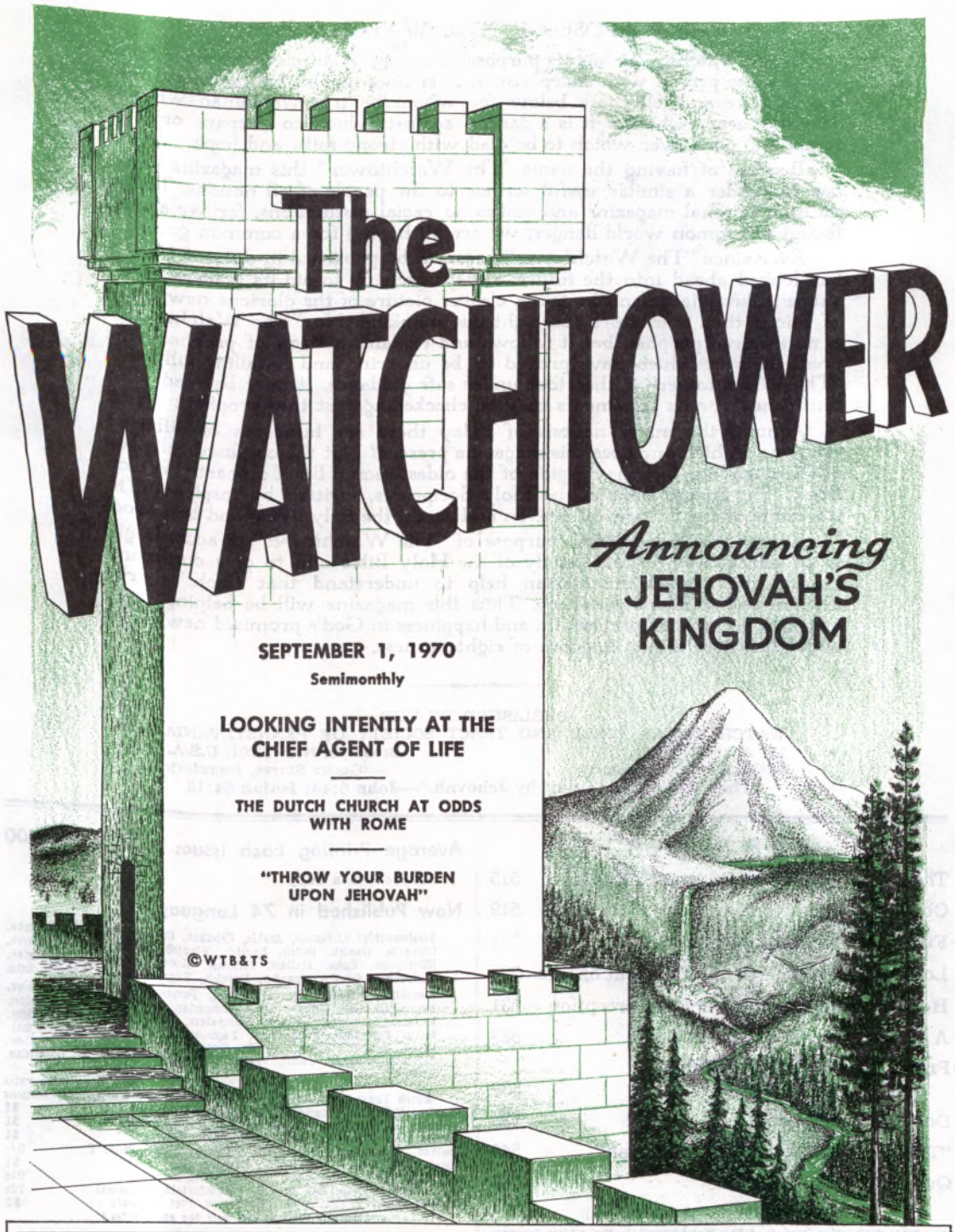

"YOU ARE MY WITNESSES," SAYS JEHOVAH.—Isa. 43:12

THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER"

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

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

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

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

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

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

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The WATCHTOWER
Announcing JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM
Vol. XCI September 1, 1970 Number 17

The Dutch Church at ODDS with ROME

"I AM telling you, Sir! For twenty-five years I have had daily contact with the people. All of us feel that we have been cheated by the church. All these changes have taken away our enthusiasm. Not that all of us have quit the church, but we have lost our zeal. And our children are taking the next step. They do not go at all."

That is what a middle-aged businessman in a Catholic country town in the Netherlands told a traveling minister. But is this an isolated case? No, his feelings are shared by countless others among the clergy and the laity alike.

This is shown by the sharp decline in church attendance—420,000 churchgoers less at the end of 1969 than in 1966—and it is evident from the thinning out of the ranks of the clergymen. A feeling of great uneasiness is common among Dutch Catholics all over the country. It is due to the changes in their church and worsening relations with Rome.

Recent events in connection with priestly celibacy have strained to the critical point relations between the Dutch church and Rome. The situation became tense during the fifth session of the pastoral council, held from January 4 to 7, 1970, in Noordwijkerhout, Netherlands.

There the recommendation was made to allow the ordination of married priests. During the sessions at this council the bishops did not vote. But later, when the Vatican voiced its strong displeasure over the pronouncement of the Dutch council, the Dutch bishops too declared that they wanted to clear the way for married priests. This was against the expressed wishes of Pope Paul VI.

That Rome was very displeased with this pronouncement is shown by the fiery denunciation that appeared in *L'Osservatore Romano* of January 30, 1970, stating that the celibacy action constituted "a maneuver against the pope." *Le Monde* of Paris said: "It is the first time in the history of the Catholic church that a national conference of bishops in its entirety openly goes against clear papal policy." A leading Catholic newspaper in the Netherlands expressed the situation by declaring: "Dutch Church Collides Headlong with Rome."

But has the Dutch church always been at odds with Rome? If not, how did the situation grow to its present explosive state? A brief look at the history of the

Roman Catholic Church in the Netherlands will be helpful.

HISTORY OF DUTCH CHURCH

During the sixth to the eighth centuries C.E., people in the general area of what is now the Netherlands were persuaded to become members of the Roman Catholic Church. Under Emperor Charlemagne very strong means were used to incorporate a whole people, the Saxons, into the church. Historians say that this "Christianizing" was carried on with a strong hand, at times baptism being required under the threat of death.

Gradually the whole population accepted "Christianity." But this did not stop them from spilling blood in fighting out their controversies among themselves. In these feuds the bishop of Utrecht often took the initiative in carrying out marauding expeditions in his neighborhood. In this he did not differ from the secular rulers of that time.

A severe crisis hit the Dutch church in the sixteenth century. This was due to the Reformation, which found a ready response in the country. The "reformers" were successful because they urged the people to get to know the Bible better. For the first time, complete Bible translations became available in the Dutch language. But the Catholic clergy fought the new movement with all their power, and many Bible readers died at the stake. On both sides cruelties were committed. The religious contentions grew into a civil war.

The conclusion of this long-drawn-out war came with the Peace Treaty of Münster in 1648. By this treaty recognition was given to a Protestant northern part, making up approximately the modern-day country of the Netherlands, and a predominantly Catholic southern part, making up approximately modern-day Belgium.

At first, the Catholic minority in the Netherlands had to profess its faith in secret. But gradually more freedom came. During the official ban of Catholic worship, the Catholic church for a long time did not exist as an independent church province with its own hierarchy, but for centuries was governed directly from Rome. Understandably a stronger influence from Rome was felt than normally would have been the case.

This may be the reason why, with the exception of the Schism of Utrecht in 1723, the relationship between the Dutch church and Rome was quite undisturbed. In the middle of the nineteenth century a change in the constitution made possible the restoration of the episcopal hierarchy in the Netherlands. Now about 40 percent of the Dutch population of over twelve and a half million consists of Roman Catholics.

CONFLICT GROWS

Up to World War II, the Dutch church was in a condition described as 'the prosperous Roman Catholic life.' There was a strong attachment to Rome and an abundant Catholic social life. The number of priests sent out from the Netherlands as missionaries was very high. Religiously speaking, there were ease and quietness. This may explain why the Dutch church did not openly resist the concordat between the Vatican and Hitler. The time was not yet ripe.

However, during and after World War II the situation changed. The population groaned under Nazi oppression. The bishops in the Netherlands assumed an attitude much different from that of the pope of Rome regarding the oppression and deportation of Jews. When, some years later, Rolf Hochhuth's play "The Deputy" was shown, the discussions about the stand the pope had taken in those years flared

THE DUTCH SAY—

"We Have Been Cheated by the Church."
There Is a "Mess in the Church."
"Grant the Priest a Wedding Ring."
"Dutch Church Collides Headlong with Rome."
"We as Individuals Must Change."

up again. A well-known Catholic reporter wrote that the silence of the pope at a time when the Dutch bishops spoke out boldly against Nazi persecution of the Jews had been a painful thing.

However, it was the second Vatican Council of 1962-1965 that gave rise to the present situation. That council, according to Pope John XXIII, was intended 'to let a little fresh air into the church.' Instead, it raised controversies of hurricane force that threaten to blow the structure to bits.

In 1966 the Dutch episcopacy published a new catechism. Relations with Rome worsened quickly. The doctrinal purity of this catechism came under Vatican criticism. It became a matter of strong controversy. At last an extensive inquiry was made into the accusation of heresy regarding its contents. Finally a board of cardinals suggested revisions that had to be published by the Dutch church as a supplement.

HEADLONG COLLISION

The situation reached the breaking point by the decision of the Dutch bishops to "Grant the Priest a Wedding Ring," as a newspaper headline expressed it. This brought the Dutch church into headlong collision with Rome. The bishops favored the opinion that married priests be given a place in the church. This was directly against the expressed wish of the pope to abstain from making any negative comments concerning celibacy.

The matter cannot be shoved aside by saying that it involves only a small group of rebelling priests who want to marry. Some try to explain it this way. The facts, however, show that most priests and 70 percent of the Dutch Catholics are in favor of marriage for priests while retaining their full authority. About half of the Catholics feel that local bishops should have the authority to cancel obligatory celibacy for priests.

In the meantime, the pope keeps on saying "No" to priests' being allowed to marry. He wants the Dutch bishops to revise their stand as to the matter of celibacy. Since he has announced this, the number of priests leaving the church has increased. In January of 1970 the number of resigning priests was twice as high as in previous months.

REACTION OF PEOPLE

How are the Catholic people reacting to all this? Of course, there is much confusion. But generally speaking, four groups can be distinguished. One group is made up of people who see in this situation a challenge to renew the church. They feel it affords the opportunity to make needed changes.

A second group consists of those who dislike the "mess in the church," as they express it. So they turn their backs on the church and on faith in God. Among this group we find many young people. They do not want to be cheated as their parents have been. But does dishonesty among men disprove the existence of God? The apostle Paul said that God cannot lie. (Heb. 6:18) His Word of truth, the Holy Bible, opens up a new future for young and old alike. And Jehovah's witnesses are

now helping many of these people in the Netherlands to understand the Bible and God's purposes. To assist the people with their study of the Bible, they use the book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life.* One reader called the contents of this book 'a gold mine of Bible knowledge.'

A third group includes those Catholics who take the view that, although they do not agree with the confused situation, they are not willing to leave the church. But many of them have lost their zeal and have become passive observers. Their opinion about renovation is: "Let them have their own way. I will have my own way too." But if there is nothing to get enthusiastic about, would it not be time to look elsewhere? A prominent Dutch clergyman wrote that the church is God's grave. But the fact that the church is a grave does not mean that God is in that grave, or that people should stay there. God is alive and guarantees a 'new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness is to dwell.' (2 Pet. 3:13; 1 Tim. 3:15) Such a heartwarming promise should be welcomed by persons who really love God.

Then, there is an ever-increasing group of Catholic people who have made a different assessment of what is happening in their church. They see that the Bible is not really being relied on by either side in this conflict. Yet the Bible is plain as to the right view in all the points of conflict. That is why these people are turning to the Bible and studying it with Jehovah's witnesses, who offer to all people a free six-month Bible-study course.

For instance, one young Catholic man was collecting money from house to house for the parish. At one door he met a Witness and was invited in. The Witness said that he did a preaching work, but that the difference was that he taught the Bible and did not receive money for it as the pastor did. The Witness offered him a free Bible study for one hour every week.

The young man and his wife accepted this offer and have progressed rapidly in learning Bible truths. They feel the urge now to work from house to house, not to collect money, but to tell others about God's marvelous promises for the future. They no longer feel lost because of being abandoned by their spiritual leaders. They have regained faith in God and his dependable Word. They see no need for modernizing the church, but as they said, "we as individuals must change to be in harmony with God's Word."

Many others are coming to appreciate this need. When confronted either directly or indirectly with the conflicts in the church, they have taken the right steps to please God. They are not acting merely in a spirit of rebellion, nor do they allow themselves to become indifferent toward God. They are really interested in being at peace with God and doing his will.

Thus, while the turmoil grows in the Catholic church, many are having their eyes opened. They are taking hold of the opportunity to evaluate correctly their relationship to God from the Bible standpoint. And they rejoice to learn of God's purpose to end all world turmoil and to grant eternal life under righteous conditions to those who really do his will. —Matt. 7:21-23; Ps. 37:10, 11, 29.

THE NEXT ISSUE

- **The Hour of Test Is On!**
- **Enjoying Real Happiness in Family Life.**
- **Those Who Became Jesus' Disciples.**

OBEDIENCE Protects You

An article specially designed for parents to read with their children

WOULD you like it if you could do anything you wanted? Are there times when you wish that no one would ever tell you what to do? Now, be honest and tell me.

But which is better for you? Is it really wise to do anything you want? Or do things turn out better when you obey your father and your mother? God says that you should obey your parents, so there must be a good reason for it. Let's see if we can figure it out.

How old are you? Do you know how old your father is? How old is your mother? They are much older than you are. They have lived much longer than you have. And the longer a person lives the more time he has to learn things. He hears more things, and sees more things and does more things every year. So young folks can learn from older ones.

Whom do you know that is younger than you are? Do you know more than he does? Why is it that you know more? It is because you have lived longer. You have had more time to learn things than he has.

Who has lived longer than you or I or any other person? Jehovah God has. He knows more than you do and he knows more than I do. When he tells us what is good for us, we can be sure that it is right. If we do what he says, it will protect us. We should always obey him.

So you see, I need to be obedient too. I need to obey God. It is for my own good. And it results in good for you when you obey God. You want to obey God, don't you?

Let's get out our Bible and see what God tells children to do. Can you find the book of Ephesians? We are going to read from Ephesians chapter six, verses one, two and three. It says: "Children, be obedient to your parents in union with the Lord, for this is righteous: 'Honor your father and your mother'; which is the first command with a promise: 'That it may go well with you and you may endure a long time on the earth.'"

That is in the Bible. So it is Jehovah God himself who is telling you to be obedient to your father and mother.

What does it mean to "honor" your father and your mother? It means that you are to show them respect. You should listen to them and do what they say without complaining. Obedience protects you. And God promises that if you obey, it will "go well with you."

I know a story about some people whose lives were saved because they were obedient. Would you like to hear it?

These people lived in the big city of Jerusalem long ago. Most of the people in that city were bad. They did not listen to God. Jehovah sent his own Son, Jesus Christ, to teach them. But they still did not listen. What would God do to them?

Jesus warned them that God was going to have their city destroyed. He said that armies of soldiers would camp around the city and ruin it. He also told the people how they could escape if they loved what was right. This is what he said:

'When you see armies all around Jerusalem, you will know that the destruction

of the city is getting near. Then is the time to get out of Jerusalem and run to the mountains.'—Luke 21:20-22.

It happened just as Jesus said it would. The armies of Rome came and camped all around Jerusalem. Then for some reason they left. Most of the people thought that the danger was past. They stayed in the city. But what had Jesus said they should do?

What would you have done if you had been living in Jerusalem? Those who really believed Jesus left their homes and ran far away from Jerusalem into the mountains. Not only grown-ups went; children went with them.

But were they really protected because they were obedient? For a whole year nothing happened to Jerusalem. In the second year nothing happened. And in the third year nothing happened. Some people may have thought that those who had left the city were foolish. But then in the fourth year the armies of Rome came back. Again they camped all around Jerusalem. Now it was too late to escape. This time the armies destroyed the city. Most of the people inside were killed and the rest were taken prisoner.

But what happened to those who had obeyed Jesus? They were safe. They were far away from Jerusalem. So they were not hurt. Obedience protected them.

If you are obedient, will that protect you too? Yes. Let me show you how. I may tell you never to play in the street. Why do I do that? It is because you might be hit by a car and get killed.

But someday you might think: 'There are no cars right now. I won't get hurt. Other children play in the street, and I have never seen them get hurt.'

That is how most of the people in Jerusalem thought. After the armies of Rome had left, it looked safe. Others were staying in the city. So they stayed too. They had been warned, but they did not listen. As a result, they lost their lives. How much better it is to obey!

Let's take another example. Have you ever played with matches? It may seem like fun to watch the fire when you light a match. But playing with matches can be dangerous, so never do it. It is like playing with a poisonous snake. The snake may not bite you, but it could! And the matches may not burn you, but they could. They could burn down the whole house and kill you! So obedience is a protection, isn't it? Obeying just some of the time is not enough. But if you always obey, it really will protect you.

Who is it that tells you, "Be obedient to your parents"? It is God. And, remember, he says that because he really loves you.

FULL-TIME KOREAN MINISTERS

A DISTINGUISHED-LOOKING gentleman approaches the main gate of a Korean residence. He looks for the bell. Pushing the button, he glances at the nameplate and notices that the householder's name is Kim. As the housemaid calls from inside the gate, he asks if Mr. Kim is at home. The housemaid cautiously opens the small door set inside the big gate. Since the visitor looks to her like a schoolteacher or someone equally distinguished, she lets him in. He stoops low to enter the tiny gate. The visitor greets the householder, introduces himself as a minister and presents his Bible message. The visitor is one of more than a thousand full-time ministers of Jehovah's witnesses in South Korea.

In Korea a high percentage of Witnesses take up the full-time ministry. Some devote between 75 and 100 hours to public teaching of the Bible during a month that they set aside for that purpose; others, as regular pioneer ministers, spend 100 or more hours in this activity regularly each month; and yet others, as special pioneer ministers, put in 150 hours. In 1969 an average of 1,304 were in these services each month. In January of 1970 a new peak of 2,326 full-time ministers was achieved among the 11,380 Witnesses active in preaching during that month.

What motivates these men and women to offer themselves willingly in the service of their Creator? It is their desire to obey the commission that Jesus Christ gave to his disciples: "Go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations."—Matt. 28:19.

THEIR BACKGROUND

These full-time ministers come from a variety of backgrounds. Some belonged to a sect of Christendom, but most come from pagan backgrounds and so were ancestor worshipers. After having come to a knowledge of God's truth, they wanted to help others enjoy the kind of freedom that Bible truth brings.

One family, like many others, fled to South Korea from North Korea. They had been Buddhists and ancestor worshipers. Shortly after the Korean War, the mother studied the Bible with the Witnesses. And in time all four family members became full-time preachers of God's Word.

A young woman who preaches God's Word full time came from a home where her mother is a sorceress. Her father also dabbles in the occult. When their daughter became a Christian witness of Jehovah, they persecuted her. After she became a full-time preacher of God's Word, they cast her out of the house. Now she uses her time in helping others to break free from superstition and false religion.

A young man on the island of Cheju, off Korea's south coast, is the only Christian in his family. As the eldest son he had the traditional responsibility to take the family lead in ancestor worship. He was also the one designated to receive the major inheritance. This young man decided to become a full-time minister of Jehovah God. For this and his refusal to worship his ancestors, he was severely beaten, cast out of his home and disinherited. His family thought that he would give up his faith. But he did not; he still faithfully

works full time in Jehovah's service. And there are signs that the attitude of his family is softening toward him.

Before learning God's truth, one of these full-time ministers was a fighter against the Japanese occupation of Korea. He had also once been a champion in the sport of judo. His acquaintances now ask why he works so hard in the ministry. He replies that he worked hard in his previous endeavors that brought him no real satisfaction. Now he has true hope for the future, and his work brings real benefit to himself and those to whom he ministers.

REQUIRED CHANGES IN THEIR LIVES

These full-time ministers are not spending their full time in God's service because they have nothing else to do. Many of them had careers or other highly regarded occupations. Yet they made changes in their lives to do God's work full time. For example, a young minister on the island of Cheju had a coveted job as a clerk in the local government office. Wanting to be in the full-time ministry, he was willing to make a change, yes, give up his secular career. He tried to resign. Twice his letter of resignation was refused. His fellow workers influenced his unbelieving mother to put pressure on him not to give up a career that most young men would be eager to have. But his decision was made. He sent in his third resignation and did not wait for it to be accepted but went around to fellow workers to bid them good-bye. He is now happy as a special full-time minister.

To make the needed changes in order to have such a full share in preaching God's Word takes a great deal of faith, effort and perseverance. Consider the example of the wife of a medical doctor (he is an atheist) and mother of four children. She made changes in her life so she could spend one hundred hours in the preaching work each month. She is a graduate nurse but now applies herself to spiritual healing by using the "healthful words" of the Bible. (2 Tim. 1:13) Initial opposition from her husband did not overwhelm her; and she has been able to balance all the demands on her time, taking good care of her four children, husband and home duties, as well as her full schedule of preaching work.

To become full-time ministers, some have had to make big changes in their lives to conform to the Bible's high moral standards. For instance, there is a full-time minister who serves in one of Korea's small villages. He had been considered the strongest farmer in the community, able to do more than his neighbors physically, to get extra income. He had also been a heavy drinker. After he learned the truth from the Bible, he began to change. His whole way of life changed so that he gave up his drinking bouts. He took up the full-time ministry and helped to organize a Christian congregation with his own family as the nucleus.

HOW THEY SUPPORT THEMSELVES

Supporting themselves in the full-time ministry can be a real problem. This is because of a high rate of unemployment, which makes part-time jobs difficult to find. How do they solve the problem? A few examples follow:

A minister of Jehovah's witnesses in a small village farms his land to care for the material needs of his family. By wise use of the remaining time he is able to spend at least a hundred hours in the ministry. Of course, the entire family cooperates. For example, they buy calves six months before a large assembly of the Witnesses. They fatten them and then sell them just before the assembly, the pro-

ceeds paying for their travel expense.

One minister supports his family with his work as a schoolteacher. Of the time available in late afternoons, evenings and weekends, he sets aside one hundred hours each month to preach God's kingdom.

Another Witness supports himself and his wife as an artist, while giving priority to the ministry. He engages in the ministry in the mornings, sells his paintings to art shops in the afternoons and does his painting in the evenings. It is a tight schedule, but he is well organized.

The presiding minister of a congregation near the Demilitarized Zone dividing South Korea from the North would like to be a regular full-time minister. But, instead, he and his wife settle for serving as temporary full-time ministers, he one month and she the next, alternating the entire year. While one is in the ministry, the other cares for the children and small store that they operate.

MINISTERS OF ALL AGES AID GROWTH

These full-time preachers of God's Word are people of all ages; some of them are grandmothers. A fifty-eight-year-old grandmother, before learning God's truth, had no hope except, as she puts it, to take care of the grandchildren and wait to die. She had been a Presbyterian for thirty years but had no true hope for the future. What a change in her life when she became a Witness! She entered the full-time preaching work. Now she is seventy-one years of age and has helped scores of people to learn the Bible's truth. She had polio in her younger years, and walking is a problem for her. Yet she averaged 130 hours in the ministry each month last year, conducting home Bible studies with twelve groups each week and placing well over 100 Bible magazines in the homes of the people each month. At a recent assembly thirteen of her students were baptized. She is all smiles and alert and encouraging to those around her.

Another of Korea's full-time preachers of God's Word is a grandmother in her seventieth year. She has been in the full-time service for almost twenty years. When she was asked how many she has helped to become dedicated Christians, she said the number is over a hundred. Everywhere she goes, it seems that there are those who could be counted as fruitage of her labors; they invariably refer to her in affectionate terms as they would their own fleshly grandmothers.

Why are there many full-time ministers among Jehovah's witnesses in South Korea? One reason is that so many Christian parents inculcate the desire for this service in their children. Consider the example of an overseer in one of Seoul's fifty-two congregations. He and his wife had been famous singing artists for decades. The family had been Buddhists and ancestor worshipers. They encouraged their children to advance in the ministry. Now they have the joy of seeing two of their eldest daughters in special full-time service and a son in the regular full-time ministry.

These full-time ministers of all ages have contributed in no small measure to the remarkable growth evident among Jehovah's witnesses in Korea in recent years. For example, five years ago there were 5,936 active ministers of Jehovah's witnesses in South Korea. Now that number has almost doubled to 11,744!

From many backgrounds and of all ages, these Korean full-time ministers have genuine sincerity and feeling for those whom they teach the Bible. And this generates such a fine response as they help others serve their Creator as disciples of Jesus Christ.

Looking Intently at the CHIEF AGENT OF LIFE

"Look intently at the Chief Agent and Perfecter of our faith, Jesus. . . . Indeed, consider [him] closely."—Heb. 12:2, 3.

HAVE you ever known what it is to look at a certain well-known object and then come to see it in a fresh light? Perhaps it has been placed in a different setting, or your own awareness has developed and become keener, or there may be some other reason. This is often true, for instance, when you have grown up and then revisited the place and scenes of your childhood. It may not have changed and you recognize the old landmarks, yet it all looks so different, often smaller. In your childhood it was your whole big world. But now, in comparison, it is just a small corner.

[2] This viewing of things in a different light is also true of situations and problems, and may well be due to someone else's influence or suggestion. In other words, you learn to look at things through someone else's eyes. This may or may not prove beneficial, depending on whose influence is at work on you. A striking example of this is seen right at the start of human history. By listening to the suggestion made through the serpent, Eve learned to look at the forbidden fruit through someone else's eyes. She no longer saw it as something forbidden, not even to be touched, but now saw it as extremely desirable from every point of view. (Gen. 3:1-6) Thus, as the Bible shows, Satan, "the original serpent," the one who was really at work on Eve, did not prove to be an agent or instrument leading to life and enlightenment, though posing as such. Rather, as Jesus said of him, he was a "manslayer" and a "liar." He was actually "the one having the means to cause death, that is, the Devil."—Rev. 12:9; John 8:44; Heb. 2:14.

[3] Satan's policy and tactics ever since then have been the same. By subtle and deceitful means he tries to influence others to look at things through his eyes. He trains his agents, both visible and invisible, to adopt the same methods. The apostle Paul, in his day, had occasion to refer to certain men as "false apostles, deceitful workers," and says in explanation, "And no wonder, for Satan himself keeps transforming himself into an angel of light. It is therefore nothing great if his ministers also keep transforming themselves into ministers of righteousness." The same warning is appropriate today. —2 Cor. 11:13-15.

[4] With this in mind, how timely and necessary it is to be on guard and not to take things for granted. No matter how popular certain viewpoints may be, no matter what our religious background

1. How and why can things often be seen in a fresh light?
2. (a) How did Eve come to look at things through another's eyes? (b) Who was at work on Eve, and how can this be proved?
3. What methods have always underscored Satan's objectives?
4. In what respects should we be on guard?

may be, we should be anxious to get and keep the right viewpoint on the fundamental things that affect our worship and our salvation. We need to learn how to keep looking intently at the things that are true and worth while.

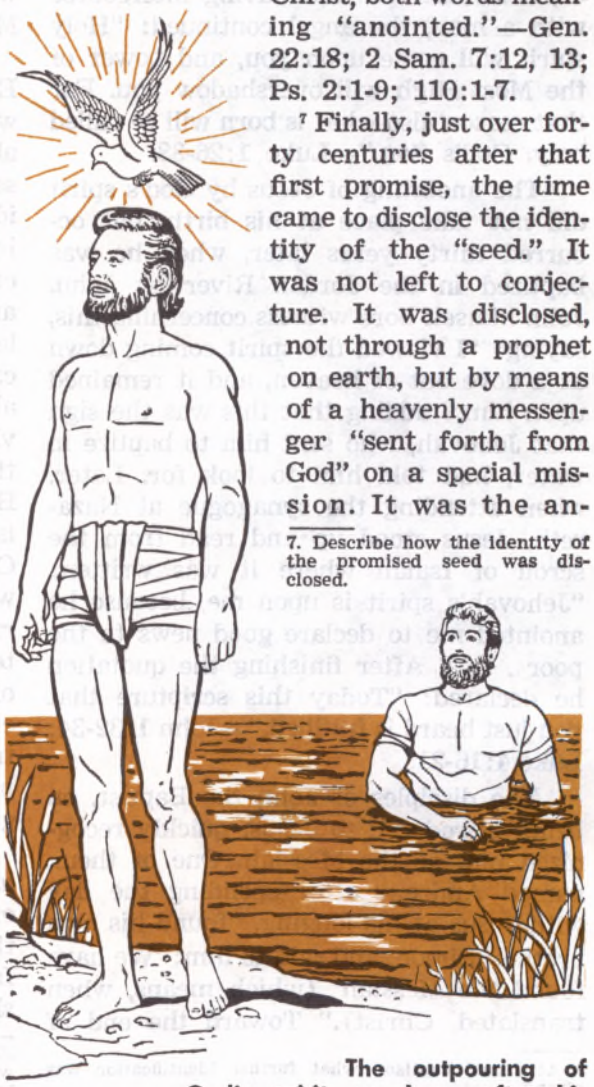
IDENTIFYING THE CHIEF AGENT OF LIFE AND LIGHT

5 Though to Satan it might have seemed he had gained a complete victory in causing the deflection of the first perfect human pair, this was not really so. Jehovah's purpose was not thwarted by what happened in Eden, or by any of the subsequent results of that initial disobedience and rebellion. On the contrary, as soon as that outbreak occurred, Jehovah foretold what he would do and how it would work out. He foretold that the seed of the woman "will bruise you [the serpent, actually referring to Satan] in the head," implying the crushing and destruction of Satan and his influence in due time.—Gen. 3:15.

6 Who this promised "seed" would be was not disclosed when first mentioned, but God kept that hope and promise alive by giving additional information from time to time. To Abraham, God gave the oath-bound promise that through "your seed all nations of the earth will certainly bless themselves." To David, a descendant of Abraham, God promised: "I shall certainly raise up your seed . . . and I shall certainly establish the throne of his kingdom firmly to time indefinite." Through the prophets, especially David in his many psalms, also through Isaiah, God gave many thrilling details of this coming one, who, as Jehovah's "anointed one" and king, would ultimately crush and destroy all of God's enemies. According to Jehovah's sworn oath, he would also be "a priest to time indefinite according to the manner of Melchizedek." The kings and high priests in Israel, when installed in office, were anointed with a special oil, but this coming one would be anointed by the "spirit of the Lord Jehovah" to do a grand work as mentioned at Isaiah 61:1-3. These and many other promises gave rise to the Jews' sure hope of a coming Messiah, or Christ, both words meaning "anointed."—Gen. 22:18; 2 Sam. 7:12, 13; Ps. 2:1-9; 110:1-7.

7 Finally, just over forty centuries after that first promise, the time came to disclose the identity of the "seed." It was not left to conjecture. It was disclosed, not through a prophet on earth, but by means of a heavenly messenger "sent forth from God" on a special mission. It was the an-

5. How did God show he was neither thwarted nor frustrated by the events in Eden?
6. What steps did God take to promote faith in his first prophetic promise?
7. Describe how the identity of the promised seed was disclosed.



The outpouring of God's spirit on Jesus after his baptism identified him as God's Anointed One

gel Gabriel, who came to Mary, "a virgin promised in marriage to . . . Joseph of David's house," telling her she had "found favor with God; and, look! you will conceive in your womb and give birth to a son, and you are to call his name Jesus. This one will be great and will be called Son of the Most High; and Jehovah God will give him the throne of David his father." After her inquiring how this could be, since she was not having intercourse with a man, the angel continued: "Holy spirit will come upon you, and power of the Most High will overshadow you. For that reason also what is born will be called holy, God's Son."—Luke 1:26-38.

[8] The anointing of Jesus by God's spirit did not take place at his birth, but occurred thirty years later, when he was baptized in the Jordan River by John. John himself bore witness concerning this, saying: "I viewed the spirit coming down as a dove out of heaven, and it remained upon him," adding that this was the sign that Jehovah, who sent him to baptize in water, had told him to look for. Later, when attending the synagogue at Nazareth, Jesus stood up and read from the scroll of Isaiah where it was written: "Jehovah's spirit is upon me, because he anointed me to declare good news to the poor . . . " After finishing the quotation he declared: "Today this scripture that you just heard is fulfilled."—John 1:32-34; Luke 4:16-21.

[9] The disciples of John the Baptist, on being introduced to Jesus, quickly recognized him as the Messiah. One of them, named Andrew, after spending the day with Jesus at his lodging, "found his own brother, Simon, and said to him: 'We have found the Messiah' (which means, when translated, Christ)." Toward the end of his ministry, Jesus, after asking his disciples how others were identifying him, said to them: "You, though, who do you say I am?" and Simon Peter at once replied: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus then made the comment that this discernment on Peter's part was not due to any revelation from a human source, saying that "flesh and blood did not reveal it to you, but my Father who is in the heavens did."—John 1:41; Matt. 16:15-17.

[10] Going back, though, to the one who in Eden started deception, resulting in death, we are interested in learning, not only about Jesus Christ as being the promised seed, we also want to know if he can be identified as God's agent opening and leading in the way of true enlightenment and eternal life. This would surely be a grand and complete answer to the Devil's challenge, and would vindicate Jehovah and cause his name to be sanctified. Additionally, it would be a great help to us on the vital questions of true worship and salvation. As we look into God's Word, the Bible, we will find that this identification is clearly confirmed. Encouraging true Christians, both in his day and ours, Paul wrote: "Let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, as we look intently at the Chief Agent and Perfecter of our faith, Jesus. . . . Indeed, consider closely the one who has endured such contrary talk by sinners against their own interests, that you may not get tired and give out in your souls."—Heb. 12:1-3.

[11] This title, "Chief Agent," (Greek: *arkhegós*) well describes the position given to Christ Jesus by God. It occurs four times in the Christian Greek Scriptures. In the first instance, Peter used it when, shortly after Pentecost, 33 C.E., he told

8. At Jesus' baptism, what further identification was given?
9. Who were first convinced that Jesus was the Messiah, and how was this shown?
10. In what other aspect can Jesus be identified, and why is this important?
11, 12. (a) On what occasions was Jesus referred to as "Chief Agent"? (b) How do these references help us respecting our salvation and true worship?

the Jews that "God . . . has glorified his Servant, Jesus." He then said: "You disowned that holy and righteous one, and . . . you killed the Chief Agent of life. But God raised him up from the dead." Later, when the apostles were forbidden by the Sanhedrin to teach on the basis of Jesus' name, Peter replied: "We must obey God as ruler rather than men." After telling them that they were responsible for slaying Jesus, "hanging him upon a stake," Peter continued: "God exalted this one as Chief Agent and Savior to his right hand," and concluded: "And we are witnesses of these matters, and so is the holy spirit, which God has given to those obeying him as ruler." Lastly, besides the reference at Hebrews 12:1-3, Paul earlier says in that same letter regarding Jesus that "it was fitting . . . in bringing many sons to glory, to make the Chief Agent of their salvation perfect through sufferings."—Acts 3:13-15; 5:27-32; Heb. 2:10.

12 From these passages alone how clearly the way of salvation and acceptable worship is marked out for us! How obvious it is that we cannot obey God as ruler and have his favor unless we recognize the appointment of Jesus as his "Chief Agent," who has been invested with 'all authority in heaven and on the earth'! (Matt. 28:18) How important it is that we view this one through Jehovah's eyes, and not through Satan's eyes as did those religious leaders who "killed the Chief Agent of life." These two opposite viewpoints are still possible, and both in fact are in active operation in our day.

13 Other translations, including the *Authorized Version,* render the Greek word *arkhegós* as "author," instead of "Chief Agent," at Hebrews 12:2, but this is neither accurate nor in harmony with other scriptures. The derivation* of this word has the thought of being chief or first in order of time or rank. That is true of Christ Jesus, but it does not make him the author or originator of life or of salvation. He was not, as trinitarians believe, the author or beginner of creation, but, as stated at Revelation 3:14, he was "the *beginning* of the creation by God," that is, the first one to be created by God, the Creator. This is in harmony with the clear expression of the relative positions of Jehovah and Christ Jesus as we read at 1 Corinthians 8:6: "There is actually to us one God the Father, *out of* whom all things are, . . . and there is one Lord, Jesus Christ, *through* whom all things are." In other words, there is the one Source, Jehovah, who uses many agents, but who has made his beloved Son, Christ Jesus, his Chief Agent.

14 It is not surprising that Satan, through his agents and through false religion, has done everything possible to cause confusion and blind "the minds of the unbelievers, that the illumination [enlightenment] of the glorious good news about the Christ, who is the image of God [but not God himself], might not shine through." (2 Cor. 4:4) To avoid this blinding influence, we must keep close to God's Word, the Bible. By so doing we can learn to look closely at Christ Jesus from God's viewpoint, through his eyes, and rightly appreciate his Son as the Chief Agent of life and light.

15 In this connection, it is interesting and helpful to review what John wrote on this subject in introducing his Gospel ac-

13. (a) What is the root meaning of the Greek word *arkhegós?* (b) How is this true of Christ Jesus, in contrast with the trinitarian view?

* Strong's *Concordance:* Greek Dictionary, p. 16, Nos. 746, X747.

14. In what way only can we properly appreciate Christ Jesus?

15. According to John, when and how was the Son first used as God's agent?

count of Jesus. Other Gospel writers trace Jesus' ancestry back to Adam, but John, in a few short, concise, yet profound statements, takes us back to the real beginning, the beginning of creation. Referring to Jesus by his prehuman title the "Word" (Greek: *Logos*), John says that "this one was in the beginning with God." Then showing that the Word was the agent of life, John writes: "All things came into existence through him, and apart from him not even one thing came into existence." As for being the agent also of enlightenment, John next says: "What has come into existence by means of him was life, and the life was the light of men." John is then inspired to make a very significant and encouraging statement in view of the conflict and hostility arising out of Satan's subtle and deceitful move that started in Eden. John says: "And the light is shining in the darkness, but the darkness has not overpowered it."—John 1:1-5.

[16] Well, you say, it is good to know that the forces of darkness did not overpower the light bearer, Christ Jesus, but of what benefit is that to me? It would seem that the forces of darkness, of evil, corruption and violence, not to speak of false religion, are more active than ever before, and more difficult to overcome. True enough, but let us pay a little more attention to what John said relative to this. After mentioning that John the Baptist's mission was to "bear witness about the light," the apostle John continues: "The true light that gives light to *every sort* of man was about to come into the world." This surely means that whatever sort of person you may have been, you can benefit from that agent of light. You are not automatically exempt from that benefit, resulting in your position's being hopeless, unless you make it so. In support of this, note John's further words. He first acknowledges that, generally speaking, Jesus was not accepted, neither by the world of mankind, even though it "came into existence through him," nor on 'coming to his own home did his own people (the Jews) take him in.' He then adds: "However, as many as did receive him, to them he gave authority to become God's children, because they were exercising faith in his name."—John 1:6-12.

[17] Later, John quotes Jesus' own words that throw still further light on this, showing the responsibility that rests on the individual in using his freedom of choice in the matter of exercising faith. As far as God is concerned, Jesus said that "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." Explaining why men in general have not accepted, but have spurned this marvelous provision of God's undeserved kindness, resulting in their remaining under a judgment of condemnation, Jesus further said: "Now this is the basis for judgment, that the light has come into the world but men have loved the darkness rather than the light . . . For he that practices vile things hates the light and does not come to the light, in order that his works may not be reproved. But he that does what is true comes to the light, in order that his works may be made manifest as having been worked in harmony with God."—John 3:16-21.

[18] If you love the darkness rather than the light, if you are unwilling to suffer reproof and correction, or unwilling to acknowledge the need to change your viewpoint and course of action, that is your

16. How does John help us to see who can benefit from such agent?

17. What further aid did Jesus himself give in this regard?

18. How should we decide as to the two alternatives facing us?

responsibility. But if at heart you realize the need to make a change, if you are willing to learn how to practice what is true in harmony with God's will, thus exercising faith in God and in his beloved Son, then we invite you to share with us in a further discussion of this subject.

HOW WE CAN IDENTIFY OURSELVES WITH JEHOVAH'S CHIEF AGENT

19 As already noted, the early Christians, under the lead of the faithful apostles, were made conscious of their close identification with Christ Jesus as God's Chief Agent and as their head. Nearly forty years before John wrote his Gospel account of Jesus, Paul had enlarged on this theme of the unique position God had given to the "Son of his love," saying that "he [the Son] is before all other things and by means of him all other things were made to exist, and he is the head of the body, the congregation."—Col. 1:13-18; see also Ephesians 2:19-22.

The serpent seduced Eve by its cunning. We can avoid Satan's snares by viewing all things through God's eyes

20 However, Paul next found it necessary to warn of the danger of "being shifted away from the hope of that good news which you heard." Many times he wrote and spoke of this danger and identified its root cause. He said to the older men of the Ephesus congregation: "From among you yourselves men will rise and speak twisted things to draw away the disciples after themselves." To another congregation he wrote: "Let no one seduce you in any manner." To seduce means to lead astray, to entice from rectitude or duty, and especially to induce a woman to surrender her chastity. In harmony with this, notice what Paul said to the congregation at Corinth: "For I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy, for I personally promised you in marriage to one husband that I might present you as a chaste virgin to the Christ. But I am afraid that somehow, as the serpent seduced Eve by its cunning, your minds might be corrupted away from the sincerity and the chastity that are due the Christ. For, as it is, if someone comes and preaches a Jesus other than the one we preached, . . . you easily put up with him."—Col. 1:23; Acts 20:30; 2 Thess. 2:3; 2 Cor. 11:2-4.

21 It would seem that, while the serpent seduced Eve, it was Eve herself who seduced her husband, using her influence in that direction. The record says simply concerning the forbidden fruit that "she gave some also to her husband when with her and he began eating it." (Gen. 3:6) But we cannot imagine that it was merely some sort of dumb action or mute appeal on her part. Though both were seduced from their former rectitude and integrity, they were not alike in the matter of being deceived. We have the inspired statement that "Adam was not deceived, but the woman was thoroughly deceived," that is, she was influenced to believe what was false. This did not relieve or excuse her from being "in transgression," for she

19. In what way is the Christian congregation identified with Christ Jesus?

20. What kind of danger did Paul warn of, and how did it operate?

21. How were both Adam and Eve ensnared by Satan, sounding what warning for us?

well knew that what was uttered through the serpent was a contradiction of what God had said. (1 Tim. 2:14; Gen. 3:1-5) So we observe how cunningly Satan used his tools, both at the start of human history, also in the early days of the Christian congregation, and no less so in our day. The main question that concerns us is, How can we avoid being either deceived or seduced? Unlike the first human pair, we want to ensure and preserve our identification with Jehovah through his Chief Agent. How can we best do this?

[22] To avoid being ensnared on any count, we must learn how to view all things through God's eyes. We must learn how to keep looking at things from his standpoint, whether in matters of doctrine, or in understanding of world conditions, or in personal problems and deciding what course to take when we are confronted with various pressures. How can this be done? By keeping close to God's Word. That is largely why it was written. As the psalmist said: "Your word is a lamp to my foot, and a light to my roadway." (Ps. 119:105) There is something else, however, that is important. Many have paid close attention to the Bible with a keen and critical eye, examining it from the viewpoint of *human* wisdom and philosophy, with the result that their faith, also the faith of those listening to them, is more and more undermined as regards accepting the authority of the Bible as the inspired Word of God. Others, devoutly religious in their way, regularly read and study the Bible, but they read it through someone else's eyes. That is, they first of all accept the viewpoint and authority of one of the churches of Christendom, or a religious group of some kind, and their understanding of what they read must be made or forced to conform to the traditions held by that church or group. There is much truth in the old saying that there are none so blind as those who do not want to see, none so deaf as those who do not want to hear something contradictory to cherished ideas strongly entrenched.

[23] Listen to Jesus' words on this point. Regarding the Jewish leaders who were "versed in the Law" and had the "key of knowledge," he said: "I publicly praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have carefully hidden these things from wise and intellectual ones, and have revealed them to babes. . . . who the Father is, no one knows but the Son, and he to whom the Son is willing to reveal him." Then identifying these "babes," Jesus turned to his disciples and said: "Happy are the eyes that behold the things you are beholding." (Luke 10:21-23) The religious leaders were in the best position to recognize and accept Jesus as their Messiah. Yes, they were well versed in their Scriptures, but they were even more well versed and deeply entrenched in their traditions. Their whole outlook was influenced by bad and selfish motives, desiring to appear outwardly righteous to men, but inside being full of hypocrisy and lawlessness. (Matt. 23:28) Pinpointing the root of the trouble, and showing the strong connection between the right heart attitude and the ability to see aright with clear vision and be rightly guided thereby, Jesus said to these leaders and their supporters: "I well know that you do not have the love of God in you. . . . How can you believe, when you are accepting glory from one another and you are not seeking the glory that is from the only God?" If the physical eye or the mental eye is giving a distorted vision due to a bad defect

22. (a) How can we get God's viewpoint on matters requiring attention and decision? (b) When approaching the Bible, what dangers must we be careful to avoid?

23. (a) What contrast did Jesus make between his disciples and the Jewish leaders? (b) How did Jesus show the close connection between the heart attitude and mental vision?

or bad motive, then that person's whole life and course of action will be affected thereby and likely end in disaster. As Jesus expressed it in the Sermon on the Mount: "The lamp of the body is the eye. If, then, your eye is simple, your whole body will be bright; but if your eye is wicked, your whole body will be dark. If in reality the light that is in you is darkness, how great that darkness is!"—John 5:42-44; Matt. 6:22, 23.

[24] Thus, besides keeping close to God's Word, we must also keep close in mind the need to maintain a right attitude of heart and mind in all sincerity and humility. We must be willing to look at things in a fresh light, also to adjust or correct our course of action accordingly, in order to bring ourselves fully in line with God's own viewpoint as taught in the Bible. This will of necessity lead to a close identification on our part with Jehovah and with his Chief Agent. With such a worthy motive, we can look forward with great interest and confidence to a further examination of the Scriptures, remembering what Jesus said: "Keep on asking, and it will be given you; keep on seeking, and you will find; keep on knocking, and it will be opened to you."—Luke 11:9.

24. In seeking God's viewpoint and blessing, what steps must we take, and what incentive are we given?

HOW TO TRAIN YOUR POWERS OF PERCEPTION

THIS might seem to be an eye-catching title, for many are keenly interested and would go to any length and pay any price to train and improve their powers of perception. To what end? We must admit it is often with a selfish motive. It may be with the desire to outwit competitors in business, or to learn how to see through others so as to get the upper hand and take advantage of them. This may be justified from the viewpoint of worldly wisdom, but a person seeking God's favor cannot adopt that viewpoint. The motive is wrong. In any case, the Bible gives a straight warning of the dangers of worldly wisdom and perception. The apostle Paul had much to say about this when writing to the congregation at Corinth. Contrasting this world's wisdom with that of God's, he said that "the world through its wisdom did not get to know God." He further explained that in calling those to form the Christian congregation, "not many wise in a fleshly way were called, . . . but God chose the foolish things of the world, that he might put the wise men to shame." Why? "In order that no flesh might boast in the sight of God." Our motive in seeking God must always be sincere and humble. So, as Paul further said: "We speak wisdom among those who are mature, but

1. (a) How should Christians view the search for and use of worldly wisdom? (b) What can we learn from the contrasts Paul made between God's wisdom and that of the world?

not the wisdom of this system of things nor that of the rulers of this system of things, who are to come to nothing. But we speak God's wisdom in a sacred secret, the hidden wisdom." And how wonderfully God has done that! It is all there in the Bible, a book that anyone can read, yet how few really perceive its hidden wisdom! The majority of those who reckon to accept it as God's Word say that it contradicts itself, showing at once they do not begin to appreciate its grand harmony throughout.—1 Cor. 1:21, 26-29; 2:6, 7.

[2] What did Paul mean when he said, "We speak wisdom among those who are *mature*"? (1 Cor. 2:6) This plays a vital part in training your powers of perception as a Christian. Becoming a true Christian involves a big change in your outlook and way of life. It also involves constant progress and development. See what we can learn from our brothers at Corinth. Many there were slow in making the necessary changes. They were simply not growing up as Christians. They were not enjoying close Christian unity. Instead, there were divisions, looking to men as their leaders in a sectarian spirit, and not to Christ as their one head. Noting the worldly spirit of "jealousy and strife," Paul had to tell them: "I was not able to speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to fleshly men, as to babes in Christ. I fed you milk, not something to eat [as a solid], for you were not yet strong enough." Also, in line with our previous discussion, note how later Paul warned: "Let no one be seducing himself" by thinking "he is wise in this system of things . . . For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God." So no training your powers of perception in the way of worldly wisdom with a selfish motive!—1 Cor. 1:10-13; 3:1-4, 18, 19.

2. Why is maturity essential for a Christian, and what is involved?

[3] Turning our attention to the positive aspect, observe how the same Bible writer explained the close link between this training process and the question of maturity. Writing to the Hebrew Christians, he first notes the foregoing tendency of a failure to grow up and make advancement. He says: "You have become dull in your hearing. For, indeed, although you ought to be teachers in view of the time, you again need someone to teach you from the beginning the elementary things of the sacred pronouncements of God," adding that "everyone that partakes of milk is unacquainted with the word of righteousness, for he is a babe." Then he reveals the secret of true Christian growth, saying that "solid food belongs to mature people, to those who through use have their perceptive powers trained to distinguish both right and wrong. For this reason, now that we have left the primary doctrine about the Christ, let us press on to maturity." —Heb. 5:11–6:1.

[4] This clearly shows that not only must we have the right motive, but we must also be careful to check as to the right method or process used in the training work. As Christians, we dare not rely on our own initiative or judgment, deciding for ourselves how to distinguish between right and wrong. That was Satan's argument when giving the original "Go-ahead" signal: "Your eyes [of perception] are bound to be opened and you are bound to be like God, knowing good and bad." With what result? The "eyes of both of them became opened," yes, but only to become self-conscious in a guilty way. Both their motive and their method were bad. (Gen. 3:5-7) In contrast, note the close connection made between solid food and the training process. As Paul explains, the

3. What is the secret of true Christian growth?
4. (a) In our training work, what must we guard against? (b) How is proper training dependent on proper feeding?

milk refers to the elementary things of God's Word, hence the more advanced Bible truths and their application are likened to solid food. Assimilating these truths is essential to our growth to maturity, it forming the only safe guide whereby we can 'have our perceptive powers trained to distinguish both right and wrong' in the right way, learning how to perceive all things from God's viewpoint.

5 Jesus himself was no exception to this rule. Throughout his ministry he relied on the Scriptures in meeting every temptation and challenge, saying: "It is written." (Matt. 4:4-10) He taught and did nothing of his own originality. He fed on God's Word not only by growing in the understanding of it, but also by applying it to himself in a practical way, in its principles and prophecies due to be fulfilled in his life and ministry. Thus he could rightly say: "My food is for me to do the will of him that sent me and to finish his work." He also foretold that at the end of this system of things there would be a "faithful and discreet slave" class that would be appointed over all his belongings, including the provision of "food at the proper time," thus ensuring a continuation in our day of the feeding program by both the right motive and the right method.—John 4:34; 14:10; Matt. 24:45-47.

6 Physically, men reach and pass their maturity, but still need to feed on solid food. Mentally and spiritually, though, there is always room for growth, hence the greater need to take in constantly and digest the spiritual food. We should always be keen to "press on to maturity." (Heb. 6:1) No milk diet for us! To begin with, as "newborn infants" in first coming to a knowledge of God's Word, we "form a longing for the unadulterated milk belonging to the word," but we should always be ready and anxious to advance, with a growing appreciation and a readiness to accept the increasing responsibility resulting therefrom.—1 Pet. 2:2.

7 The point is, we cannot stand still in this respect. If we do not advance, we begin to slip back. That was the trouble with many of those Hebrew (Jewish) Christians. Their interest was waning, their hearing dulled, they were again needing someone to teach them the elementary things from the very beginning. They had lost touch and become unacquainted with the word of truth. We hear the same report of some today who let things slip after making a start as true Christians by dedication and water baptism. Whether we are aware of this tendency in ourselves or we see it in others, can we afford to be indifferent, hoping that somehow such ones will attain salvation? Paul did not take that attitude, but plainly indicated the outcome if such a course was persisted in to the point of resenting any offer of help. He said: "It is impossible as regards those who have once for all been enlightened . . . and who have tasted the fine word of God and powers of the coming system of things, but who have fallen away, to revive them again to repentance." —Heb. 6:4-8.

8 We must be careful, though, not quickly to become impatient with any who seem to be drifting into indifference and abandon them. Paul did not. Notice what he next writes: "However, in your case, beloved ones, we are convinced of better things and things accompanied with salvation, although we are speaking in this way." He set us a fine example of how to maintain the proper balance, combining warning with encouragement. As he wrote

5. How did Jesus faithfully exemplify this rule, and what guidance did he promise for our day?
6. In what ways should we always seek growth and advancement?
7. If progress is lacking, what does this indicate, and how did Paul warn of the dangers involved?
8. How should warning be properly balanced with encouragement?

later on: "Keep on remembering the former days in which, after you were enlightened, you endured a great contest under sufferings." Then, after quoting from Habakkuk 2:4: " 'My righteous one will live by reason of faith,' and, 'if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him,' " Paul adds: "Now we are not the sort that shrink back to destruction, but the sort that have faith to the preserving alive of the soul." How encouraging!—Heb. 6:9; 10:32, 38, 39.

[9] Paul certainly proved that his perceptive powers were well trained, as shown by the way he dealt with the many problems in the various congregations, also by the way he faced up to and handled the fierce opposition from his enemies. It was also manifest by the way Jehovah used him, through the operation of the holy spirit, to write the many letters forming a vital part of the Bible. How was this thorough training achieved? As he himself says, it was "through use," through constant and untiring use, while we were being sustained by continually feeding on the "solid food" of God's Word. In this Paul was following the perfect example set by Jesus when on earth, hence he could say: "Become imitators of me, even as I am of Christ." So why not let us pay closer attention to this much-used and faithful servant in seeking to train our own perceptive powers in a godly way.—Heb. 5:14; 1 Cor. 11:1.

PAY CLOSE ATTENTION

[10] Throughout the Bible we find many expressions exhorting us to be alert and attentive with the right motive. Here are a few examples: "Take good care of your souls . . . that you may not act ruinously." "If you do look for Jehovah . . . you will also certainly find him, because you will inquire for him with all your heart and with all your soul." "Watch out for yourself that you may not forget Jehovah your God." "How I do love your law! All day long it is my concern." "Keep looking, keep awake." "Pay attention . . . that your hearts never become weighed down." —Deut. 4:15, 16, 29; 8:11; Ps. 119:97; Mark 13:33; Luke 21:34.

[11] However, when we examine Paul's writings, we find possibly even stronger expressions. Mental perception is important, but Paul speaks of the "eyes of your *heart* having been enlightened," betokening a heart appreciation beyond that of head knowledge. This only comes about when there is a free flow of God's "spirit of wisdom and of revelation," so that we can grasp "what the surpassing greatness of his power is toward us believers," and to "know the love of the Christ which surpasses knowledge," from a human viewpoint. Again, he tells us not only to watch, but to "keep strict watch . . . because the days are wicked . . . [and to] go on perceiving what the will of Jehovah is." These expressions are in the superlative degree, embracing every possible aspect. —Eph. 1:17-19; 3:18, 19; 5:15-17; see also Colossians 1:9-11.

[12] Paul's letter to the Hebrews is no exception. He exhorts not only to pay attention, but to "pay *more* than the usual attention." He tells not only of those looking for Christ, but of "those *earnestly* looking for him," and tells us to "look *intently* . . . Indeed, consider *closely* the one [Jesus] who has endured . . . that you may not get tired and give out in your souls." However, besides these arresting expressions, the apostle gives an additional reason for paying close attention, and that is—someone is paying close attention to *us*.

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9. In what way is Paul a good example for us?
10. As shown in the Bible, in what way should we pay close attention?
11. How does Paul stress the same thing, and to what extent?
12. What similar expressions occur in the letter to the Hebrews, and what added aspect invites our attention?

Who is this, and how is the close inspection carried out?—Heb. 2:1; 9:28; 12:2, 3.

[13] The answer briefly is that it is Jehovah who takes this close look at us, doing so by the agency of his Word. To realize how this works out will aid us in having our perceptive powers rightly trained. In the early part of his letter, commencing at Hebrews 3:7, commenting on God's dealings with Israel of old, Paul quotes twice what "the holy spirit says" at Psalm 95:7, 8: "Today if you people listen to his [God's] own voice, do not harden your heart." (Heb. 3:7, 8, 15) That is what he is stressing, the need to listen closely in a responsive way whenever God speaks. This will help us to draw ever closer to him, resulting in an ever-growing faith. Paul sharply warned to avoid a contrary course, saying: "Beware, brothers, for fear there should ever develop in any one of you a wicked heart lacking faith by drawing away from the living God," and Paul further warns of becoming "hardened by the deceptive power of sin." (Heb. 3:12, 13) Israel as a nation proved disobedient to God's word and hence failed to enter into God's rest. Note that Paul closely links disobedience with a lack of faith. (See Hebrews 3:18, 19.) Then, in chapter four, he shows there is still a promised rest in a spiritual way for those of spiritual Israel, the Christian congregation, and stresses the same need to pay close attention, saying: "Let us therefore do our utmost to enter into that rest, for fear anyone should fall in the same pattern of disobedience." To drive the point right home, Paul then makes the impressive statement: "For the word of God is alive and exerts power and is sharper than any two-edged sword and pierces even to the dividing of soul and spirit, and of joints and their marrow, and is able to discern thoughts and intentions of the heart." —Heb. 4:11, 12.

[14] What a remarkable description of God's Word, as if it were a living person with powers of penetration that can see what you really are at heart. It gets to the root of things. How so? Well, the Bible is not just a religious book written and compiled by devout men long ago, an ancient record dealing with the dead past. Rather, as a channel of God's spirit it can be said to be alive. It is God's Word, 'his own voice.' When David wrote and spoke under inspiration, it was not David who said thus and so, but it was "the holy spirit [that] says," as both Paul and David realized. (2 Sam. 23:2; Heb. 3:7) Not only is it alive, but it can impart life even more wonderfully than is the case with human life. As the apostle Peter states, speaking of those who have become Christians, they have "been given a new birth, not by corruptible, but by incorruptible reproductive seed, through the word of the living and enduring God." (1 Pet. 1:23) But notice now Paul's further word of explanation at Hebrews 4:13, where he says: "And there is not a creation that is not manifest to his sight, but all things are naked and openly exposed to the eyes of him with whom we have an accounting." Paul is now speaking of Jehovah himself and his penetrating vision. His perceptive powers are supreme in every sense, always with the right motive and most effective method. In view of the foregoing is it not evident that God sees and judges us through his Word and by how we react to it? This is the best method, for it enables us to a large extent to examine ourselves by the same means and see just where we stand. Do we sincerely try to conform to God's Word in every aspect of

13. (a) Commencing at Hebrews 3:7, what is being stressed, and how is Israel used as an illustration? (b) What forceful comment is made at Hebrews 4:11, 12?

14. (a) How should the Bible be rightly viewed? (b) In what way can it be said to be alive and life imparting? (c) What can we thereby learn as to how God deals with and judges his people?

our lives, and do we try and try again despite our many failures? We should, as we shall discuss later.—Prov. 17:3.

15 At some time or other all creatures "have an accounting" with Jehovah, the Supreme Judge. It seems the same method is used, that of one's reaction to God's word at the time of judgment. (Rev. 20:12) It is true now. Those of this generation are more and more making themselves manifest by their reaction to the Bible message of truth, the message of God's kingdom. (Matt. 24:14) The enthroned king, Christ Jesus, uses a similar means in dividing the "sheep" from the "goats," determining their attitude to him by their attitude and behavior toward "one of the least of these my brothers," that is, one of his disciples with the heavenly hope.—Matt. 25:31, 32, 40, 45.

PAY MORE ATTENTION TO THE MORE IMPORTANT THINGS

16 In training our powers of perception it is important to get our priorities right. Let us face up to it. There are two things that are very precious—*time* and *life*. In a sense, both are in short or limited supply. Life will not be in short supply under God's Kingdom rule, but there is only the one means for gaining life, only one way of salvation, by the "precious blood" of Christ. (1 Pet. 1:19) And time is certainly limited, with about 56 years already gone of the generation witnessing the sign of the "time of the end." (Matt. 24:34) This means we must be selective. We want to be properly guided in selecting the more important things for our more important attention, and minimizing, playing down, the lesser things for less and less attention. The Bible should be our guide in deciding these things. For example, consider what Jesus said in his prophecy on the "time of the end," where, after stressing the urgency of the time, he continues: "But pay attention to yourselves that your hearts never become weighed down with overeating and heavy drinking and anxieties of life, and suddenly that day be instantly upon you as a snare. . . . Keep awake, then, [keep very attentive] . . . making supplication that you may succeed in escaping all these things that are destined to occur," not by being taken out of the scene of action, but by being preserved from the snares due to our watchfulness. As a result, we shall be found "standing before the Son of man" in his favor and in our integrity and endurance.—Luke 21:34-36; see also 1 Corinthians 10:13.

17 Jesus' mention of escaping reminds us again of the letter to the Hebrews. It was written shortly before the outbreak of persecution on the Jewish Christians at Jerusalem, and only nine years before the destruction of that city. Similar circumstances face us today. Time is running out.

15. How do the Scriptures indicate that all creatures "have an accounting" with God?
16. (a) What two things demand priority, and why? (b) How did Jesus stress this in his prophecy?

God judges us by how we react to his word

17. Paul shows what connection between escape and paying careful heed?

The "great tribulation" comes on apace, and this brings up the question of escape. Listen to Paul's warning: "See that you do not beg off from him who is speaking [by not listening or paying heed]. For if they did not escape who begged off from him who was giving divine warning upon earth [when the Israelites were at Mount Sinai], much more shall we not [escape] if we turn away from him who speaks from the heavens," and who will shortly shake and entirely remove the old system of things.—Heb. 12:25-27.

18 Do you feel that this matter of paying close attention is perhaps rather irksome, if not somewhat frightening? It need not be. It should not be. Pay attention that your faith and devotion remain strong. In other words, pay attention to your *heart*. That is the key to the whole situation as far as you personally are concerned, "for out of it [the heart] are the sources of life." (Prov. 4:23) Rather than your head, do you not see that it is your heart, the organ that determines your motives and affections and desires, that really determines what you will give most attention to, at the same time finding pleasure in doing so?

19 In proof of this, have you not had the experience, especially when growing beyond the childhood stage, of finding yourself paying more than the usual attention to someone in particular? What a delightful and absorbing experience that can be, entering into all your waking hours! And when that particular person nicely responds and starts paying *you* more than the usual attention, what a thrill that can be! Nothing can stop you from paying much more than the usual attention. Is that not so? Ah! yes, you say, but a personal relationship of that kind is entirely different from what we have been discussing. Well, perhaps not so entirely different. The question of love comes into the picture; that surely is a matter of the heart. The highest form of love, as explained in *The Watchtower*, is *agápē* love. From what is sometimes said, the impression is gained that this form of love is so superior and desirable because it rises above personalities, being described as a love based on right principles. But that is not how *The Watchtower* defined the Greek word *agápē*. Peter, when using this same word, did not say "love strictly according to good principles from the heart," but he did say: "love *one another intensely* from the heart." (1 Pet. 1:22) Yes, *agápē* love can be intensely personal, but always in full harmony with and governed by right principle. As *The Watchtower* said, it is a "principled love," but this does not mean that it is impersonal. This is specially true of our love for Jehovah. It is not sufficient or proper to love God, as many seem to do, as a far-off, invisible, abstract embodiment of good principles, a great First Cause. That is the big mistake made by Job's comforters. They referred to God by his title, but never by his personal name, Jehovah. Similarly with the clergy, the modern-day Job's comforters. But Jehovah is the supreme Being, the greatest Personality, and he invites us, by our constantly paying close attention, to get to know and love him as the One who is worthy of all that we can give, our whole heart, mind, soul and strength. He is the Source and Judge of all right and good principles.

20 As is well known, in recent years thousands have come to a knowledge of the truth and actually become Jehovah's witnesses, and then have either drifted

18. Should we pay close attention merely as a duty? Why so?

19. (a) On what basis can paying attention become an absorbing delight? (b) Does *agápē* love properly enter into personal relationships, and how is this specially true of Jehovah?

20. What has been and still is a basic cause for drifting away from the truth?

right away out of sight, or have had to be disfellowshiped from the Christian congregation. In the latter case, the cause of the deflection can often be traced to a strong personal influence operating against the truth and its high principles. Why do such things happen? Fundamentally it is because these ones never stayed in the truth long enough or went deeply enough really to get to know and love Jehovah as a person, The Person. Oh! yes, they loved the truth and the happy association with the brothers and the Kingdom prospects, but they never learned to build up between themselves and Jehovah, as between one person and another person, that close, personal, binding attachment and devotion that nothing can break.

[21] It is not impossible. It is not too difficult, not if you set your heart on it. The faithful men and women of old did just that, as described at Hebrews, chapter 11. By faith they proved their loyal devotion under severe suffering, knowing that Jehovah rewards those "earnestly seeking him," paying him more than the usual attention. (Heb. 11:6) Similarly today, as shown by the record in our *Yearbook*, there is a whole host of integrity keepers the world over who are maintaining the same course of steadfast devotion. Also, many dedicated husbands and wives are daily proving true to their partners, and we must admit that the love between husband and wife is personal, right from the start, when they commence paying each other special attention. Again using the Greek word *agápē*, the Christian husband's prior responsibility is made clear: "Husbands, continue loving your wives, just as the Christ also loved the congregation," yes, every one of his bride class individually, making up the Christian congregation.—Eph. 5:25.

[22] Jesus Christ, of course, is our chief example. After the record just mentioned at Hebrews, chapter 11, the appeal is made to "run with endurance the race that is set before us, as we look intently . . . [and] consider closely the one [Jesus] who has endured such contrary talk by sinners against their own interests." (Heb. 12: 1-3) How do you view him? Through whose eyes do you see him? Do you see him as one worthy of following, or do you feel like those of whom it was foretold that they would say: "When we shall see him, there is not the appearance so that we should desire him"? (Isa. 53:2) To get the right viewpoint we must look at him by using God's Word as a mirror. As we sometimes use a mirror to get a different angle on another person, so we can use the Bible to gain a fresh appreciation of God's Son. This will help us to put on a new personality, one like his, and will encourage us to conform to the divine pattern in every aspect of our lives, and helping us to endure as Jesus endured right to the end.—Jas. 1:22-25.

21. In sticking to the right course, what encouragement do we get, and from what sources?

22. How can we get the right viewpoint of Christ Jesus, and how will this help us?

A Catholic Priest's Advice

● In Poland a man went to his priest to inquire as to how he should deal with his mother, who is one of Jehovah's witnesses. He was very much surprised when the priest frankly told him: "Take your stand with your mother as quickly as you can because that is the only true way."

Upon learning this, the son agreed to have the Witnesses conduct a home Bible study with him, his wife and his son. It is being held twice a week.

Preparing for the Approaching Millennial Peace

What assurances do the Scriptures give that there will be a millennial peace?

The Scriptures give us abundant basis for hope regarding this millennial peace. Thus we read that Jesus Christ bears the name "Prince of Peace," and of his reign as the Greater Solomon we read: "In his days the righteous one will sprout, and the abundance of peace until the moon is no more." (Isa. 9:6; Ps. 72:7) And that his Kingdom rule will be one thousand years long is made clear at Revelation 20:6.*

What evidences are there that the approaching peace of a thousand years is close at hand?

Fulfillment of Bible prophecies indicates that the end of this system of things is near at hand, to be followed by the millennial peace. Among these is Jesus' great prophecy recorded at Matthew 24, 25; Mark 13 and Luke 21.

Further, Bible chronology indicates that we are at the close of six thousand years of human history. For Jesus to be "Lord of the sabbath," his thousand-year reign would have to be the seventh in a series of thousand-year periods. Would not, then, the end of six millenniums of mankind's laborious enslavement under Satan the Devil be the fitting time for Jehovah God to usher in a sabbath millennium for all mankind?

How can we prepare for the approaching peace of a thousand years?

To prepare for that peace one must make peace with Jehovah God and then keep at peace with him. This means to take in knowledge of Jehovah God and of his Word, exercise faith in him and in his Son as one's Savior and Redeemer. It means repenting from one's former wrong course of action and turning around and following a course of righteousness. It further means dedicating oneself to do Jehovah's will and to follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ. It includes symbolizing that dedication by water baptism.

Once having begun to follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ one must continue to do so by bringing forth the fruits of God's holy spirit such as love, joy, peace and self-control. Also, there is obligation to preach the good news of God's kingdom and to make disciples. Further, one must keep separate from the world and keep seeking first God's kingdom and his righteousness. In all such ways Christians can show that they are preparing for the approaching millennial peace.—Matt. 24:14; 6:33; John 15:19; Gal. 5:22, 23.

* For details see *The Watchtower*, October 15, 1969.

DO YOU REMEMBER?

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

● What was pictured by Noah's ark?

The Christian system of things.—P. 267.†

● When did the harvest of Jesus' parable of the sower (Matt. 13:24-30) begin?

1919 C.E.—P. 272.

● In view of Matthew 28:19, why is infant baptism unscriptural?

Because those baptized are to be disciples, and babies cannot exercise faith and be disciples.—P. 301.

● How does water baptism express a "request made to God for a good conscience"?—1 Pet. 3:21.

By dedication one presents himself to God in full dedication, doing so through Jesus Christ, by means of whom forgiveness of sins is possible; thus his request for a good conscience before God can take full effect at symbolizing his dedication.—Pp. 304, 305.

● How was Enoch "transferred so as not to see death"?—Heb. 11:5.

While having a vision of the coming earthly paradise, God put him to sleep in death, safe from enemy hands and without his experiencing the failing health that so often leads to death.—P. 327.

● What do newswriters overlook when commending the good morals of Jehovah's witnesses?

That they are what they are because of what they believe, and because what they believe is God's law, the TRUTH.—P. 371.

● Why was ancient Israel no welfare state?

Because the poor, though amply cared for, had to work for what they got.—P. 373.

† All references are to *The Watchtower* for 1970.

● How did the observance of the Jubilee year, in relation to the sabbath year, call for faith?

The Israelites had to trust in God to provide in the forty-eighth year of each fifty-year cycle enough food to last until the harvest of the fifty-first year.—P. 375.

● What are the main purposes of the congregation committee in handling cases of wrongdoing?

To keep the congregation clean in God's eyes; to keep his spirit.—P. 397.

● If a person violates God's law and escapes detection by the Christian congregation, why will he not escape the consequences of his act?

Because all laws and principles of God are sure to be enforced, whether through natural processes, by an agency of God, or by God himself.—P. 404.

● What is the "fear" that perfect love throws outside, as stated at 1 John 4:18?

Fear that inhibits one's expressions to God in prayer.—P. 415.

● What is the result with regard to obedience when there is too high an expectation of ourselves or others?

It can take the joy out of obedience.—P. 434.

● What is the modern-day Egypt that is foreshadowed at Exodus, chapters 7-12?

The entire world of which Satan the Devil is god.—P. 459.

● How is it true that "he that practices fornication is sinning against his own body"? —1 Cor. 6:18.

It takes the body of the Christian away from being one with the Lord Jesus and makes it one with a harlot; it also exposes one to venereal disease, with terrible effects on the physical body.—Pp. 511, 512.

"THROW YOUR BURDEN upon Jehovah"

AMONG the things for which the true servants of Jehovah God have been noted is their happiness. It is indeed true, "Happy is the people whose God is Jehovah!" Their happiness, however, does not come to them automatically. To obtain genuine happiness requires, among other things, heeding the inspired advice: "Throw your burden upon Jehovah himself, and he himself will sustain you." You cannot be happy if you are burdened down. —Ps. 144:15; 55:22.

How can you throw your burdens upon Jehovah? By faith and prayer, even as we read: "Do not be anxious over anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication along with thanksgiving let your petitions be made known to God; and the peace of God that excels all thought will guard your hearts and your mental powers by means of Christ Jesus." Jesus Christ made the same point in his Sermon on the Mount, saying: 'Stop being anxious. Your heavenly Father feeds the birds. Are you not worth more than they are? And if God clothes the lilies of the field with a glory greater than that of Solomon, will he not much rather clothe you, you with little faith? So never be anxious as to what you are to eat, drink or wear. For your heavenly Father knows you need all these things.'—Phil. 4:6, 7; Matt. 6:25-32.

Yes, by exercising faith and through prayer to Jehovah God you can throw upon him all your burdens in the form of anxieties, worries, fears, frustrations and all other negative emotions. And this you need to do to have peace of mind allowing for happiness. In fact, doing so is even necessary for your physical well-being because of the psychosomatic principle.

THE BURDEN OF BEING WRONGED

What are some of these burdens that you can throw upon Jehovah? For one thing, there are the emotional burdens that life brings with it. These in particular tend to interfere with your being happy. For example, you might be burdened down emotionally because of having been wronged. You might resent this and want to retaliate or pay back in kind. Or you may not be able to do anything about it and so you let your frustration out on others or you let it make you bitter. Yet how foolish! Needlessly you are bearing a very heavy burden.

The wise course is to heed the counsel of the inspired apostle Paul: "Return evil for evil to no one. . . . Do not avenge yourselves, beloved, but yield place to the wrath; for it is written: 'Vengeance is mine; I will repay, says Jehovah.' " That is the right as well as the wise course, for it keeps you from becoming presumptuous and arrogating to yourself the role of judge and executioner. By telling Jehovah about it and letting him take care of it you rid yourself of a great burden indeed. —Rom. 12:17, 19.

That this is both the wise and the right course to take, David of old illustrated in his relation with King Saul, who hounded him and repeatedly tried to kill him. David could have taken the law into his own hands, as it were. On two occasions he had the opportunity to slay King Saul, but he did not do so. No question about Saul's persecution of David being a burden to him. But David threw this burden upon Jehovah, saying: "As Jehovah is living, Jehovah himself will deal him a blow; or his day will come and he will have to die, or down into battle he will go, and he will certainly be swept away. It is unthinkable, on my part, from Jehovah's standpoint, to thrust my hand out against the anointed of Jehovah!" And that is just the way things did work out. King Saul was wounded in battle and took his own life, and David became his successor upon the throne of Jehovah in Jerusalem without David's lifting a finger against his persecutor King Saul.—1 Sam. 26:10, 11; 1 Ki. 2:11.

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, whom David foreshadowed, took the same wise and loving course, even as appears from the record of his life as found in the four Gospels. He could have let the people make him king and then turned the tables on his persecutors, but he did not. Rather, as the apostle Peter tells: "He [Jesus] committed no sin, nor was deception found in his mouth. When he was being reviled, he did not go reviling in return. When he was suffering, he did not go threatening, but kept on committing himself to the one who judges righteously." Like David of old, Jesus Christ threw this burden upon Jehovah. He humbly submitted himself to whatever his heavenly Father permitted to come upon him, leaving it up to his heavenly Father to avenge him, which Jehovah did in his due time.—1 Pet. 2: 22, 23; Matt. 23:35, 36.

'DO NOT GET HEATED UP'

Today there is widespread wickedness in every land. Sexual immorality is rampant. Dishonesty in business matters has honeycombed society from the biggest corporations to the humblest employee. Citizens

cheat their government out of taxes and flout traffic regulations. All of this makes it more difficult for lovers of righteousness to live up to their high principles. What shall they do? Let all this wickedness unduly disturb them and rob them of their peace of mind? Such would not be wise.

To do so would be carrying a needless burden. Instead, heed the counsel that divine wisdom gives, not to bear this burden but to throw it upon Jehovah. Note the words of King David, who had many opportunities to heed this counsel in his own life: "Do not show yourself heated up because of the evildoers. . . . Trust in Jehovah and do good . . . For evildoers themselves will be cut off, but those hoping in Jehovah are the ones that will possess the earth." By exercising faith that Jehovah God in his due time will straighten out matters, you will be throwing your burden upon Him instead of trying to carry it yourself. You will thus allow room in your life for happiness.—Ps. 37:1, 3, 9.

PHYSICAL AND OTHER HANDICAPS

There is no doubt about physical handicaps' being a burden to the Christian. Polio may have left one lame, so one has difficulty in walking and especially in climbing stairs as one goes from house to house preaching the good news of God's kingdom. Or one may be plagued by failing or poor eyesight. Another may be afflicted with partial deafness. Still another is feeble because of advancing age. These may be circumstances over which one has no control. But how shall these be viewed? As frustrating handicaps that rob one of the joys of serving God? By no means!

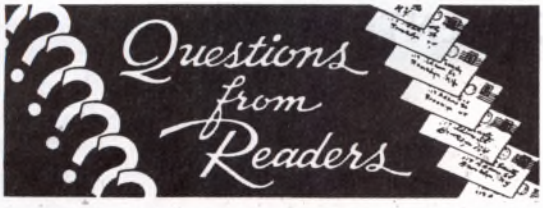
The apostle Paul had what he called a "thorn in the flesh," which he repeatedly asked Jehovah to remove. While Jehovah did not remove it, he did relieve Paul of its burdening frustration by saying, in effect, 'Do not let it worry you, Paul. I understand. I'm not asking more of you than you can do under the circumstances.' Or, as Paul himself put it: "He really said to me: 'My undeserved kindness is sufficient for you; for my power is being made perfect in weakness.' Most gladly, therefore, will I rather boast as respects my weaknesses, that the power of the Christ may like a tent remain over me." Getting God's viewpoint of these handicaps or disabilities relieves one of the frustrating burden and allows one to have peace of mind and happiness.—2 Cor. 12:9.

There are, however, certain other burdens aside from anxieties, worries, fears, frustrations and other negative emotions that are the lot of the Christian and that he must himself bear. For example, the governing body of the Christian congregation in Jerusalem wrote the early Christians scattered abroad: "The holy spirit and we ourselves have favored adding no further burden to you, except these necessary things, to keep abstaining from things sacrificed to idols and from blood and from things strangled and from fornication." Christians have certain responsibilities that they must shoulder.—Acts 15:28, 29.

And there are also certain burdens or 'heavy things' that we can help others to bear, even as Paul told Christians to do: "Go on carrying the burdens of one another, and thus fulfill the law of the Christ." Yes, "we, though, who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those not strong." How can Christians do this? By being patient with them, by bearing with them, by helping to make up for their shortcomings and deficiencies, by not expecting too much of them. Jesus set a fine example for us in this regard in the patient manner in which he dealt with his apostles.—Gal. 6:2; Rom. 15:1.

There are burdens that we must carry ourselves—with Jehovah's help. And others have burdens that we can help them to carry. But such burdens as worries, anxieties, fears and frustrations we need not and should not carry. These are some of the burdens that the psalmist tells us to throw upon Jehovah. Implied, of course, is doing all you can yourself, and, having done that, you can leave the results and the future in God's hands.

So do not let injustices or persecution embitter or discourage you; do not get heated up because of the prosperity of evildoers; do not chafe because of physical or other weaknesses or conditions over which you have no control. Do your best and leave all these disturbing things in Jehovah God's hands by means of faith and prayer. Doing so will help you to know the happiness of the people whose God is Jehovah.—Ps. 144:15.



● How are we to understand Matthew 1:17, which speaks of three sets of generations (fourteen for each set) from Abraham to Jesus Christ, although the previous verses list only forty-one generations?—Belgium.

There is a simple explanation to this seeming difficulty. It is apparent that Matthew counted David twice, not taking into consideration the total but only the uniformity of the three groups of fourteen names or generations as a memory aid. As Matthew himself puts it: "All the generations, then, from Abraham until *David* were fourteen generations, and from *David* until the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon until the Christ fourteen generations."

When such genealogical lists as that found at 1 Chronicles chapters 1 to 3 are taken into consideration, it appears that there were at least forty-six generations from Abraham to Jesus Christ. Matthew abbreviated the list by omitting three kings of Judah who were the offspring of King Jehoram and murderous Queen Athaliah. She was the daughter of wicked Queen Jezebel and usurped the throne of Judah for seven years. After listing Jehoram he omits the next three generations or fruits of this wicked alliance, namely, Ahaziah (who reigned but one year), Jehoash (who began to reign at the age of seven), and Amaziah (who reigned for twenty-nine years). Instead, he next names Uzziah, who had a long and prosperous reign until he presumed to take the place of a priest and offer up incense in the temple and was stricken with leprosy. Matthew also omitted the name of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah from his genealogy as well as that of Hananiah the son of Zerubbabel who in turn became the father of Abiud.

Such omissions on the part of Matthew are not to be wondered at, however, for genealogical lists were at times abbreviated. For example, Ezra lists twenty-three names in his priestly genealogy at 1 Chronicles 6:3-14 but lists only sixteen for the same period when giving his own genealogy at Ezra 7:1-5.

In considering Biblical lists of genealogy there are several things to be kept in mind. First of all, it is well to note that the variations were not due to carelessness. The Israelites were greatly concerned with history and were very careful in keeping records. Thus concerning the Genesis Table of Nations (Gen. 10:1-32) we are told that it is "unique in ancient literature. This interest in the nations accurately reflects the biblical emphasis on history. . . . Such preoccupation with history cannot be found in any other sacred literature of the world."—*The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible,* Vol. 3, p. 515.

Further let it be noted that all the Bible writers were honest men, guided by the high standard of morals set out in the Bible. And, more than that, they were writing under the influence of Jehovah's holy spirit.—2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21.

It is also well to remember that the way men went about recording things in ancient times was different from the way such things are done today. For example, certain terms took in more meaning than they do today. Thus Abraham spoke to Lot saying: "We men are brothers." (Gen. 13:8) Yet Abraham actually was the uncle of Lot. Likewise the Babylonian queen referred to Nebuchadnezzar as the father of Belshazzar, when Nabonidus was evidently his father and Nebuchadnezzar his grandfather. (Dan. 5:11) In fact, often "father" is used to refer to a more remote ancestor. Thus repeatedly in the Christian Greek Scriptures Abraham is referred to as "the father of us," when actually he was a distant forefather.—Acts 7:2; Rom. 4:12; Jas. 2:21, *Kingdom Interlinear Translation.*

Taking into consideration such factors helps us to understand why Bible writers expressed themselves as they did in recording certain genealogical lists and so removes apparent difficulties.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ANNUAL MEETING, OCTOBER 1, 1970

On this date (Thursday) the annual meeting of the members of Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania will be held, 10:00 o'clock in the forenoon, at the Society's office located at 4100 Bigelow Boulevard, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The regular letters of notice will be sent to all the members of the corporation and it will be appreciated if at this time they will see to it that the Secretary's office has their present mailing addresses so the letters and proxies will reach them shortly after September 1.

The proxies will be sent to the members along with the notice of the annual meeting and are to be returned so as to reach the office of the Secretary of the Society not later than September 15. As each member knows, he should complete and return his proxy promptly whether he is going to be at the meeting personally or not.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

October 4: Looking Intently at the Chief Agent of Life. Page 524. Songs to Be Used: 118, 46.

October 11: How to Train Your Powers of Perception. Page 531. Songs to Be Used: 54, 63.