "Moses! Moses!"

Who was saying that? It was God speaking! God had a big job for Moses to do. God said: "Come and let me send you to Pharaoh [the king of Egypt], and you bring my people the sons of Israel out of Egypt." God promised to help Moses to bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt.

But Moses said to God: 'Suppose I come to the sons of Israel in Egypt and say that God sent me. What if they ask me, What is his name? What shall I say?' God told Moses to tell the sons of Israel: 'Jehovah has sent me to you. Jehovah is my name forever.'—Ex. 3:1-15.

Moses now knew that God was going to keep the name Jehovah. He would never change it. God wanted to be known by the name Jehovah forever.

Moses went back to Egypt. The Egyptians there did not really know Jehovah. They thought that he was just a small god of the sons of Israel. The Egyptians did not think that Jehovah was the God of the whole earth. So Jehovah told the king of Egypt: 'I am going to make my

name known in all the earth.'—Ex. 9:16.

Jehovah did make his name known in all the earth. He had Moses lead the sons of Israel out of Egypt. And people in all the earth soon heard about Jehovah.

Today many people are like the Egyptians of Moses' day. They do not believe that Jehovah is the God of the whole earth. So Jehovah wants his own people to tell others about him. This is what Jesus did.

Do you want to be like Jesus? Then tell others that God's name is Jehovah. You will find that many persons do not know that. So perhaps you can show them the scripture in the Bible at Psalm 83:18. Let's get the Bible right now and find that scripture together. It says: "You, whose name is Jehovah, you alone are the Most High over all the earth."

"Jehovah" is the most important name there is. It is the name of the One who made all things. Jesus loves and worships Jehovah. And remember, Jesus said that we should love Jehovah God with our whole heart. Both Jesus and Moses showed that they loved Jehovah that much.

How can you show that you love Jehovah as Jesus and Moses did? One way is to tell others about the wonderful things Jehovah has made and the good things he has done. This makes Jehovah very happy, because he wants people to know about him. You want to make Jehovah happy, don't you?

Not everyone will want to listen when you speak about Jehovah. Many people did not listen even when Jesus, the Great Teacher, talked about Him. But that did not stop Jesus from speaking about Jehovah.

So be like Jesus. Keep talking about Jehovah. Jehovah God will be pleased with you because you show love for his name.

Kindness and Tact—What They Can Accomplish

FOR many people acting unkindly is the rule rather than the exception. In acting this way they usually set off a chain reaction, as their victims strike back the same way. However, true Christians 'seek to clothe themselves with kindness.' (Col. 3:12) In doing this, they can deal with unkindness in a most effectual way. The joyful outcome of the following experience of one of Jehovah's witnesses underscores this fact:

"One day, while I was making personal visits, I knocked on a door where a German girl answered. I was delighted because I could give my sermon in German, for my English was not very good then. After I began to explain my purpose in calling at her home, she interrupted me and said in a very unkind way, 'I hate God and I want to have nothing to do with the Bible.' As I was leaving, she said, 'If you need anything personal, you can come to me.'

"A short time later, I needed someone who knew both German and English and who could translate something for me. I could think of no one except this German girl who had acted so unkindly. With some misgivings, I tapped on her door. She opened the door and said coldly, 'What, are you back again?'

"I answered, 'But you said I could come back again if I needed something.'

"'Oh!' she said and then added, 'Well, come on in!'

"After I explained the matter to her, she became very friendly and she helped me with it. To show my appreciation for her help, I invited her to come to my home the next day for some German cake and coffee. Well, she came again and again. She seemed to be coming every day. I had an idea. If she keeps visiting me, I have an excellent opportunity to tell her something about the Bible and God's promised new order. So during her

visits as we drank coffee and munched on German cake, I told her a little about God's purposes each day.

"For instance, when her little boy had some sickness, I pointed out that he would not have any sicknesses at all in Jehovah's new order. When she spoke of her longing to own a new house, I tactfully explained to her that she could own one in the earthly paradise that God promises. This gentle seeding and watering went on for about four months. One morning she came to my home early and knocked on the door. I opened the door and there she stood with that same unkind look that she had when I first met her. She almost pushed me into the house and ordered me to sit down, which I did. Then she angrily waved her arm at me and said, 'You, you have bewitched me.'

"I answered her mildly, 'I have? How?'

"She replied: 'Last night I dreamed about that new order that you always talk about. Since you are the one telling me these things, show me where they are in the Bible!' So I took my Bible and showed her what she wanted to know. 'Now,' she cried, 'come to my house.' We went to her home and there she took her thirty-dollar Bible down from a very high shelf. She then said, 'Now, show me from my own Bible!' I did.

"A few months later, when she had acquired more understanding of the Bible, she took her thirty-dollar Bible under her arm and went from door to door where she lived. She showed the people many of the wonderful things that she had learned. She did this because she felt that she owed it to Jehovah to let everyone know that she had really changed. Some admitted that this had to be the true religion if it could change a person like her.

"I have learned from this experience that if you meet anyone who is unkind, always show kindness. Who knows, it could be another sheeplike person."

● During a Bible study that I was conducting, Romans 8:26, 27 came up for discussion. Could you please explain the meaning of these verses? —A. B., U.S.A.

The verses in question read: "In like manner the spirit also joins in with help for our weakness; for the problem of what we should pray for as we need to we do not know, but the spirit itself pleads for us with groanings unuttered. Yet he who searches the hearts knows what the meaning of the spirit is, because it is pleading in accord with God for holy ones."

How does God's holy spirit plead for holy ones? In this way: God foresaw and foretold the experiences of the Christian congregation. In his Word, which is inspired by means of God's spirit, He foretold that Christians would come into certain situations. By that same spirit-inspired Word he caused prophetic prayers to be recorded that foretold how Christians would be brought out of such situations and be preserved in his service. Because Christians have not always understood the prophecies and the prophetic prayers, they do not know exactly how to express themselves and the right thing for which to pray. Yet they have prayed for God's help.

The apostle Paul found himself in such a situation, of which he wrote: "For we do not wish you to be ignorant, brothers, about the tribulation that happened to us in the district of Asia, that we were under extreme pressure beyond our strength, so that we were very uncertain even of our lives. In fact, we felt within ourselves that we had received the sentence of death."

So the question was, Would it be God's will to deliver Paul and his companions or would God let them be put to death? Paul goes on to give the answer: "This was that we might have our trust, not in ourselves, but in the God who raises up the dead. From such a great thing as death he did rescue us and will rescue us; and our hope is in him that he will also rescue us further."—2 Cor. 1:8-10.

Yes, God knows his times and seasons; he knows what is written down in his Word through his spirit, and he knows how such things apply to Christians and when. He knows the meaning of those spirit-inspired prophecies and prayers, and he lets these intercede for

Jesus' true followers. He accepts these as being what they should like to ask and pray for, and, accordingly he fulfills them. Afterward he reveals to them by the power of his spirit how these prophecies have been fulfilled toward them, and they see that it is just what they should have asked for, had they known and understood.

The faithful remnant of Christ's anointed followers who survived the tests of 1918 can particularly appreciate this fact. How so? In that they were in dire straits during the war years. They were in doubt, confused; they were not certain as to what was God's will for them. So they did not know exactly what to pray for, though they certainly prayed for divine support. But God's Word had foretold their condition and it contained prophetic prayers, and God accepted these prayers as being by them and answered them accordingly.—Psalms 69; 102; 126; Isaiah chapter 12.

Likewise today, both organizationally and individually, God's servants may be beset by trials and not know the way out, not know just what to pray for. But God knows and he accepts the prayers recorded in his Word as coming from his people and answers them according to his will. They may feel that they should be relieved from a certain test, but God knows that it may be best for them to keep undergoing such a test, as in the case of Jehovah's witnesses in the Nazi concentration camps. Such a test may well result in a great witness to Jehovah's name, cultivate fine qualities in his servants and cause others to take their stand for Jehovah. This has been the case in Malawi. It has also often furnished opportunities for fellow Christians to show their love by coming to the aid of those undergoing tests to the extent that they were able to do so. —John 13:34, 35.

Thus we can see how God's spirit does indeed plead for his people by means of the spirit-inspired Word when they are under great stress. Additionally, in view of these texts, how wise it is when Christians are under tribulation that they always pray as did Jesus: "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass away from me. Yet, not as I will, but as you will." —Matt. 26:39.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

August 16: Meeting the Divine Requirement of Obedience, ¶1-21. Page 425. Songs to Be Used: 35, 74.

August 23: Meeting the Divine Requirement of Obedience, ¶22-27, and Obedience the Desired Course, ¶1-17. Page 430. Songs to Be Used: 89, 95.

August 30: Obedience the Desired Course, ¶18-39. Page 437. Songs to Be Used: 105, 112.