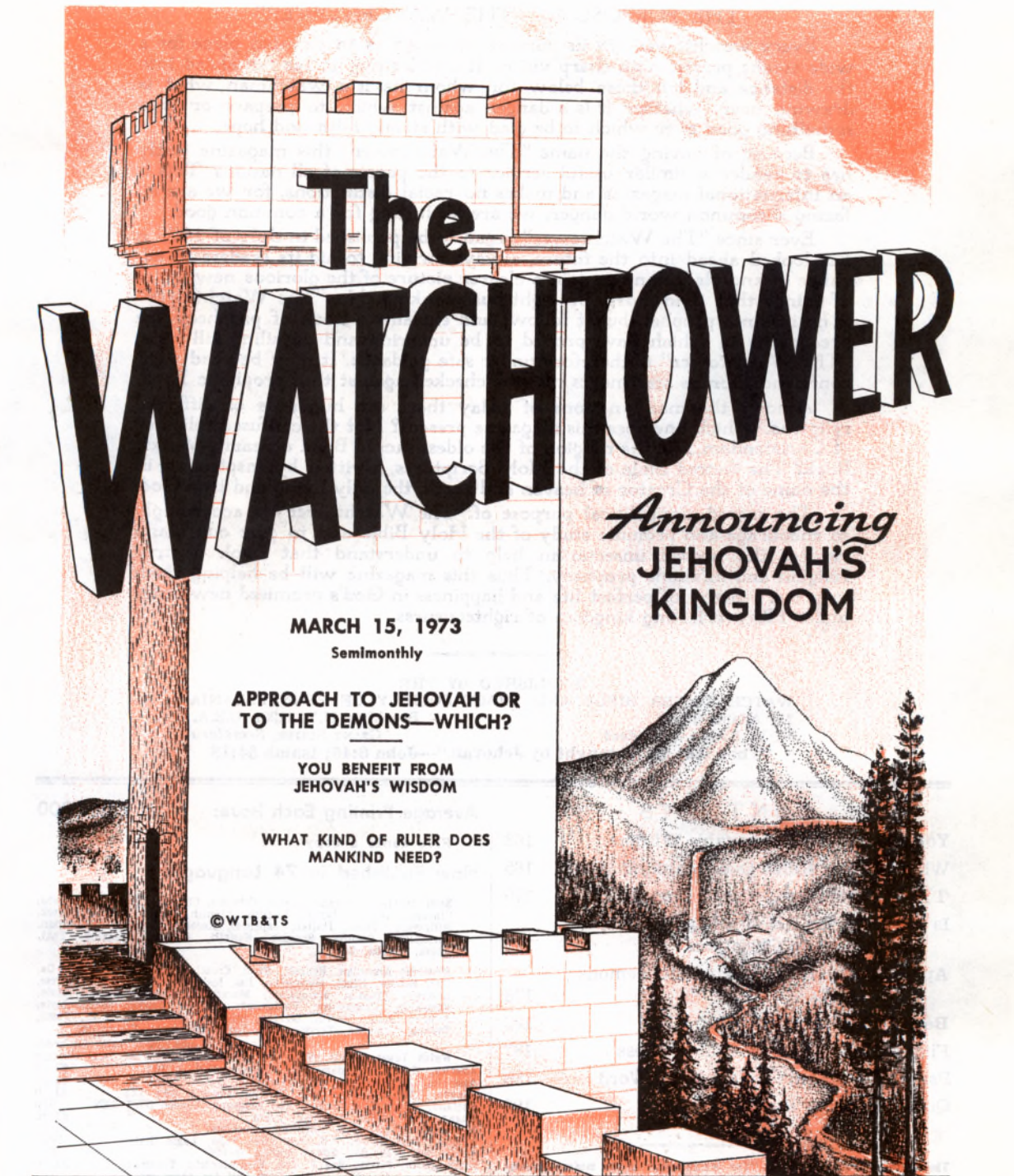




The WATCHTOWER

Announcing
**JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM**

MARCH 15, 1973

Semimonthly

**APPROACH TO JEHOVAH OR
TO THE DEMONS—WHICH?**

**YOU BENEFIT FROM
JEHOVAH'S WISDOM**

**WHAT KIND OF RULER DOES
MANKIND NEED?**

©WTB&TS

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

THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER"

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

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

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

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

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

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

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Announcing JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

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You Benefit from

Jehovah's Wisdom

"NO MAN has seen God at any time." (John 1:18) That statement, made nearly nineteen centuries ago, preserves an undeniable truth. Jehovah God is invisible to human eyes.

The qualities of this invisible God, however, are "clearly seen from the world's creation onward, because they are perceived by the things made." (Rom. 1:20) One of these qualities is wisdom, for Jehovah God is "wise alone," that is, wise in the absolute sense. (Rom. 16:27) This being the case, you should be able to see evidence of Jehovah's wisdom. In fact, you are benefiting from his wisdom. Did you know that?

The very fact that you are alive proves that you are benefiting from God's wisdom as reflected in his creative works. Conditions on this earth are just right for life to flourish. Light and heat are supplied by an adequate, constant and dependable source. The speed of earth's rotation on its axis and the speed of its movement in its orbit around the sun are such that solar energy is distributed to the planet's surface in the best way possible. By gravity, earth's vital atmosphere, consisting of just the right mixture of gases, is kept from escaping. The gravita-

tional pull, however, is not so strong as to hamper our freedom of movement. There are also vast supplies of water with properties that are absolutely essential for life to continue on earth. The soil, in turn, is filled with nourishment that readily combines with water and can easily be assimilated by plants.

Consider: Was it blind chance that placed an adequate source of heat and light at just the right distance from the earth? Was it chance that caused the earth to rotate on its axis and to move around the sun at just the right speed? Was it chance that provided the earth with a permanent atmosphere having the right mixture of gases? Was it by chance that the earth came to have the food and water supplies needed for life to continue? Obviously not. It was the source of unlimited wisdom, Jehovah God, who put into operation all the cycles necessary for life to continue.

It is indeed amazing that life is possible under such a great variety of circumstances. We humans can make our home in high altitudes, tropical lowlands or cold Arctic regions. If in reasonably good health, we can adjust readily to seasonal changes or to completely different

climates in other parts of the earth.

There is a generous "margin" in which life can continue to exist comfortably. Though man's unwise and unclean ways have brought death to millions, life has, nevertheless, continued for millennia. Today poisonous fumes are polluting the air. Harmful wastes are pouring into streams, rivers, lakes and oceans. Large land areas are being ruined through human carelessness, greed and ignorance. Yet life is able to continue.

True, man's failures are bringing him ever closer to disaster, to the edge of the generous margin in which life can survive. Nevertheless, Jehovah God has both the wisdom and power to cope with this. He has purposed to "bring to ruin those ruining the earth" and to preserve it as a home for obedient mankind.—Rev. 11: 18; 21:3-5.

GOD'S WISDOM SEEN IN HUMAN CONSCIENCE AND THE BIBLE

To continue to benefit from God's wisdom after the destruction of all ruiners of the earth, we must prove ourselves to be people who desire to be guided by the wise commands set forth in his Word, the Bible. We read: "The world is passing away and so is its desire, but he that does the will of God remains forever." (1 John 2:17) Are you acquainting yourself with God's will and *doing* it?

Many people today feel that leading a good life is enough and that one does not need the Bible to do that. They may say that a person does not have to know the Bible to use good judgment in handling his affairs, to treat his neighbors decently and to be a law-abiding citizen. That there are people who lead comparatively 'good' lives though lacking Bible knowledge should come as no surprise. Why not? Because humans have the God-given faculty of conscience, an inward realization or

sense of right and wrong. It is just as the Bible says: "Whenever people of the nations that do not have law do by nature the things of the law, these people, although not having law, are a law to themselves. They are the very ones who demonstrate the matter of the law to be written in their hearts, while their conscience is bearing witness with them and, between their own thoughts, they are being accused or even excused."—Rom. 2: 14, 15.

Were it not for God's wisdom in endowing man with the faculty of conscience, then crime and lawlessness doubtless would have long ago reached such proportions as to make human life virtually impossible. Happily the faculty of conscience is so strong that, even in this twentieth century of increasing crime and violence, it moves many people to act in a generally decent way and to contribute in some measure at least to the welfare and happiness of fellow humans. If inherited conscience can do that, should not adherence to God's commands as set forth in his Word produce even better results? Certainly!

Another reason for wanting the direction of the Bible is that training and environment can affect one's conscience unfavorably and make it an unreliable guide. In this century, for example, men have justified the torture and brutal murder of men, women and children by saying that those doing so were acting under the orders of superiors. Should we, therefore, not want to benefit from the wisdom set forth in God's Word so that we do not begin to justify wrong acts, bringing harm to ourselves and others?

Jehovah's Christian witnesses have found that living in harmony with the Bible has made their life purposeful and given safe direction to their conscience.

Their applying God's Word in their daily life has made them better husbands, fathers, mothers, wives, sons and daughters. When problems arise, they confidently turn to God's Word for a dependable solution. The next time they call on you,

why not let them show you how they have benefited from the wisdom found in the Bible? They will be happy to conduct a weekly free home Bible study with you so that you might benefit more fully from God's wisdom now and in the future.

WHAT KIND OF RULER DOES MANKIND NEED?



ONE of the wisest rulers of ancient times, King Solomon, observed that "man has dominated man to his injury." (Eccl. 8:9) This is because, all too often, human rulers have been haughty, uncompassionate and oppressive. They have not reflected toward their subjects the tenderness and concern an Oriental shepherd has for his flock. In fact, they have been tyrannical.

Mankind would certainly be much better off without such tyrannical rulers or "shepherds." That is also the way the Supreme One, the Sovereign of the universe, Jehovah God, feels about it. When, for example, the "shepherds" of ancient Israel became uncompassionate toward their subjects, Jehovah, through his prophet Ezekiel, exposed them, saying:

"Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel. Prophesy, and you must say to them, to the shepherds, 'This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah has said: "Woe to the shepherds of Israel, who have become feeders of themselves! Is it not the flock that the shepherds ought to feed? The fat is what you eat, and with the wool you clothe your

own selves. The plump animal is what you slaughter. The flock itself you do not feed. The sickened ones you have not strengthened, and the ailing one you have not healed, and the broken one you have not bandaged, and the dispersed one you have not brought back, and the lost one you have not sought to

find, but with harshness you have had them in subjection, even with tyranny. And they were gradually scattered because of there being no shepherd, so that they became food for every wild beast of the field, and they continued to be scattered. My sheep kept straying on all the mountains and on every high hill; and on all the surface of the earth my sheep were scattered, with no one making a search and with no one seeking to find.'" —Ezek. 34:2-6.

CHRISTENDOM'S RULERS ARE UNDESIRABLE

Have not the rulers of Christendom acted like the bad shepherds of Israel in dealing with their subjects who claim to be God's "sheep"? Have these rulers not treated people as if they owned them rather than as the property of the God whom they professed to worship? Have they, as well as popes, cardinals and archbishops who have held political office, not been harsh rather than tender? Have they not fattened themselves materially off these poor "sheep" and lived in "shameless luxury"? (Rev. 18:7) We have not seen the political rulers of Christendom lay down their lives for the "sheep," as did the Lord

Jesus Christ. (John 10:9-11) But there is abundant historical evidence that the political rulers of Christendom have been oppressive.

The political "shepherds" of Christendom have fought among themselves, one professed Christian ruler against another so-called Christian ruler. They have sacrificed their sheeplike people on the altar of nationalism or religious sectarianism. Even some dictators have been outstanding favorites of the religious clergy. The Christian witnesses of Jehovah have experienced violent persecution at the hand of these dictators and extremely nationalistic, totalitarian rulers. Because of the injustices that are not corrected, many of the oppressed people have fled to various newly formed, revolutionary kinds of organizations and have fallen victim to materialistic radicalism and atheistic Communism. There is neither political, national nor religious unity in Christendom. Like bewildered sheep without a shepherd, the people are scattered as prey to "beasts." The situation in Christendom is just like that described at Ezekiel 34:7-10, and this gives positive assurance that Jehovah God will see to it that Christendom's rulers will lose their position. We read:

"You shepherds, hear the word of Jehovah, 'As I am alive,' is the utterance of the Sovereign Lord Jehovah, 'surely for the reason that my sheep became something for plunder and my sheep continued to be food for every wild beast of the field, because there was no shepherd, and my shepherds did not search for my sheep, but the shepherds kept feeding themselves, and my own sheep they did not feed,' therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of Jehovah. This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah has said, 'Here I am against the shepherds, and I shall certainly ask back my sheep from their hand and make them cease from feeding my sheep, and the shepherds will no longer feed themselves; and I will deliver my sheep out of their mouth, and they will not become food for them.'"

In the case of ancient Israel of Ezekiel's day, Jehovah delivered his "sheep" out of the mouth of the self-feeding "shepherds" in governmental places by having Jerusalem destroyed and the land of Judah desolated. The king and princes had to vacate their governmental office, being captured by the Babylonians and deported. Some were killed as a penalty for their rebellion. In Babylon the captive rulers were put in prison or subjected to restraints, being stripped of rulership. —2 Ki. 25:18-30; Jer. 52:24-34.

In harmony with that ancient example, Jehovah God will see to it that the governmental overseers of the entire worldwide system of things, including the professed Christian rulers of Christendom, are deposed. This will free Jehovah's true "sheep" from the oppression and self-serving operations of the political "shepherds." No more will those unfaithful "shepherds" feed themselves at the expense of Jehovah's flock of Christian witnesses. No matter how scattered these may find themselves because of the opposition and persecution carried on by political elements, Jehovah knows where his true "sheep" have been dispersed. Like a loving Shepherd, he will search for them and regather them into one fold. His solemn promise as made through his prophet Ezekiel stands good today. The way that he fulfilled this promise toward ancient Israel in the year 537 B.C.E. and thereafter was a prophetic guarantee that he would carry out his promise in the future. We read:

"For this is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah has said: 'Here I am, I myself, and I will search for my sheep and care for them. According to the care of one feeding his drove in the day of his coming to be in the midst of his sheep that have been spread abroad, that is the way that I shall care for my sheep; and I will deliver them out of all the places to which they have been scattered in the day of clouds and thick gloom. And I

will bring them out from the peoples and collect them together from the lands and bring them in onto their soil and feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the stream beds and by all the dwelling places of the land. In a good pasturage I shall feed them, and on Israel's high mountains their abiding place will come to be. There they will lie down in a good abiding place, and on a fat pasturage they will feed upon the mountains of Israel.'"—Ezek. 34:11-14.

JEHOVAH'S DEEDS ASSURE THAT HE CAN PROVIDE A GOOD RULER

In 537 B.C.E., through the instrumentality of King Cyrus the Persian, Jehovah enabled a faithful Jewish remnant to return to Jerusalem and the land of Judah. Similarly in this century, Jehovah God has demonstrated his ability to gather the scattered remnant of spiritual Israel into a religiously free, spiritually nourishing relationship with Him. (1 Pet. 2:25) For them the turbulent times of World War I (1914-1918 C.E.) had been a "day of clouds and thick gloom." (Ezek. 34:12) That day was darkened because of the religious persecution that Christendom (the dominant part of Babylon the Great, the world empire of false religion) heaped on the remnant of spiritual Israel. Thereby the remnant of spiritual Israelites were scattered and came into deep bondage to Babylon the Great.

But Babylon the Great failed to maintain her oppressive hold on the remnant of spiritual Israelites. In the spring of 1919 Babylon the Great suffered a severe fall from her position of religious power over Jehovah's people, and the shackles of their bondage to her were broken. As far as their religious rights and privileges from God were concerned, this remnant no longer let themselves become prey or "food" for the governmental "shepherds" of Christendom. In Christian fearlessness they stepped on the stage of the postwar world as witnesses of Jehovah's Messianic kingdom.—Matt. 24:14.

This remnant has experienced the fulfillment of Ezekiel 34:15, 16:

"I myself shall feed my sheep, and I myself shall make them lie down,' is the utterance of the Sovereign Lord Jehovah. 'The lost one I shall search for, and the dispersed one I shall bring back, and the broken one I shall bandage and the ailing one I shall strengthen, but the fat one and the strong one I shall annihilate. I shall feed that one with judgment.'"

Jehovah God has made an addition to the original remnant that survived faithfully the "day of clouds and thick gloom" during World War I. Thousands of persons inside and outside Christendom heard the Kingdom message as preached by Jehovah's restored remnant and eventually became dedicated, baptized disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ. Among all these "sheep" Jehovah permits no one to misuse his strength with impunity. If anyone becomes harsh and oppressive like a fat, strong sheep toward other "sheep" in the fold, Jehovah 'annihilates' such an unloving, selfish "sheep." He cuts that one off from the flock as one who is spiritually dead. He 'feeds that one with judgment,' that is, with the judgment of disfellowshipping from the flock now and literal annihilation in the coming "great tribulation."

Jehovah has cleared out from among his restored remnant of spiritual sheep those who are greedy and self-seeking. None are tolerated who spoil things for others and who use brute strength and horns of power to enjoy the best things for themselves to the exclusion of weak or sickened "sheep." Jehovah has allowed no dividing of his "sheep" into a clergy class and a laity class. He has enforced the rule laid down through his Son Jesus Christ: "You, do not you be called Rabbi, for one is your teacher, whereas all you are brothers. Moreover, do not call anyone your [spiritual] father on earth, for one is your Father, the heavenly One. Neither be called

'leaders,' for your Leader is one, the Christ. But the greatest one among you must be your minister." (Matt. 23:8-11) What Jehovah has done fits the prophetic description found at Ezekiel 34:17-22:

"As for you my sheep, this is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah has said: 'Here I am judging between a sheep and a sheep, between the rams and the he-goats. Is it such a little thing for you men that on the very best pasturage you feed but the rest of your pasturages you should trample down with your feet, and that the clear waters you drink but the ones [the waters] left over you should foul by stamping with your very feet? And as for my sheep, on the pasture ground trampled by your feet should they feed and the water befouled by the stamping of your feet should they drink?' Therefore this is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah has said to them: 'Here I am, I myself, and I shall certainly judge between a plump sheep and a lean sheep, for the reason that with flank and with shoulder you kept pushing and with your horns you kept shoving all the sickened ones until you had scattered them to the outside. And I will save my sheep, and they will no longer become something for plunder; and I will judge between a sheep and a sheep.'"

JEHOVAH'S CHOSEN RULER

In view of Jehovah's great concern for his "sheep," we can rest assured that his choice of a ruler for mankind would indeed be a great blessing. But has Jehovah God chosen a ruler? Yes. Ezekiel 34:23, 24 tells us:

"I will raise up over them one shepherd, and he must feed them, even my servant David. He himself will feed them, and he himself will become their shepherd. And I myself, Jehovah, will become their God, and my servant David a chieftain in the midst of them."

We are not to conclude from this promise that Jehovah will raise up the original King David from the dead in order to put him in this shepherdlike office. Rather, God's "servant David" is one who has inherited the royal right from King David. He is the Lord Jesus Christ. The

fact that the name David means "Beloved" fits nicely with Jehovah's declaration concerning Jesus: "This is my Son, the beloved." (Matt. 3:17; 17:5) Then, too, Jesus likened himself to a shepherd, saying: "I am the fine shepherd, . . . and I surrender my soul in behalf of the sheep." —John 10:14, 15.

Jesus Christ did surrender his life for the "sheep." Jehovah God, however, raised him up from the dead. That is why Hebrews 13:20 speaks of Jehovah as "the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great shepherd of the sheep with the blood of an everlasting covenant, our Lord Jesus." Resurrected back to spirit life such as he originally had, Jesus Christ is now a heavenly Shepherd. In view of this there could be only the "one shepherd" that Jehovah could raise up over the remnant of spiritual Israel, namely, this resurrected Jesus the Messiah.

When did Jehovah do so? In the year 1914 C.E. when the "appointed times of the [Gentile] nations" ended, about October 4/5. In keeping with his role as king, Jesus Christ was foretold to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod or scepter, breaking them to pieces. (Ps. 2:8, 9; Rev. 12:5) The spiritual Israelites, however, have experienced a different kind of shepherding. Jesus Christ has fed them with spiritual food. He has become their chieftain in whose footsteps they follow as "sheep." His God, Jehovah, has become their God. In appreciation of this, the anointed remnant, in the year 1931, embraced the Scripturally based name "Jehovah's witnesses." —Isa. 43:10-12.

These anointed Christian witnesses of Jehovah have not been alone in benefiting from Jesus' fine shepherding. Jesus himself said: "I have other sheep, which are not of this fold; those also I must bring, and they will listen to my voice, and they will become one flock, one shepherd."

(John 10:16) Since 1935 particularly these "other sheep" have come into association with the remnant. And along with these spiritual Israelites, they enjoy the peace and protection that Jehovah promised through his prophet Ezekiel:

"I will conclude with them a covenant of peace, and I shall certainly cause the injurious wild beast to cease out of the land, and they will actually dwell in the wilderness in security and sleep in the forests. And I will make them and the surroundings of my hill a blessing, and I will cause the pouring rain to descend in its time. Pouring rains of blessing there will prove to be. And the tree of the field must give its fruitage, and the land itself will give its yield, and they will actually prove to be on their soil in security. And they will have to know that I am Jehovah when I break the bars of their yoke and I have delivered them out of the hand of those who had been using them as slaves. And they will no longer become something to plunder for the nations; and as regards the wild beast of the earth, it will not devour them, and they will actually dwell in security, with no one to make them tremble." —Ezek. 34:25-28.

BLESSINGS FROM GOOD SHEPHERDING

According to Jehovah's "covenant" for Christian peace, he has driven out and kept out all ferocious beastlike personalities dangerous to sheeplike Christians. By his holy spirit operating upon the true baptized disciples of Christ he has transformed their personalities into peaceful, harmless sheeplikeness. They lovingly seek to protect one another spiritually as well as materially amidst this hostile world. The effect of this has been as predicted: They have come to know that the God who has broken the bars of their religious yoke of bondage and delivered them from their Babylonish enslavers is Jehovah. They rejoice in the shepherding that Jehovah has provided by means of his Son Jesus Christ.

Under the shepherding of Jesus Christ, the spiritual Israelites have been enjoying a spiritual paradise. This is in fulfillment of Jehovah's declaration at Ezekiel 34:29, 30:

"I will raise up for them a planting for a name, and they will no more become those taken away by famine in the land, and they will no longer bear the humiliation by the nations. 'And they will have to know that I, Jehovah their God, am with them and that they are my people.'"

The "planting" that Jehovah has raised up for these restored spiritual Israelites has remained to this day and is producing more abundantly than ever previously since the year 1919. Under Jehovah's blessings, like pouring rains, their earthly estate has brought forth superabundantly the "fruits" of the kingdom of God. (Matt. 21:43) This productive plantation has become for them "a planting for a name," a renowned or famous plantation. Jehovah's written Word, the Holy Bible, has been opened up to their understanding. Not only are they sharing the resulting spiritual food among themselves, but they are also making it available in printed form in as many languages as possible. Truly they are the 'sheep of Jehovah's pasturing' and those being fed by his chosen king, the Lord Jesus Christ.—Ezek. 34:31.

Grand indeed have been the blessings that the anointed remnant and the "great crowd" of "other sheep" have experienced through the loving care of Jesus Christ. If they can enjoy such blessings in a hostile world, surely far grander will be the blessings when Jesus Christ will rule an earth free from the present religious, political and commercial system of things. Truly, Jesus Christ is the Ruler that mankind needs. Have you taken your stand for him by conforming your life to his example?

'I Am Grateful to GOD and CHRIST'



As told by John Charuk

THE syn- copated rhythm of African drums interrupt the stillness and quiet of the night, only to fade away into the background as I complete the circuit overseer's report on the Zorzor congregation of Jehovah's witnesses. Zorzor is located in the hinterlands of the Republic of Liberia on the West Coast of Africa. This is thousands of miles from my home in Alberta, Canada. How did I get here to serve my Christian brothers?

It began about thirty-six years ago. In 1937 an issue of *The Golden Age* (now *Awake!*) found its way into our home. The article "The Hope of the Nations" opened up a vision of a new order and filled me with a new hope. This article began to dispel my youthful dreams of attending a university and becoming a scientist. Now my mind was absorbed with thoughts of God's kingdom and with the hope of living on the earth forever. My heart throbbed with joy because of these new truths, leaving me with a longing, a consuming desire to follow the example of Jesus Christ and his apostles in preaching the good news of the Kingdom.

A few days later I attended a house party. Unbelievably, here I came upon another copy of *The Golden Age!* Eagerly I grasped it! For the remainder of the evening I was oblivious to the merry-

making of the other guests and was absorbed in reading and rereading the article on the subject "Armageddon." The importance of proclaiming the good news in the short remaining time was emphasized. How was I to get started in this all-important work? There was no one to instruct me. I was greatly disturbed. Many times I prayed with tears that Jehovah would open up the way for me to get into his service before Armageddon.

A year and a half later we moved to where a small congregation of Jehovah's witnesses was established. The first meeting I attended required walking a distance of four miles each way. During the meeting an announcement was made about advertising the public Bible talk. Who would like to share? Instantly my hand went up! Later, arriving at the appointed place, I found that the group was gone. They had met earlier, as no one else was expected. Fearing the end would come at any time, I took some handbills and got started on my own. That was in 1939, and I have been in the ministry ever since, grateful to God for this privilege. I feel much like the apostle Paul, who said: "I am grateful to Christ Jesus our Lord, who imparted power to me, because he considered me faithful by assigning me to a ministry."—1 Tim. 1:12; Matt. 24:14.

BAPTISM AND TESTS OF FAITH

In 1940 I symbolized my dedication to Jehovah by water baptism. Fulfilling my desire to get into the ministry full time,

I left home with \$10 in my pocket and a few things in a small handbag and entered the full-time preaching work. Ever since then Jehovah has provided amply for my material needs. Materially I have more now than when I started full-time service.

Serving Jehovah in those years was a real test of faith. World War II had increased the spirit of nationalism to the boiling point. One tall, broad-shouldered householder literally kicked me off his porch down a flight of seven steps and then cursed me for being a mere boy and not a man, so he could beat me to a pulp because of my Christian, neutral stand on the war issue. (John 17:16; 18:36) I knew from Jesus' words that persecution would come upon a true Christian and I was willing to endure. (John 15:19-21) Then came a ban on Jehovah's witnesses in Canada, and being a true Christian became even more difficult.

While in prison in 1943 due to the military issue, I learned of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead, for training missionaries. It imbued me with a missionary desire, and this hope was a sustaining factor during confinement. Then things began to happen. I was released from prison. The ban was lifted, the war ended, and finally came an invitation to Gilead School's twelfth class in 1948.

Soon after graduation I was sailing across the ocean to Africa. Permission to stay in the Gold Coast, now the Republic of Ghana, was not granted, so I went on to Nigeria, where I spent three busy and happy years. For the past twenty years I have served here in Liberia.

The missionary work, of course, has entailed some hardships, inconveniences and problems, all of which test one's faith. The second day after arriving at the Gold Coast I was struck down by dysentery. In a weakened and shaky state I began mis-

sionary service. Here I was, unaccustomed to the heat, and trying to adjust to a strange land, the language and customs of which I did not understand. Yes, I thought of home; however, there was no thought of *returning* home. I was grateful for this assignment from Jehovah, and I was determined to stay as long as Jehovah wanted me here.

At first, I had difficulty distinguishing one person from another. Every face looked alike. Calling back on interested people, I did not know whether I was talking to the person who had initially shown the interest or to a different individual. Gradually the problem was overcome. Today, by the features of an individual, I am able to distinguish of which of the major tribes of Liberia he is a descendant. I feel I am just as much at home on the African continent as the African himself.

THREE YEARS IN NIGERIA

During the three years I was in Nigeria, I had the privilege of visiting scores of places and seeing the interesting ways of the different tribes, such as the Yoruba, Ibo, Urhobo, Efik, Kwale and Benin. While serving as a district overseer, I sometimes had the privilege in connection with the circuit assembly to give three or four public talks. The assembly program was arranged for early afternoon to avoid the problems of lighting and the hordes of insects that are attracted by bright lights. At the end of the program for each day many Witnesses on cycles would visit a nearby town to witness, and a public talk would be delivered in conjunction with their witnessing.

Generally, long after the talk, people could be heard discussing what was said, some for, others against. After nearly every talk people would hand in their names with remarks such as, "We want to become Jehovah's witnesses; help us to

learn the truth," or, "From now on we are resigning from the church to associate with you people."

There were many heartwarming experiences. During the Aja Gbodudu circuit assembly, the Witnesses called on certain juju worshipers. Some of these saw the folly of their false religious practices. The next day the Witnesses returned to visit these people. "What are we to do with our jujus?" they asked. "Destroy them!" came the reply. "Will you help us?" "Gladly!"

In true Gideon fashion they began removing the jujus from their places. This caused great commotion. The villagers gathered quickly. Some came to protest. The Witnesses were determined to do a thorough job. One Witness answered the protesters in the manner of Gideon's father: 'If the jujus are gods, let them fight and save themselves.' (Judg. 6:28-31) How helpless the jujus were! The Witnesses junked them into the nearby river, and six persons who had served them rejoiced in the hope of serving Jehovah forever.

The coming of hundreds of witnesses to a particular village for an assembly had extraordinarily great impact. At Ewu over a thousand joyful Witnesses filled the town with their happiness for three days. At the conclusion of the assembly, the townspeople were sorry to see the Witnesses depart. Some even cried. With tears they remarked: "You have filled the whole town with joy and your cheerful spirit, and your presence here has been even better than a feast, and now you are leaving us so soon."

ASSIGNED TO LIBERIA

In 1953 I was assigned to Liberia, where I have been for the past twenty years. I have seen the Kingdom work here grow from 60 to about 800 publishers of the good news. I have had the privilege of

helping persons to dedication, see some grow to maturity and become overseers and others go off to Gilead School and return to assist with the work here. It has been my happy privilege to help in establishing the circuit work in this country.

Traveling during the past sixteen years in the circuit and district work has often been with many inconveniences. To travel in the interior one had to fight heat, perspiration and the red dust. Transportation was unscheduled. Sometimes one had to wait hours or even days for a vehicle to move. If I asked a driver, "When are you going?" he would shake his head and say, "God knows." But despite the rigors and inconveniences of travel, I thank Jehovah for all these experiences. It has been valuable training for the tests of faith that eventually face all of God's people.

A SEARCHING TEST COMES UPON US

The test that came upon God's people in Liberia in 1963 was a real challenge, and I am happy for the privilege of sharing in it. The persecution burst forth suddenly, prompted by a resolution signed by three prominent clergymen. It called upon the government to ban Jehovah's Christian witnesses on the false grounds that they are not a religious organization, but, rather, a political one, operating behind a religious front, seeking to undermine the authority of the state by teaching people not to salute national emblems. These three clergymen thought of damaging Jehovah's organization and stopping his worship in Liberia. However, since then the last of these clergymen has recently died, and some of their former hardworking members are today among our finest publishers of the good news, and Jehovah's organization is stronger than ever before.

The persecution itself began when soldiers came to our Christian assembly at

Gbarnga, broke it up and marched all of us (about 400 men, women and children) to the army compound, where we sat on the field. Soldiers armed with rifles and bayonets surrounded us and continuously threatened us with being broken like a chicken egg. I wondered if I would ever see my mother and father again this side of Armageddon. However, there was no thought of escape. My mind was made up. I was determined to remain faithful to Jehovah and, if need be, to end my ministry right there in death. I prayed to Jehovah to grant me strength to remain faithful and endure whatever torture the enemy might bring against me.

Jehovah did strengthen me. It seems that I felt impervious to what they said or did. One soldier hit me several times across the arms and shoulders. I felt a dull thud but no real pain. It was not until three days later, after I had returned home, that I saw the bruises and felt the pain. Undergoing this type of oppression provided me with this invaluable lesson—that during severe persecution Jehovah can dull the body, making it insensitive to pain and that the thought of being physically beaten is more fearful and painful than the actual experience.

Remaining on that hard field for three days and nights in an upright sitting position without the privilege of sleep or even resting oneself on the elbow caused the back and body to ache with pain. At this painful moment, the soldiers issued what seemed an ultimatum—salute or go to a notorious army prison in which very few survive. The thought of this struck terror into one Witness. He compromised. Immediately the announcement was made that the rest were being released and could go home. On hearing this, the compromiser broke down and cried like a baby. His

happiness was gone. He felt remorse and abandoned, with no hope. This affected his physical condition, bringing on an illness from which he never recovered, and he died shortly thereafter. How forcefully this illustrates the truthfulness of Proverbs 10:9: "He that is walking in integrity will walk in security"!

Maintaining integrity under test brings a happiness that one can experience only if one has been faithful under severe trial. The Witnesses who maintained integrity have some of their finest moments now when they come together and relive the scenes of persecution. They are able to enjoy themselves for hours, most happy that they were able to remain faithful. It has helped me to appreciate the full meaning of Jesus' words at Matthew 5:10-12, to rejoice when being persecuted for righteousness' sake.

Psalms 119:46 indicates that before kings God's people will declare Jehovah's righteousness. I am grateful to Jehovah for being favored with this privilege. After the government asked the missionaries of Jehovah's witnesses to leave the country, an interview was arranged so that we could present the case for true worship before the ruler of the land. On the morning of December 4, 1963, we were ushered into the presidential office at the Executive Mansion. During the one hour we were favorably heard, and a trend was reversed and the missionaries were invited to return.

GOOD THINGS IN ABUNDANCE

How truthful the words of the psalmist, that "Jehovah himself will not hold back anything good from those walking in faultlessness"! (Ps. 84:11) This has been proved to me time and again during the past twenty-three years of missionary ser-

vice. Leaving Canada in 1948 for Gilead and then for a foreign assignment, I never thought of seeing home before Armageddon. Ten years passed, and in 1958 Jehovah, through his organization, lovingly arranged for me to attend the "Divine Will" International Assembly at New York's Yankee Stadium and the Polo Grounds. After the assembly, I visited my parents and friends. It was a happy time!

Jehovah, true to his promise, had many more good things in store for me. In 1969 the Society arranged for round-trip air fare from Liberia to Vancouver, Canada, and the "Peace on Earth" Assembly. Here I was reunited with my two sisters whom I had last seen in 1958. Two happy months were spent with my mother and father in Edmonton. During 1947-1948, I served as a full-time minister there prior to attending Gilead School. At that time there was only one congregation. Now there are seventeen congregations. What a joy it was to speak in each of them about the progress of the work in Liberia and the upbuilding experiences of our Liberian brothers!

There have been additional privileges for which I thank Jehovah immensely. In 1959 I was in the circuit work in the remotest corner of Liberia when word was received to come to Monrovia immediately and care for the office work at the Branch. I knew nothing of office work, and the first few days I seemed completely lost. Gradually I became acquainted with the routine of office work, and during the eight months that the branch overseer was away recovering from a polio attack, I learned a great deal more about organization. This experience has helped me to appreciate that with Jehovah's help we can handle any assignment. In 1961 I received an invitation to attend a ten-

month course at Gilead for additional training.

Life in the African villages has been simple over these years, with not too many distractions of modern civilization. Without these distractions, I have had ample opportunity to study and meditate on God's Word. This has kept me strong. Yes, missionary life has been a real blessing and protection against materialism. During the pleasant tropical evenings there has been ample time to meditate and reflect on Jehovah's creation and draw near to him. My greatest happiness comes each evening when my mind is still awake, and while alone I can spend some time under the starry heavens walking and talking with Jehovah. This has drawn me closer to Jehovah. Also, I find it more refreshing to communicate with Jehovah in this manner, rather than to pray for only a minute or two before going to bed when the body is tired and the mind is not so alert.

After spending twenty-three years in missionary service in tropical West Africa, do I feel that it is time to quit and let the younger ones take over? No, seeing the blessings and the growth of Jehovah's organization makes me feel as did Caleb, after being preserved for more than forty-five years, through the wilderness sojourn and into the Promised Land. He said: "Yet I am today as strong as on the day of Moses' sending me out. As my power was then, so my power is now." (Josh. 14:11) Despite the inconveniences and hardships, these past years have been excellent training and preparation for the future. Yes, I am extremely grateful to Jehovah and to Christ Jesus our Lord, who have imparted power to me, and considered me faithful by assigning me to the Kingdom ministry.

IS THE DATE FOR CELEBRATING PASSOVER

IMPORTANT TO CHRISTIANS?

JESUS CHRIST, the founder of Christianity, instituted the memorial of his death (the Lord's Evening Meal) on a day marked by an annual observance, the Jewish Passover. This being the case, reasonably the Lord's Evening Meal would also be an *annual* celebration. Hence the date on which the Passover was held would determine when the memorial of Jesus' death should be commemorated. Christians therefore find it of more than passing interest to ascertain when Passover was observed. It is important, for they are under command to keep the memorial of Jesus' death.—Luke 22:19.

According to the Jewish calendar, the anniversary date for the celebration of Passover falls in the month of Nisan. Regarding the lamb or goat that was to be eaten during the course of the Passover meal, Jehovah God commanded: "It must continue under safeguard by you until the fourteenth day of this month, and the whole congregation of the assembly of Israel must slaughter it between the two evenings."—Ex. 12:6.

What does the expression "two evenings" mean? Does it have any bearing on the date for celebrating Passover?

Jewish tradition generally presents the "two evenings" as the time from noon (when the sun begins to decline) on until sundown. As the Israelites measured their day from sundown to sundown, this would mean that the Passover victim was slaughtered prior to the sundown with which Nisan 14 ended and Nisan 15 began. If this were correct, the Passover meal itself would have been eaten in Egypt on Nisan 15 and the Israelites would not have left Egypt until that date.

But the traditional Jewish view regarding the "two evenings" does not harmonize with the Bible account at Exodus 12:17, 18. There we read: "You must keep the festival of unleavened cakes, because on *this very day* I must bring your armies out from the land of Egypt. And you must keep this day throughout your generations as a statute to time indefinite. In the first month [Nisan or Abib], on the fourteenth day of the month, in the evening you are to eat unleavened cakes."

Had the Passover victim been slaughtered as Jewish tradition holds, namely, in the last quarter of the fourteenth day, which ended at sundown, then the Israelites could not have left Egypt that "very day." The event that enabled them to depart was the death of the Egyptian firstborn. But, as this took place at midnight, it would not have come until about six hours after Nisan 14 ended.—Ex. 12:29.

So we must look to a source other than Jewish tradition to find out when the Passover victim was sacrificed and then eaten. We need to examine the Bible itself to determine the significance of the expression "two evenings." Directing our attention to Deuteronomy 16:6, we note that in the case of the first evening a time beginning considerably later than noon is involved. The instructions to Israel here read: "You should sacrifice the passover in the evening as soon as the sun sets." So the first of the "two evenings" manifestly designates the time when the sun sets, whereas the second evening would correspond to the time when the sun's reflected light or afterglow ends and darkness falls.

This explanation of the two evenings was also offered by the Spanish rabbi Aben-Ezra (1092-1167 C.E.), as well as by the Samaritans and the Karaite Jews. It is the view presented by such scholars as Michaelis, Rosenmueller, Gesenius, Maurer, Kalisch, Knobel and Keil.

Viewing the Biblical evidence as a whole, we can see that the Passover victim was slaughtered at sunset, at the start of Nisan 14, and the meal itself was eaten later that evening. Whereas the Jews of today, in keeping with tradition, eat the Passover meal on Nisan 15, their practice is not supported by the Holy Scriptures. The correct anniversary date is Nisan 14.

Thus Jesus Christ must have eaten the Passover with his disciples on Nisan 14 "after evening had fallen" and thereafter instituted the Lord's Evening Meal. (Mark 14:17; Matt. 26:20-28) Jehovah's Christian witnesses therefore observe the memorial of Christ's death on its anniversary date after sundown on Nisan 14.

Approach to Jehovah or to THE DEMONS -WHICH?

"Let us, therefore, approach with freeness of speech to the throne of undeserved kindness, that we may obtain mercy and find undeserved kindness for help at the right time."—Heb. 4:16.

JEHOVAH GOD in his heavenly abode has provided a way of approach to himself. He has ONE way. Approach must be through the right channel, faith in Jesus Christ and acceptance of his ransom sacrifice.

² Jesus himself said: "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me." (John 14:6) There are no shortcuts. It is not a matter of living any way one wants to live, even if belonging to some religion. Neither can one use just any method, such as yoga, astrology, asceticism or drugs, and qualify to approach God. A person must have an earnest desire to approach God in the right way, and pray from his heart to get accurate knowledge of God's Word. And no one is made to approach or serve Jehovah against his own will. God accepts only willing, wholehearted devotion.

1, 2. Describe the way by which one must approach God.

³ Then, having come to know God's will, a person must follow the direction of God's Word. To stand before God requires clean hands and a pure heart. The psalmist says: "Who may ascend into the mountain of Jehovah, and who may rise up in his holy place? Anyone innocent in his hands and clean in heart."—Ps. 24:3, 4.

⁴ There is "one Lord, one faith, one baptism," and of the high priest through whom we approach God we read: "Seeing, therefore, that we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold onto our confessing of him. . . . Let us, therefore, approach with freeness of speech to the throne of undeserved kindness, that we may obtain mercy and find undeserved kindness for help at the right time."—Eph. 4:5; Heb. 4:14-16.

⁵ God loves us; therefore he is not difficult to approach. The apostle Paul said: "He is not far off from each one of us." We do not need helps or "crutches" such as images or earthly priests or any formalistic rites or printed prayers, neither hypnotism nor any form of drug. Adam did not approach God by means of images or drugs, neither did the "last Adam," Jesus Christ.—Acts 17:27; 1 Cor. 15:45.

⁶ Satan and his associate demons, on the other hand, seek control of mankind. Satan is a mimic god. He too has ways by which he can be approached, certain things that open us up to demon control.

⁷ Now, Jehovah protects his people from control of the demons unless they use a channel of approach to the demons. When a person gives in to wrong or foolish desire, however, he is easily turned to some channel that the demons arrange. He then

3-5. (a) Having approached God, how can we maintain closeness to him? (b) What so-called "helps" do we not need to approach God?

6, 7. By what way can one of God's people come to be under demon control?

comes under their control. Such a person may not necessarily be demon possessed, but he will be doing the things the demons want him to do, the things against God. James, Jesus' half brother, said: "Each one is tried by being drawn out and enticed by his own desire. Then the desire, when it has become fertile, gives birth to sin; in turn, sin, when it has been accomplished, brings forth death."—Jas. 1: 14, 15.

⁸ Trying to imitate or be associates of worldly persons, or persons who follow the world's thinking, is highly dangerous. Following their ways or trying to please them is one avenue that can eventually lead to control by the demons. Regardless of how fine such persons may appear to be, they are not guided by God's spirit, but "according to the system of things of this world, according to the ruler of the authority of the air, the spirit that now operates in the sons of disobedience." That is why we should take seriously the Scriptural warning: "Bad associations spoil useful habits."—Eph. 2:2; 1 Cor. 15:33.

⁹ Once the demons get a hold on a person he can rapidly go into complete degradation and an untimely death. That is what the demons like to see, especially delighting in the ruin of one who has once served God.—Compare Matthew 8:28-32.

WHAT ABOUT DRUGS?

¹⁰ What, then, about the use of drugs? Do they affect us in this respect, one way or another? Drugs have indeed become a big issue. The use of drugs is widespread in colleges and high schools and is rapidly spill-

ing over into grade schools. Young business people even have their social marihuana (marijuana) smokes.

¹¹ Is it, as they claim, merely 'a harmless diversion, a way to relax, a way to get relief from the pressures of the modern world'? Someone may say, 'That's all there is to it; it doesn't have anything to do with demons; it's just for relaxation.'

¹² Yes, someone may say that, but none of us can avoid facing the issue, To whom do drugs open an approach? Why? Because drug advocates themselves say that drugs are 'a way to get closer to God.' Drugs, they say, 'give a sense of awareness,' 'are instant paradise' or 'give instant self-analysis.' Well, do drugs actually expand the mind? Can they help us to analyze our hearts for good? What things in this connection must we consider, and what do the facts show?



Smoking marihuana can ruin mental health and soundness of mind. Is that what you want?

8, 9. Why is it very dangerous to be associates of worldly persons?

10-12. Why cannot we avoid the question, Do drugs open approach to the demons?

A SOUND MIND ESSENTIAL

¹³ In the matter of approaching Jehovah and winning the reward of everlasting life, Jesus brought the mind into focus when he said: "You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and [please note] *with your whole mind*."—Matt. 22:37.

¹⁴ It is obvious, therefore, that to approach Jehovah requires the full use of a healthy mind, keeping our power of perception and our power of reason clear and keen. Thus it requires a *sound mind*. Further, Paul stresses that Christians, all Christians, must be sound in mind. He exhorts that the aged men be sound in mind, that the aged women help younger women to be sound in mind, and that Titus himself keep on exhorting the younger men to be sound in mind.—Titus 2:2-6.

¹⁵ Therefore, as Christians, we cannot do anything that would place the soundness of our Christian mind in jeopardy. We are told: "Present your bodies a sacrifice living, holy, acceptable to God, a sacred service *with your power of reason*." (Rom. 12:1) To do otherwise would be to lose out on our approach to Jehovah and would put us in great danger of getting involved with the demons.

¹⁶ Since marihuana's effects are not so violent as the "hard" drugs, its use is more widespread among worldly people. Even Jehovah's people, particularly those who are in school, may be tempted to use it. This raises the question: Would a Christian be giving evidence of a sound mind, a healthy mind, by using marihuana, or even contemplating its use? This is a very serious question, for the increase in frequency of the use of marihuana is staggering.

13-15. Why is it necessary for a Christian to guard his soundness of mind?

16. Why does a Christian have to be concerned as to the effects of marihuana on the mind?

MARIHUANA'S EFFECTS ON THE MIND

¹⁷ For evidence of marihuana's detrimental effects on one's mind, morals, life and body, let the reader consider with us some concrete facts as submitted by medical doctors whose findings are reported in *JAMA*, the Journal of the American Medical Association, of April 19, 1971.

¹⁸ "A 16-year-old girl in whom there was no prior psychiatric difficulty smoked cannabis derivatives (marihuana and hashish) . . . for a period of two years. She began to lose interest in academic work . . . From a quiet and socially popular girl, she became hostile and quite impulsive in her inappropriate verbal attacks on teachers and peers. . . . After withdrawal from the drug, . . . Ten months of follow-up showed continued impairment of memory and thought disorder . . . she . . . could not transform her thoughts into either written or spoken words as she had once been able to do quite easily."

Marihuana a harmless diversion? Rather, a ruination of mental health and soundness of mind.

¹⁹ "A 20-year-old man developed delusions of omnipotence and grandeur six months after starting to smoke marihuana. He believed that he was in charge of the Mafia and that he was an Eastern potentate of the Ku Klux Klan. He began to collect guns and knives in addition to training his German shepherd dog to attack others."

This individual's mind was greatly damaged. It became unsound, sick. Was he obeying God's command to 'beat swords into plowshares' and to love his neighbor? Whom was he approaching—Jehovah or the demons?

²⁰ "Shortly after a 14-year-old boy began to smoke marihuana, he began to demonstrate indolence, apathy, and depression. . . . his condition worsened until he began to hallucinate and to develop paranoid ideas. Simultaneously, he became actively homo-

17, 18. Did the use of marihuana prove to be 'a harmless diversion' to a certain sixteen-year-old girl?

19. What experience reveals that marihuana's use can bring out viciousness in its user?

20. What degraded works were produced in a fourteen-year-old user of marihuana?

sexual. . . he attempted suicide by jumping from a moving car he had stolen."

We ask: Marihuana, 'an approach to paradise'? Homosexuality and suicide—instant paradise?

²¹ Often only a short period of marihuana use has ruinous effects, as experienced by another young man:

"A 19-year-old boy smoked marihuana for four months. . . . Believing he had superhuman mental powers, he felt that he was able to communicate with and control the minds and actions of animals, especially dogs and cats. . . . [he believed] that he was the Messiah."

Communication with dogs and cats and presumptuously thinking one is the Messiah makes approach to Jehovah impossible.

²² "An 18-year-old boy who smoked marihuana and hashish regularly for a three-year period became progressively withdrawn, confused, and depressed. His interest in astrology and Eastern religions increased. He became a vegetarian and practiced yoga. He had the delusion that he was a guru and eventually believed that he was the son of God. . . . he moved to the west coast and continued his unproductive, aimless life, supported financially by his parents."

Again, we face the question: Approach to Jehovah or the demons—which? These two last-cited cases definitely show that a form of spiritism was involved.

²³ In connection with the use of drugs as in other matters affecting us spiritually we should turn our ears away from the counselors of this world, which is sick in mind. We should recognize this counsel for what it is: the wisdom of this world whose god is Satan the Devil. Weigh the value of such counsel given to a college student.

"A 19-year-old boy entered college with an 'A' average. He began smoking marihuana

early in the freshman year, and within two months of starting to smoke cannabis, he became apathetic, disoriented, and depressed. At the semester's end, he had failed all courses and lacked judgment in most other matters. . . . As with so many of our patients, this young man told his psychiatrist that he had observed changes while smoking marihuana; he even went to a college counselor and told the counselor that he felt he was having a thinking problem due to smoking marihuana. The counselor reassured him that the drug was harmless and that there was no medical evidence of difficulties as a consequence of smoking."

However, this boy quit smoking marihuana, and gradually his apathy disappeared, his motivation returned, and his personal appearance improved. He found employment and later enrolled at another university.

²⁴ Many other cases could be cited. It might be added that a marked characteristic of marihuana users, particularly females, was the unusual degree of sexual promiscuity, both with individuals of the opposite sex and of the same sex. This was true among those who had engaged in no sexual promiscuity before using marihuana. The incidence of venereal diseases was high.

DRUGS, SPIRITISM AND DEMONISM

²⁵ Whom, then, do drugs help us to approach? Who is it that is in favor of degradation of men, of filth, both physical and moral, of insanity and an early death? It is the powers of darkness that drug users are approaching and with whom they are cooperating. In fact, as to the terrible addictive drug heroin, one user says: "It has all the advantages of death without its permanence." Yes, drug abuse leads to the deadly danger of spiritism, demon practices, demon worship, and can even

21, 22. What religious and spiritistic connections do we observe in the experiences of two young marihuana users?

23. (a) Why cannot one rely on worldly counselors?
(b) Cite an instance in proof.

24. What were some of the general effects on those using marihuana?

25. With whom are those who use drugs cooperating?

result in obsession by demons. Far from godly spirituality and closeness to God, it brings closeness to the demons.

²⁶ Either we are doing what the demons desire of us or we are obsessed and possessed by them, if we use the hallucinatory drugs. Notice this, that, in many cases, there is a leading of the person to astrology or to occult pagan religions that practice a form of spiritism and communication with the demons. There is a direct connection. One drug user said it was a thing commonly recognized among the drug users with whom he associated that (as they said) they 'knew a guy had gone too far when he began thinking that he was a god.' So the boys who thought they were the Son of God were no isolated cases. Now, which were they getting to be like—Jehovah God and his Son Jesus the Messiah, or the demon gods?

²⁷ Following their approach to the demons by the use of drugs, these young persons whose cases we have just considered did not stop there. No. They followed through and displayed the *works* of the demons: hostility, a disposition toward violence, sexual perversion and attempted suicide.

SPIRITISM A WORK OF THE FLESH

²⁸ But we do not have to have examples to know these things about drugs. We already have the word of the most important authority of all, Jehovah God. At Galatians 5:19-21 we read of the works of the flesh: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, and they are fornication, uncleanness, loose conduct, idolatry, practice of spiritism, enmities, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, contentions, divisions,

sects, envies, drunken bouts, revelries, and things like these." Which one of these things does the use of drugs not lead to?

²⁹ These degrading things are not the fruits of the spirit. They are not spiritual. Spiritism itself is not *spiritual*, but is classified by the Bible as a work of the *flesh*. As an illustration: A person who commits bestiality (having sexual relations with a beast) is a *human* performing the act, but it is not a human act. It is the act of a beast, perverted, degraded for a human to do. Similarly, spiritism, while claiming to be spiritual, while being promoted by spirit creatures, wicked demons, is perverted, debased, a work of the *flesh*, not of the spirit.

³⁰ The demons pervertedly desire fleshly connections. Reflect on the pre-Flood account. The Bible reports: "Now it came about that when men started to grow in numbers on the surface of the ground and daughters were born to them, then the sons of the true God [angels] began to notice the daughters of men, that they were good-looking; and they went taking wives for themselves, namely, all whom they chose."—Gen. 6:1, 2.

³¹ This act of the angels was a perversion because they were not created for this purpose. The Christian writer Jude compares their action with the sex perversion of Sodom and Gomorrah, writing: "The angels that did not keep their original position but forsook their own proper dwelling place he has reserved with eternal bonds under dense darkness for the judgment of the great day. So too Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities about them, after they in the same manner as the foregoing ones had committed fornication ex-

26, 27. Show that the use of drugs really leads to spiritism.

28, 29. Why is spiritism classified by the Bible as a work of the flesh?

30, 31. (a) How, before the Flood, did the demons demonstrate their desire to have fleshly connections? (b) Show that the action of the angels who married human women was perversion.

cessively and gone out after flesh for unnatural use, are placed before us as a warning example by undergoing the judicial punishment of everlasting fire."—Jude 6, 7.

³² These angels who sinned cannot materialize now as they did before the Flood, because of God's restriction. Nevertheless, by controlling the minds and bodies of persons they feel that, to some extent, they are having fleshly connections.

³³ It is of interest to us that the Greek word used in the Bible for "practice of spiritism," "sorcery" or "witchcraft" is *phar-ma-ki'a*, which is very closely related to our word "pharmacy." *Phar-ma-ki'a* means, literally, "druggery." Why is this word used for spiritism or sorcery? One authority says:

"PHARMAKIA . . . (Eng., pharmacy, etc.) primarily signified the use of medicine, drugs, spells; then, poisoning; then, sorcery, . . . See also Rev. 9:21; 18:23. . . In sorcery, the use of drugs, whether simple or potent, was generally accompanied by incantations and appeals to occult powers, with the provision of various charms, amulets, etc., professedly designed to keep the applicant or patient from the attention and power of demons, but actually to impress the applicant with the mysterious resources and powers of the sorcerer."—Vine's *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*.

³⁴ Is not the situation parallel today? Many drug users claim they are 'approaching God,' they are 'expanding their minds.' But actually it has to do with impressing the user with mysterious hallu-

cinations and feelings, leading them to the demons, under the idea that the drug is freeing their minds for higher, broader thinking. If one is led into the practice of spiritism he is open to all sorts of wrong practices, demon influence, insanity and everlasting death. Spiritism, a work of the

flesh, will prevent one from entering God's kingdom, say the Scriptures at Galatians 5:21.

³⁵ The apostle Paul describes what people are doing when they engage in any religious act or prac-

tice that makes an approach to anyone aside from the true God, Jehovah. He says: "The things which the nations sacrifice they sacrifice to demons, and not to God; and I do not want you to become sharers with the demons. You cannot be drinking the cup of Jehovah and the cup of demons; you cannot be partaking of 'the table of Jehovah' and the table of demons." If we use drugs, we should very soberly consider Paul's next words: "Or 'are we inciting Jehovah to jealousy'?" he asks, then warns, "We are not stronger than he is, are we?"—1 Cor. 10:20-22.

³⁶ Jehovah provides those who approach him sincerely with everything they need to be happy. Of approach and service to God, the apostle says: "To be sure, it is a means of great gain, this godly devotion along with self-sufficiency." Seek godliness through obedience to the only One who can provide it, and be happy "along with those who call upon the Lord out of a clean heart."—1 Tim. 6:6; 2 Tim. 2:22.

32. How do the demons still seek to satisfy their desire to have fleshly connections?

33. How does the Greek word for "spiritism" or "witchcraft" indicate a connection between drugs and spiritism?

34. How are drug users deceived, and in what will drug use eventually result for its users?

35. What warning does the apostle Paul give concerning the doing of anything that causes us to deviate from devotion to the true God, Jehovah?

36. What does God provide for the individual who approaches him with sincerity of heart?

THE NEXT ISSUE

- "Happy Is He Who Reads Aloud."
- Why Was It Written in That Way?
- Does the God of Justice Care?

Be A VESSEL for HONORABLE USE

"If, therefore, anyone keeps clear of the [dishonorable] ones, he will be a vessel for an honorable purpose, sanctified, useful to his owner, prepared for every good work."—2 Tim. 2:21.

THOSE who want to "get a firm hold on the real life" appreciate the importance and gravity of the warning: "Bad associations spoil useful habits." They know they must keep clear from dishonorable things and from dishonorable persons, whether such persons claim to be servants of God or not.—1 Tim. 6:19; 1 Cor. 15:33.

² In the matter of drug use, the greatest danger is to young persons. Therefore, the spotlight focuses on parents. They must see that their children do not get contaminated by the associations among which they are thrown in school and otherwise. It is not an easy task for parents. They need to have the right view of the drug problem and to know how to safeguard their children. For "by wisdom a household will be built up, and by discernment it will prove firmly established."—Prov. 24:3.

³ Drug users and promoters present many arguments to justify themselves. They claim they have something new. This drug craze is thought to be a new, "modern" thing, a new way of living or of approach to some god, something that others do not know about. When others try to talk to them about it, they say: 'Oh, well, you don't know what you're talking about; you haven't tried them.' They say, 'You can't realize the beauty, the euphoria, the perception you get.' Do you have to try drugs to know what

you are talking about? Well, do you?

⁴ Have we not had centuries of information on this? Look at India; look at China in past years. The degradation of the Chinese people by the infiltration of opium into China, particularly by European nations, was one of the issues in the Boxer Rebellion of 1901. Consider the degradation that drugs brought into these countries. It is a matter of history. So, when anyone talks about drugs, if he has these facts, he knows what he is talking about. No user of drugs can truthfully say, 'You can't tell me anything.'

⁵ Marihuana (marijuana) is not new, and what it does has been known for centuries. This drug is a product of the cannabis plant, from which hashish is made. Hashish, frequently called "hash," is used by most marihuana smokers. The origin of the word "assassin" testifies to the power of hashish to incite to acts of violence. This word "assassin" is drawn from an Arabic word *hashashin*, a word used to describe the Order of Assassins, a Moslem order founded in Persia about 1090 C.E. At the time of the Crusades, these men terrorized Christians and other enemies by secret murders, religious assassinations committed under the influence of hashish.

JESUS' ATTITUDE TOWARD ESCAPISM

⁶ What was the attitude of Jesus, our way of approach to God, when he was

1. How do Christians view the Scriptural warning: "Bad associations spoil useful habits"?
2. Why should parents be very concerned over the widespread use of drugs?
3. What arguments do drug users present to those trying to counsel them?

4. Is it true that one who has not tried drugs does not know anything about their effects?
5. Cite a historical acknowledgment of the bad effects of hashish, a relative of marihuana.
- 6-8. What was Jesus' attitude toward that which would help him to escape reality?

offered drugs? When he was about to be put on the torture stake they offered him "wine drugged with myrrh," which would probably have dulled his senses and would have lessened the pain somewhat. The account reads: "He would not take it."—Mark 15:23.

⁷ Why did Jesus refuse a drug? Well, of all persons, Jesus Christ, through whom God created all things, certainly knew what effects drugs have on the nervous system and the mind. (Col. 1:16) Jesus was here on trial as to his integrity, his faithfulness and blamelessness toward God. He was undergoing a severe test, and he did not want his mental powers to be dulled for an instant, just for the sake of dulling the pain. He wanted to be alert to God's will. It was God's spirit that Christ desired, not a false feeling of 'great perception and expansion of mind.' He knew that drugs, rather than help him, would shut off nearness to his Father Jehovah in this time that he most needed God's help. No drug-induced state of mind would help him to approach nearer to Jehovah God. He realized that, rather, he could, under the stupefying effect of a drug, play into the hands of the demons and lose everything for himself and the human race.

⁸ Jesus never sought unreality to get away from facing life. He accepted the "cup" that Jehovah had put before him to drink. (John 18:11) Earlier, when Peter tried to turn him away from reality in facing and completing the course that Jehovah had set for him, he reacted instantly by saying to Peter: "Get behind me, *Satan* [adversary]! You are a stumbling block to me, because you think, not God's thoughts, but those of men." Jesus did not want to go off into dreamy unreality and be drawn under the control of the demons.—Matt. 16:21-23.

⁹ To be usable by God we must do his will, and God wants our will to be strong so that we can do his will with all our heart, soul, mind and strength. (1 John 2:17) We need every faculty fully alive and active to do it. (Eph. 5:17; Col. 1:9) The apostle Peter learned from Jesus and he later wrote, urging: "Keep your senses, be watchful. Your adversary, the Devil, walks about like a roaring lion, seeking to devour someone. But take your stand against him, solid in the faith."—1 Pet. 5:8, 9.

¹⁰ The demons, on the other hand, want to dull us so that we are not functioning exactly right. They want to weaken our will to do right. Then they can easily get control of us. They want to becloud and confuse our minds, directing them toward other things so that we will be easily influenced to "do the things not fitting." (Rom. 1:28) Drugs can be a tool of the demons to accomplish this. A folder published by the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare says this about marihuana: "A person using marijuana finds it harder to make decisions that require clear thinking. And he finds himself more easily open to other people's suggestions. Doing any task that takes good reflexes and thinking is affected by the drug."

IS THIS GENERATION "DIFFERENT"?

¹¹ Those who are fighting for the so-called "right" to use drugs present such arguments as, 'Why, it's no worse than a cigarette,' or 'It shows our generation is different.' Some youths among Jehovah's witnesses have been infected by such ideas. But why fight against the warning of God's Word and of his congregation,

9. What is essential, in order that we may approach God and be used by him?

10. What method do the demons use to get control of humans, and how do drugs serve this purpose?

11. Show the fallacy of arguments that drug users present to uphold their supposed "right" to use drugs.

which has always served him faithfully and is telling us the truth about these drugs? Cigarettes are admittedly ruinous, as is excessive drinking. Even if marijuana were no worse than a cigarette, well, what *good* is there in either one? If others want to do bad or ruin themselves, why should you?

¹² Did Jesus go bad or relax his morals just because his generation was most corrupt? Oh, they presented arguments to show they were justified. They thought they had the way of approach to God. But Jesus asked their leaders: "How are you to flee from the judgment of Gehenna?" (Matt. 23:33) He told them that the men of Sodom were actually better than that generation. (Matt. 10:15) And as to the argument that free drug use 'shows our generation is different,' this is the very generation that Jesus Christ said would be on earth when the "great tribulation" hits the world, and which would be *destroyed*. —Matt. 24:21, 34; 2 Tim. 3:1-5.

¹³ This generation is getting so bad that there are many parents who want to take their children out of school when they legally can, because of the increase of immorality. They prefer teaching them at home. Many are encouraging their children to get part-time work, so as to be self-supporting. They want the youths to get an appreciation of values

and to be real, reliable men and women. Then they encourage them to enter the full-time preaching work.

PARENTAL EXAMPLE REGARDING DRUGS

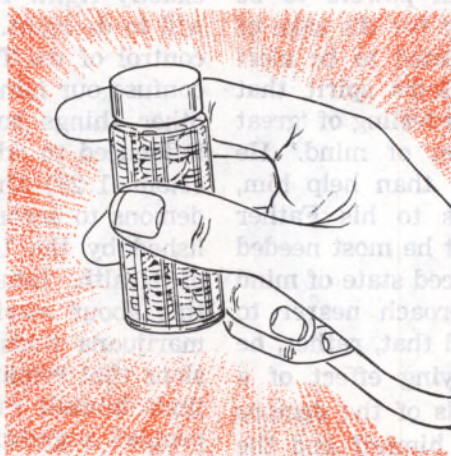
¹⁴ Drug use surrounds children in many schools to the extent that it is affecting some youths among Jehovah's witnesses. Parents, are you concerned about your children? Then what about your own life—the example that you are setting? Are you overindulging in alcoholic drinks? Are you constantly talking about such things as drinking? Or, do you take weight-reducing amphetamine pills, not

due to a glandular problem, but because you lack self-control in eating? Or, do you use "pep" pills to drive yourself beyond your normal limits?

¹⁵ Doctor George R. Edison, of the University of Utah, says that "amphetamine abuse is the major drug-abuse problem in the U.S. outside of the large cities where heroin addiction is so prevalent." "Speed," as some amphetamines are called, can cause

serious brain damage. In some localities doctors have voluntarily put a ban on prescribing amphetamines.

¹⁶ Admittedly, there are legitimate medical uses for various pain-killing preparations in cases of accident or incurable disease. But parents, do you abuse or overuse tranquilizer drugs or barbiturates



When parents overuse drugs, what example are they setting for their children?

12. (a) Was Jesus influenced in his course because of the practices of the generation among which he lived? (b) Why would the argument 'our generation is different' be no reason for changing to conform to their practices?

13. What are some parents doing because of the increase of immorality?

14. What questions should parents ask themselves about the example they are setting?

15. How dangerous is the habitual use of amphetamines?

16. What great dangers exist in the tranquilizer drugs, and to what, rather, should one turn for encouragement?

simply to avoid facing up to life every day? These can make you an addict. They can bring sudden death, particularly if you combine the use of barbiturates with alcohol. Do you not, rather, get comfort and courage from God's Word to face up to the everyday things of life? (2 Cor. 1:3, 4) If you are addicted to such drugs yourself, do not be surprised if you are found to be like the mother who wrote to TV personality Art Linkletter and who said: "I am so frightened. My daughter is experimenting with drugs because I notice that some of my barbiturates have been missing."

¹⁷ You may say, 'But my doctor prescribed them.' What doctors prescribe cannot always be taken without question, especially when dangerous drugs are involved. *The Journal of the American Medical Association* reports: "Hyperkinetic [overactive] children treated with amphetamines behave better in the classroom, according to a panel of physicians who met in Boston." But in such cases parents would do better first to apply Bible principles of love and understanding and proper discipline. Doing this may often bring much better results, as some Christian parents have found.

PARENTS, BE ALERT, WATCHFUL

¹⁸ Parents, do you know about your own children in this respect? Just because they are your children do not say to yourself, 'Oh, they wouldn't use drugs.' Have you



**Reason with your children
about the dangers of drugs.
Find out how they feel
about their use**

actually talked to them about drugs and their dangers and found out how your children feel about the issue? Have you forewarned them of things they do not know? That is, not a mere stern warning or threat that something is going to be done if they are found using drugs. Have you, rather, reasoned with your children, finding out their situation and thoughts? This takes time, but it is time that you could not spend in

a better way, for their lives are valuable to you. Also, what your children do may mean life or death to YOU.

¹⁹ So, parents, talk this matter over periodically with your children, whether you feel that they are using drugs or not. We are all in a fight to maintain integrity for life. To lose integrity means death. The pressures get stronger on us, but at the same time Jehovah kindly makes the issue so clear that there is no haziness to confuse us. It is merely a matter of doing what his Word says. But we have to do our part in maintaining self-control and staying on the right track.

URGENCY

²⁰ Now is no time to be indifferent, careless or stupefied by drugs. This is a time of final judgment on this world. Anything that weakens self-control, or makes one more open to suggestions from others, deprives one of one's own full willpower. One is in extreme danger. The spirit of the world is becoming increasingly demonic. If one toys with drugs one is in

17. Can we confidently take drugs merely because a doctor has prescribed them?

18, 19. What serious situation do parents face, and what should they do?

20. Why is it very dangerous even to toy with drugs, for example, to 'try them just once'?

great peril of weakening one's integrity. Giving in only once to the world's spirit may mean falling into the hands of the demons, and death.

²¹ Marihuana and such other drugs, as well as excessive drinking of alcohol, do indeed weaken inhibitions and control. They lower the bars of morality. One is open to suggestions from bad associations. It is a trap of the demons. The Bible says: "As a city broken through, without a wall, is the man that has no restraint for his spirit." (Prov. 25:28) When the wall of an ancient city was broken through, its defenses were gone. It was open to invasion by the enemy. Do not forget that the demons exist and are our *foremost enemies*.

TRUE SELF-ANALYSIS AND SPIRITUALITY

²² As to the claim that drugs give self-analysis, it is not what is in our human mind and heart that brings salvation, but, rather, what is in God's mind and heart. The apostle says: "For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, there dwells nothing good; for ability to wish is present with me, but ability to work out what is fine is not present." (Rom. 7:18) Do we need a "trip" into drug-induced unreality and so-called self-analysis to know this, when God our Creator has already told us so in his Word?

²³ Of course, we need to examine ourselves and keep our minds and hearts in the right way. But it is the Creator, who knows us better than we ourselves do, who can tell us what to do. The Bible says: "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." So, there is where we can find reliable analysis. —Heb. 4:12.

²⁴ God, not drugs, can direct us to lead spiritual lives. We read in First Corinthians 2:9-13: "Eye has not seen and ear has not heard, neither have there been conceived in the heart of man the things that God has prepared for those who love him." For it is to us God has revealed them through his spirit, for the spirit searches into all things, even the deep things of God."

²⁵ So, if we want to have deep insight, we will earnestly seek to receive God's spirit through prayer and study of his Word. The apostle continues: "For who among men knows the things of a man except the spirit of man that is in him? So, too, no one has come to know the things of God, except the spirit of God." The spirit of God is the only thing that can teach us the things of God.

²⁶ Certainly the spirit of the world is what impels so many young folks to take drugs. They want to please or be popular with their equals. So Paul declares: "We received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is from God, that we might know the things that have been kindly given us by God. These things we also speak, not with words taught by human wisdom, but with those taught by the spirit, as we combine spiritual matters with spiritual words."

²⁷ Jehovah's witnesses are not trying to escape reality. They are living now with a purpose. They are 'making their minds over' from the way they formerly were being "fashioned after this system of things." (Rom. 12:2) A musician who had lived the unreal life on drugs began

21. To what bad things does drug use expose one?
22. Do we need to use drugs to find out what is in our mind and heart?

23, 24. Where can we get reliable analysis of ourselves, with proper direction?

25, 26. (a) How can we receive deep insight? (b) What statement of the apostle Paul is a Christian denying if he uses drugs?

27. Rather than trying to escape reality, what are Jehovah's witnesses doing?

studying the Bible with Jehovah's witnesses. His associates ridiculed him, taunting: "You're being brainwashed." He aptly replied: "The shape our brains are in, they need a good washing."

²⁸ Yes, Jehovah's witnesses have cleaned up their thinking. They hold to the truth of the Bible words: "Godly devotion is beneficial for all things, as it holds promise of the life now and that which is to come." Also, they realize, as the apostle said, that their "labor is not in vain in connection with the Lord." —1 Tim. 4:8; 1 Cor. 15:58.

²⁹ So it is not eating or drinking, or

28. How do those following the Bible's way have far better hope than those seeking escape through drugs?
29. (a) How does Romans 14:17 show us that things such as drugs cannot help us to gain God's blessing? (b) How will God view and use those who seek now to develop the fruits of his spirit?

smoking "pot" or using drugs that opens the approach to God, but it is Bible knowledge and the doing of God's will. It would be well always to think of what is written at Romans 14:17, when arguments such as drug users put forward are presented to us, because we know that it is not what we eat, drink, smoke or put into our bodies that makes us God's servants or brings his favor. The apostle wrote: "The kingdom of God does not mean eating and drinking [and it might be added, using drugs], but means righteousness and peace and joy with holy spirit." (Rom. 14:17) Pursuing the fruits of God's spirit, we will be available for honorable use by Jehovah. He will provide a place for us in his new order. —2 Tim. 2:21.

Fine Conduct—a Powerful Witness

DEEP love for Jehovah God and fellow humans moves true Christians to conduct themselves in a laudable way. Their fine conduct 'adorns the teaching of God.' (Titus 2:10) It makes that teaching appealing to honest-hearted persons. In fact, many who are now associating with Jehovah's Christian witnesses were initially attracted to the Bible's message by observing the powerful witness given by commendable conduct.

● While working at the Customs Agency Service in Atlanta, Georgia, a woman met one of Jehovah's witnesses. Regarding this Witness, she writes: "There was something outstandingly different about this woman. Her modesty and manner of conducting herself were unlike that of most businesswomen. We became friends and, during one conversation, she told me that she was one of Jehovah's witnesses.

"Although at first this seemed rather strange to me, I was interested in hearing more about it. As she answered my barrage of questions, I realized that this was definitely the truth."

Today this woman is also a dedicated, baptized witness of Jehovah.

● A manager of a large restaurant in the United States had his interest aroused when a Witness began working there. About twenty-

five cooks and busboys and between fifty and seventy-five women worked in the restaurant. But it was the Witness who stood out from all the others. In a short period of time she became known as one of the better workers. She never cursed nor did she smoke, share in off-color stories or attend any of the after-hour parties. She also made good use of her 'break' periods to consider Biblical matters.

All this made a favorable impression on the manager. He tried to assist her by extending to her the opportunity to get off on religious holidays. But she would turn these opportunities down, always explaining Scripturally why she did not share in them.

Eventually the manager began to ask more questions. Discerning his interest, the Witness directed him to one of the male Witnesses, and a home Bible study was started with him.

Later, this manager married the Witness whose conduct had impressed him, quit his job as manager and, as a baptized witness of Jehovah, took up the full-time "pioneer" ministry. For some thirteen years now he has been serving as a traveling overseer.

● Relating her personal experience, a Witness from California says: "When most people think of Jehovah's witnesses they think of their door-

to-door activity. But this wasn't the case with me. I was contacted by a Witness at school. We had no classes together or any friendship. But I observed her from a distance. I could tell that she was different and this attracted me.

"One day this Witness approached me and my twin sister and asked if we would like to study the Bible with her. I readily agreed, but my sister just 'went along' with it. During our studies, when I got to know this Witness better, I could see that her whole outlook on life was different. She was so secure, happy and satisfied. She had a clean moral life and was uninvolved in extracurricular school activities.

"After a while my twin sister quit studying but I continued. My sister always tried to discourage me and made it very hard for me. My brother also discouraged me, especially when he noticed how I started to change the way I dressed. Even my father tried to keep me from getting involved.

"As time went by I began to see more of a distinction between Jehovah's witnesses and the world. For example, at my first district assembly I really started to notice the difference between the modest length of the Witnesses' skirts and dresses and the length of my dresses, which were like the world's. In fact, I was so embarrassed because of this that the whole last day of the assembly I wore an apron to hide my dress."

Today this girl, along with the Witness whom she met in school, is sharing in the full-time ministry as a pioneer. She is very grateful for having found someone different in school, someone who reflected Christianity in every way.

Clearly fine Christian conduct gives a powerful witness and lends weight to the public proclamation of Bible truth. Should this not give true Christians added encouragement to let their love for God and neighbor prompt them to maintain fine conduct at all times?

PSALM 119

"YOUR word is a lamp to my foot, and a light to my roadway." Bible students are very familiar with, and quite fond of, this verse of sacred Scripture. Most fittingly these words are found in Psalm 119 (verse 105). Why most fittingly? Because from beginning to end this psalm magnifies God's Word.

Among the interesting aspects of Psalm 119 is that it is an acrostic; but, unlike most other acrostic psalms in which each succeeding verse begins with a succeeding letter of the Hebrew alphabet, in this psalm eight verses at a time begin with each succeeding letter. There being twenty-two letters in the Hebrew alphabet, the psalm has 176 verses, making it by far the longest psalm.

But most striking of all is the way the writer has developed his theme of appreciation of God's Word. Thus we find in

Magnifies Jehovah's Word

it eight terms referring to God's Word or doings, for an average of twenty-two times each—a total of 176 times. These terms are "commandment(s)," "law," "orders," "regulations," "reminder(s)," "judicial decision(s)," "saying(s)" and "word." Psalm 19 makes mention of five of these.—Vss. 7 to 9.

The term COMMANDMENT(S) translates the Hebrew word *mits-wah*'. When a Jewish boy becomes of age, thirteen years according to Jewish law, his family celebrates with a *bar mitzva*h, because he has now become a 'son of the commandment,' that is, accountable to it. The Hebrew word *mits-wah*' occurs some 180 times in the Bible and with comparatively few ex-

ceptions refers to God's commandments given to his people Israel. Thus the book of Leviticus ends, saying: "These are the *commandments* that Jehovah gave Moses as commands to the sons of Israel." It appears to be the most inclusive term referring to God's requirements as contained in his Word. So, in the conclusion of the book of Ecclesiastes, we read: "Fear the true God and keep his *commandments*. For this is the whole obligation of man."—Lev. 27:34; Eccl. 12:13.

Commandments are issued by one having complete control or authority. The writer of Psalm 119 appreciated this, and he was concerned with observing them. Fittingly, he ends the psalm by saying: "O look for your servant, for I have not forgotten your own *commandments*."—Ps. 119:176.

LAW translates the Hebrew word *toh-rah'*. It may refer to Jehovah's complete law or to certain parts of it: "This is the *law* of the burnt offering," "of the grain offering," "of the sin offering," Moses wrote.—Lev. 6:9, 14, 25; 7:1.

Law is defined as "a body of rules recognized by a state or community as binding upon its members." The term appears nearly always in the singular form, whereas "commandment" more often than not is in the plural. The psalmist certainly had a great appreciation of God's law, for he said: "The *law* of your mouth is good for me, more so than thousands of pieces of gold and silver." "How I do love your *law*! All day long it is my concern." "Abundant peace belongs to those loving your *law*, and for them there is no stumbling block."—Ps. 119:72, 97, 165.

The term ORDERS ("precepts" in the *New English Bible* [NE]) translates the Hebrew word *piq-qoh-dim'*. It comes from the same root as the word "overseer" and means "to inspect." Its English equivalents mean 'instructions with explicitness as to details' and 'rule of action.' With

warm appreciation the psalmist speaks of these "orders": "O see that I have loved your own *orders*." "I have observed your own *orders*." "Owing to your *orders* I behave with understanding."—Ps. 119:159, 100, 104.

REGULATIONS ("statutes," NE) translate the Hebrew word *hhoq*, which is another word often referring to God's requirements. However, different from the foregoing words, it is also used to refer to God's regulations for inanimate creation. (Job 28:26; 38:10) A "regulation" is defined as an authoritative rule or principle.

The psalmist appreciated God's regulations, for we read: "Melodies your *regulations* have become to me." (Ps. 119:54) Repeatedly he asks God: "Teach me your [own] *regulations*" (vss. 12, 26, 64, 68, 124, 135), and he also praises God for doing so. (Vs. 171) He not only wanted to learn them but also desired to observe them: "Your *regulations* I continue to keep."—Ps. 119:8.

With reference to God's stated purpose for his servants, there is another Hebrew word, *e-dah'*, translated REMINDERS ("instructions," NE). This can mean a witness or a testimony, and it comes from a root meaning to go over again, to repeat, for which reason it is translated "reminders" (NW). The psalmist expresses great appreciation for these reminders and repeatedly tells of having kept them. (Ps. 119:22, 88, 129, 167, 168) He prays that God will incline the psalmist's heart to them. (Vs. 36) He also declares: "I will also speak about your *reminders* in front of kings, and I shall not be ashamed."—Vs. 46.

The foregoing five terms (commandment, law, order, regulation, reminder) the psalmist uses in referring to matters that have much in common in God's Word. An expression of quite a different aspect

is JUDICIAL DECISIONS ("decrees," *NE*), which translates *mish-pat'*. We are to have a wholesome fear of God's judicial decisions. So the psalmist says: "From the dread of you my flesh has had a creepy feeling; and because of your *judicial decisions* I have been afraid." (Ps. 119:120) He tells of his learning them (vs. 7), declaring them (vs. 13), longing for them (vs. 20). He considers them appropriate (vs. 30), righteous (vs. 106), and twice he asks, "According to your *judicial decision* [O] preserve me alive."—Ps. 119: 149, 156.

Another word of which the writer of Psalm 119 seems to have been especially fond is *im-rah'*, rendered SAYING. It comes from a root meaning simply "to say" and so refers to something said. The psalmist repeatedly uses it to refer to God's promises, for which reason the *New English Bible* uniformly translates it "promise" throughout this psalm. The psalmist prays that God will support and show him favor "according to your *saying*." (Vss. 116, 58, 170) God's sayings are a great help to him: "In my heart I have treasured up your *saying*, in order that I may not sin against you." (Vs. 11) And he exults over God's "*saying* just as one does when finding much spoil."—Vss. 67, 162.

And lastly we have the Hebrew term for WORD, *da-vahr'*. It does not mean, as it

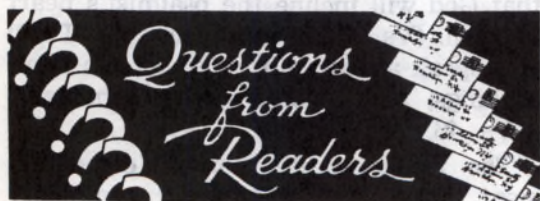
often does in English, a single word, but, rather, refers to an entire thought or statement. Thus the Ten Commandments are called the "Ten Words." (Ex. 34:28) Typical of his appreciation of God's "word" are verses 9 and 105: "How will a young man cleanse his path? By keeping on guard according to your *word*." "Your *word* is a lamp to my foot, and a light to my roadway."

Certainly in all of this the writer of Psalm 119 sets a fine example for all lovers of Jehovah God. He delighted to express his appreciation of God's Word by weaving his thoughts around eight basic Hebrew words and then casting these thoughts into an acrostic or alphabetical Hebrew poem of 176 verses. Certainly this was a painstaking task. Like King Solomon he "sought to find the delightful words and the writing of correct words of truth." (Eccl. 12:10) God's "sayings" were sweeter to him than honey, God's commandments he loved more than "even refined gold."—Ps. 119:103, 127.

If we have a like appreciation of God's Word, what will we do? We will regularly concern ourselves with it and "meditate" on it. (Ps. 119:15, 48, 78, 148, *NE*) More than that, we will be ready to declare it before others, not abashed even to tell it before kings. Above all, we will *keep* God's requirements.

ple do with reference to jury duty is a personal matter, governed by the dictates of conscience.

As far as they personally are concerned, Jehovah's witnesses generally do not feel that they should sit as judges of other people. When confronted with an opportunity to handle a legal dispute, their Exemplar the Lord Jesus Christ turned it down, saying: "Who appointed me judge or apportioner over you persons?" (Luke 12:14) The apostle Paul raised similar questions in his letter to the Corinthians:



- What is the attitude of Jehovah's witnesses toward jury duty?—U.S.A.

Jehovah's witnesses recognize that what peo-

"What do I have to do with judging those outside? Do you not judge those inside [the Christian congregation], while God judges those outside?"—1 Cor. 5:12, 13.

Then, too, many persons serving on juries do not desire to be guided by the laws of God's Word in reaching a verdict. Some jurors have consulted horoscopes, given in to personal prejudice or yielded to pressures from others in making a decision. So there is a danger of becoming party to a miscarriage of justice. When the life of an accused person is involved, this could mean incurring bloodguilt. Thus it can be seen why serving on a jury might lead to serious conflicts of conscience.

The legal requirements for serving on a jury and the provisions for exemption vary from place to place. Within the United States, the situation in one state may be quite different from that in another state. At times explaining one's position to the clerk of the court or the judge may lead to one's name being removed from the list of prospective jurors. Court opinions in West Virginia, Minnesota and Washington have, in fact, upheld a person's right to refuse jury duty for religious reasons. And in the state of Colorado persons who can prove by documents that they are Jehovah's witnesses are granted exemption from jury duty.

Exemptions, however, are not granted everywhere. If a person cannot be exempted when called for jury duty even after explaining matters to the judge, he can, nevertheless, state his conscientious scruples regarding a case when questioned by the lawyers before the trial begins. If his conscientious scruples are not accepted as disqualifying him for jury duty, the Christian may feel that he will have to refuse to serve in order not to violate his conscience. In that case he should prepare himself to face whatever consequences may arise as a result of his decision.

● According to Deuteronomy 6:8, 9, the Israelites were commanded to 'tie God's law as a sign upon their hand' and have it serve as a 'frontlet band between their eyes.' Is this to be understood literally?—U.S.A.

Many Jewish commentators have applied this injunction literally. This is also one of the Biblical passages used to support the practice of wearing phylacteries (small cases con-

taining texts from the Holy Scriptures). However, an examination of the context and other scriptures definitely points to a figurative application.

Starting with Deuteronomy 6:6 and continuing to verse 9, we read: "These words that I [Jehovah] am commanding you today must prove to be on your heart; and you must inculcate them in your son and speak of them when you sit in your house and when you walk on the road and when you lie down and when you get up. And you must tie them as a sign upon your hand, and they must serve as a frontlet band between your eyes; and you must write them upon the doorposts of your house and on your gates."

It should be noted that this passage does not say that the commands were to be written on something and then worn between the eyes or on the hand or attached to the doorposts and gates. The commands themselves were to be 'tied as a sign upon the hand' and were to serve as a 'frontlet band between the eyes.' Evidently, therefore, the thought conveyed is much like that expressed at Proverbs 7:2, 3: "Keep my commandments and continue living, and my law like the pupil of your eyes. Tie them upon your fingers, and write them upon the tablet of your heart." Clearly this is not literal. It would be impossible literally to write commandments upon the heart, and to tie written commands to one's fingers would only hinder one from accomplishing work. No useful purpose would be served.

Similarly, with reference to the Passover, the commemoration of their deliverance from Egypt, Jehovah commanded the Israelites: "It must serve for you as a sign upon your hand and as a memorial between your eyes, in order that Jehovah's law may prove to be in your mouth; because by a strong hand Jehovah brought you out of Egypt." (Ex. 13:9) Again, it is obvious that the commemoration itself could not literally be bound upon their hands nor serve as a literal memorial between their eyes. But the Israelites could constantly keep what God had done for them in view, as if written on a tablet between their eyes or as if a sign upon their hands.

In the same way they could always keep Jehovah's commands before them regardless of whether they were at home or near the city gates, where people commonly congregated

and the city elders handled legal cases. The Israelites were not just to retain God's law in their hearts and teach it to their children. They were also to demonstrate by action (as expressed by the hands) that they adhered to it. Just as if God's law were written between their eyes for all to see, they were to identify themselves publicly as its upholders. This would be a far more effective way to maintain faithfulness than the literal wearing of passages from God's law on their person or writing such passages on their doorposts or gates.

Even a hypocritical person could wear scripture-containing cases. In fact, Jesus Christ censured the Pharisees for 'broadening the scripture-containing cases that they wore as safeguards.' (Matt. 23:5) By enlarging these cases, they apparently wanted to impress others with their zeal for the Law. But they disregarded its real purpose. Hence, their outward manifestations meant nothing.

Surely we today should want to prove ourselves to be obedient servants of Jehovah from the heart. This means our hearts should move us to respond with appreciative obedience to the guidance of God's written Word. Our minds should be on the serious, righteous, lovable, virtuous, chaste and praiseworthy things. (Phil. 4:8) In whatever we are doing, we should "work at it whole-souled as to Jehovah, and not to men." (Col. 3:23) Yes, our every action should prove that God's commands are always before us.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

April 15: Approach to Jehovah or to the Demons—Which? Page 176. Songs to Be Used: 21, 40.

April 22: Be a Vessel for Honorable Use. Page 182. Songs to Be Used: 33, 91.

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