The WATCHTOWER

WHY BELIEVE IN GOD?

JULY 15, 1977

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

The WATCHTOWER

July 15, 1977
Vol. 98, Number 14

A watchtower enables a person to see far into the distance and announce to others what is coming. Can a magazine serve similarly in our day? Yes, from its first issue (July 1879) onward, *The Watchtower*, published by Jehovah's Witnesses, has done just that.

How can it benefit you? Consider: Do you long for a better world, one of true justice and free from sorrow, hatred and war? Do you want to live at a time when genuine peace and love prevail among people of all races? Then this magazine can aid you. Using God's Word, the Bible, as its authority, it points out the clear evidence that the present wicked system of things will soon end, destroyed by God. But it also announces the coming in of a righteous new order. There, under the rule of God's kingdom, his heavenly government, people will enjoy life forever in true peace, health and happiness on a paradise earth.

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We know that many sincere persons would appreciate a discussion of these things in their own home with a qualified person. One of Jehovah's Witnesses will be glad to call on you free of charge. To arrange for this, simply write the publishers of this magazine or contact Jehovah's Witnesses locally.

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Why Believe in A God We Cannot See?

WE LIVE in a highly scientific age. Scientists have produced many impressive inventions and have performed spectacular feats, even sending men to the moon.

Because of such accomplishments, many people accept the conclusions that scientists reach regarding other matters. For example, when they claim that humans evolved from beasts, it is widely believed. When they assert that life came into existence by itself in some primeval sea, many believe it.

As a result of such teachings, when some scientists say that there is no God, this too is often accepted. Also, since we cannot see God, there are those who conclude that he must not exist. So, atheism and agnosticism increase. Belief in an invisible and purposeful Creator diminishes.

However, are there sound reasons for not believing in God because we cannot see him? Should we put so much confidence in science? And does it make any difference whether we believe in God?

A HUGE DIFFERENCE

It makes a huge difference whether we believe in the existence of a Creator. If he does exist, then surely he must have a purpose in making this earth and creating human life on it.

It would also be reasonable to expect that such a wise and powerful Creator would determine the future of this earth and of the human family. So our attitude and actions toward this Creator could make a big difference to our future.

However, if there is no God, then the future prospect for humanity is quite dismal. Based on the record of history, it would be a continuing trouble-filled existence, or worse. If there is no unseen Creator who has a purpose for us, then it would seem to make sense to "eat and drink, for tomorrow we are to die." —1 Cor. 15:32.

BELIEVING THE UNSEEN

Can we believe in a God we cannot see? Well, do we believe in only what we see? No, we very much believe in things we do not see.

In fact, our very lives depend directly upon something we cannot see! What is that? The air we breathe. Without it, we would die in a few minutes. We cannot see the air, but we certainly know that it exists. If you were to hold your breath for sixty seconds, you would appreciate very quickly the air that you cannot see.

We cannot see the wind either, but we do see trees waving in the breeze, and ocean waves tossed about by the wind's power. We believe that the wind exists because we see its results.

Electricity is invisible. But what amazing things it can do! It lights lamps, heats homes, drives huge machines and makes kitchen appliances work for us. No sen-

sible person doubts that electricity exists just because it cannot be seen.

Radio, television and radar beams are transmitted through the air, unseen. Yet we know that they exist because of the sound or pictures they produce.

Can we see gravity? No, but without it, everything not firmly attached to the earth, including people, would tend to float off into space. A similar force is magnetism. A magnet attracts iron, yet the magnetic field is invisible to our eyes.

The nucleus of the atom is bound together by a powerful, yet invisible, force. But we know the force is real because fantastic amounts of energy are released when the atom is "split" in atomic explosions.

We cannot see X rays, but they can penetrate the body and take pictures of our bones. What would a doctor say if you told him that X rays did not exist because you could not see them?

We do not see odors, but our nose picks them up; bloodhounds even track people by the invisible smell. And we cannot see sound waves either, but our ears pick them up; so we know that they are real.

Thus, we believe in many things we cannot see, because we observe the evidence, the results they produce. In the same way, we know an unseen Creator exists because we observe the evidence, the results of his handiwork. The Bible says: "For his invisible qualities are clearly seen from the world's creation onward, because they are perceived by the things made, even his eternal power and Godship."—Rom. 1:20.

CREATOR'S HANDIWORK

When you see a house, what do you conclude? Do you conclude that the wood, concrete and metals accidentally arranged themselves into a house, complete with rooms, a heating system, plumbing, electrical wiring and furniture? No, you acknowledge a maker. Even relatively simple things such as a box or a pencil do not come into existence without a maker.

Yet, such things are insignificant compared with an atom, a tree, a human, a planet, a sun, a galaxy, a universe. If simple things do not come into existence without a maker, then what of these far more complex and intricate things?

Physicist G. E. Davis says: "No material thing can create itself." In line with this, the Bible logically declares: "Of course, every house is constructed by someone, but he that constructed all things is God."—Heb. 3:4.

Then, too, if you saw a code of laws, such as those in a nation's constitution, what would that indicate? If you saw even a simple sign at a street corner saying, "Stop," what would it show? Laws indicate the existence of lawmakers.

The universe has far more impressive laws. Why, the moon landings by astronauts would have been impossible without taking into consideration, and depending upon, the precise and reliable laws of gravity, motion, acceleration, as well as the laws that govern the orbiting of the earth and the moon. Those superior laws indicate the existence of a superior Lawgiver, the invisible Creator.

Hence, it is not difficult to understand why the Bible says of those who ignore or deny the abundant evidence of a Creator: "They are inexcusable."—Rom. 1:20.

But why is God invisible to human eyes? Well, would you expect to survive a journey to the sun? No, you would burn up long before you got there. God created the sun. Hence, he is far too powerful to be viewed by human eyes. That is why God says in his Word: "No man may see me and yet live."—Ex. 33:20.

However, what about the claims of scientists who say that living things evolved from inanimate matter, that humans came from apelike beasts?

EVOLUTION in RETREAT

FOR over a century, many scientists have claimed that all life evolved. They have said that life originated by itself, moved up to the plant and animal stage, and then progressed through ape-like beasts to man.

All during this time, these scientists have confidently hunted for evidence to support such claims. Quite a few men of science, as well as others, hoped that the evidence would destroy belief in a God of creation.

However, in recent years the evidence has done the opposite! It has shattered the basis for belief in the theory of evolution, so that many honest people, including a number of scientists, no longer accept this theory. Those who continue to promote evolution have been forced to retreat from some long-held beliefs.

Commenting on this situation, the New York *Times* reported: "The study of evolution has undergone a major change in the last 10 years, with the principles of evolution, as laid down by Darwin and others, being challenged and new theories being proposed. The field is in an uproar."

INVESTIGATING THE EVIDENCE

Recently a number of investigators have examined the evidence impartially. They have expressed amazement at what they have found.

Norman Macbeth, a Harvard-trained lawyer, decided to approach the matter as if he were arguing a court case. He compiled evidence for and against evolution. After many years of intensive research he concluded that the evidence *against* evolution was so strong that, as he said, "no theory at all may be preferable to the existing one."

Macbeth further stated: "In the field of evolution most explanations are not good. As a matter of fact, they hardly qualify as explanations at all; they are suggestions, hunches, pipe dreams, hardly worthy of being called hypotheses." His reaction to a typical book supporting evolution was: "If I had to oppose that man in court I could get his case thrown out."

An editor of *The Washington Monthly*, Tom Bethell, made a similar investigation. He was amazed to find so much confusion and debate among evolutionists. He said: "It is surprising that so little of [the debate] has leaked out, because it seems to have been one of the most important academic debates of the 1960s, and as I see it the conclusion is pretty staggering: Darwin's theory, I believe, is on the verge of collapse."

Mr. Bethell noted: "Darwin, I suggest, is in the process of being discarded, but perhaps in deference to the venerable old gentleman . . . it is being done as discreetly and gently as possible, with a minimum of publicity."

How do evolutionists react to this? F. Appleton, writing in *Weekend* magazine, says: "We admit there are gaping holes in the evidence for evolution. . . . Even for an advanced scientist, there is a point where explanations become thread-

bare and you have to admit you don't really know." He added: "Yes, evolution *is* only a theory. Believing in evolution, then, is an act of faith."

The "gaping holes" have widened with the passing of time. Evidence has poured in about heredity, cell structure, DNA, the complexity of living things, breeding experiments, as well as the fossil record. From all this evidence it has become more and more obvious to impartial, honest observers that the facts overwhelmingly support creation, not evolution.

BASIC IDEA UPSET

One of the fundamental beliefs of evolution, in fact, a main foundation, now is being upset. This is the long-accepted theory of how evolution was supposed to have taken place—its "mechanism."

If one type of fox survives better than another type of fox, it does not change that fox into a different animal

Advocates of evolution believed that it took place by small, advantageous changes in living things. These changes presumably enabled those living things to survive better. Their offspring supposedly continued having other beneficial changes over millions of years. Allegedly, this resulted in the gradual evolving of all insects, plants, animals and man.

Among scientists, this idea of 'survival of the fittest' is called 'natural selection.' The phrase was intended to mean that "nature" supposedly "selected" the "fittest" types for survival, the "weaker" becoming extinct.

Why is this fundamental belief challenged now? Because, after decades of experimenting with living things and studying the fossil record, what should have been an obvious conclusion has finally dawned on many scientists. It is this: because a type of plant or animal may survive better, this really has nothing at all to do with how it got here in the first place. If one type of fox survives better than another type of fox, it does not explain how either fox originated. "Survival" does not explain "arrival." Nor does mere survival change the fox into a different animal.

Breeders have discovered, after decades of experimenting, that no matter how intensively they breed plants or animals, they never develop a new or totally different kind. They may cause changes in size, color or other characteristics. But a cow always remains a cow; a grape always remains a grape; a fly always remains a fly.

It now has been definitely established that beyond a certain limited degree of variation from what is normal, living things cannot be changed further without either making them sterile or killing them. Why? Because there is a law that locks them into being what they are.

"ACCORDING TO THEIR KINDS"

God has built into all living things a law to keep basic types separated. That law is what the Bible calls "according to their kinds."

An example of this is Genesis 1:24, which states: "God went on to say: 'Let

"Plants and animals . . . produce their young from their own bodies and in no other way." "All life derives from preceding life, . . . the parent organism and its offspring are of the same kind."—"Biology for You," p. 468; "The Encyclopedia Americana," 1956, Vol. 3, p. 721

the earth put forth living souls according to their kinds, domestic animal and moving animal and wild beast of the earth according to its kind.' " This is also true regarding all plants, insects, birds, fish and humans.

However, the hereditary makeup of living things does include the potential of variety within basic kinds, which makes life more interesting. But, just as the breeders have discovered, while there may be many varieties of cats, for example, all the varieties forever stay cats and can interbreed only among themselves. The same is true regarding all other basic kinds.

Harold Coffin, invertebrate zoologist from the University of California, states: "Obviously much adaptation has occurred, but has this adaptive change actually caused evolutionary progression from one major category to another? The evidence from science does not support this kind of change."

FOSSIL EVIDENCE BACKFIRES

The evidence from fossils, the remains of living things dug up from the earth, also has backfired on evolutionists. They had hoped that after more than a century of searching, they would have found numerous "in-between" fossils linking the various types of once-living things together in an unbroken chain. But the abundant fossil evidence now available has completely shattered this hope.

Zoologist Coffin says: "The fossils, evidences of the life of the past, constitute the ultimate and final court of appeal, because the fossil record is the only authentic history of life available to science." And what does the record show? Does it agree with evolution? Coffin answers: "It does not. . . . It tells us that plants and animals were created in their basic forms. The basic facts of the fossil record support creation, not evolution."

Dr. D. B. Gower, biochemist from London University, also confirms that 'the story of the fossils agrees with the account of Genesis (in the Bible).' He says that 'in the oldest rocks we do not find a

series of fossils covering the gradual changes from the most primitive creatures to developed forms, but, rather, in the oldest rocks, developed species suddenly appeared.' He also observed that between every major type of plant and animal 'there was a complete absence of intermediate fossils.'

Thus, after more than a century of digging up millions of fossils, the record confirms that life-forms were created "according to their kinds."—Gen. 1:11, 12, 21, 24.

RETREAT ON MAN'S HISTORY

Recent discoveries of human fossils have caused a retreat, also, regarding man's supposed evolutionary history. These discoveries have made a shambles of the evolutionary "tree," the hypothetical line-up of apelike creatures assertedly leading to man.

Because of these recent discoveries, the Boston *Globe* declared: "Every single book on anthropology, every article on the evolution of man, every drawing of man's family tree will have to be junked. . . . It also means we have had our ancestors mixed up."

What has caused this retreat? The discovery of modern-type human fossils believed to be older than the supposed "apemen" from which they were alleged to have come. One of these "apelike" creatures, labeled *Australopithecus* by scientists, was once even hailed by some as being the missing link between humans and apes.

But according to scientific sources the new evidence has shown this to be impossible. The New York *Times* reported: "The new fossils provided conclusive evidence that Australopithecus, an extinct species once thought to be transitional between ape and man, was, instead, a contemporary of early man that became an evolutionary dead end."

The truth is that humans, too, were created 'according to their kind.' That is why no "links" have ever been found between man and beast. It is also why none ever will be found. The huge gap will always remain, put there by the Creator to keep man and beast distinct.

Anthony Ostric, a professor of anthropology from Indiana, told a congress of scientists that the evidence shows that man has remained essentially the same since he first appeared. He declared: "It is not possible to see how biological, social or cultural forces or processes could transform any kind of prehuman anthropoid or 'near-man' into homo sapiens." He observed that man's unique biophysical and sociocultural nature appears to represent "an unbridgeable abyss separating him from all other animals."

Plainly, the evidence accumulated over many decades has forced evolution to retreat on many fronts. Facing the facts honestly leads to only one conclusion. As the Bible long ago declared: "Know that Jehovah is God. It is he that has made us, and not we ourselves."—Ps. 100:3.

IN COMING ISSUES

- **What Are Young Persons Thinking?**
- **The Wisdom of Self-Discipline.**
- **Is Yours a Living Faith?**

TRUST JEHOVAH, not man

"It is better to take refuge in Jehovah than to trust in earthling man."—Ps. 118:8.

FEW people today have a deep, abiding trust in Jehovah God. Some do not even believe that he exists. Others may acknowledge God's existence, but they pay little attention to his will. Even those who are devout in this world's religions trust mostly in their religious traditions or in their clergymen, not in Jehovah. They are much like those of whom the apostle Paul said: "I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God; but not according to accurate knowledge; for, because of not knowing the righteousness of God but seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God."—Rom. 10:2, 3.

[2] Regarding the future of the human family, in whom do people trust to bring about better conditions? Most of them put their trust in human efforts, not in Jehovah's purpose for mankind. Only a tiny minority of earth's four billion inhabitants have carefully examined the evidence of Jehovah's existence, have accepted their responsibilities toward him, and live their lives in obedience to his laws. These persons trust him completely, knowing that he will fulfill his promise of establishing a righteous new order for mankind. They declare, as did the ancient psalmist: "In you I have put my trust, O Jehovah. I have said: 'You are my God.'" (Ps. 31:14) And they heed God's warning: "Do not put your trust in nobles, nor in the son of earthling man, to whom no salvation belongs."—Ps. 146:3.

[3] Should it discourage those who trust Jehovah that they are relatively few compared with earth's four billion people? No, because numbers have never been a measure of the rightfulness of an issue. The masses of humankind often have been wrong. Jesus Christ said: "Go in through the narrow gate; because broad and spacious is the road leading off into destruction, and many are the ones going in through it; whereas narrow is the gate and cramped the road leading off into life, and few are the ones finding it." (Matt. 7:13, 14) No, trusting the judgment of the masses is not the way through the "narrow gate" to life in its fullness. History is filled with the wreckage of men's promises, and of the harm that came to the masses who followed blindly.

[4] Especially has the folly of trusting in

1, 2. (a) How many people have a deep, abiding trust in Jehovah today, and why is this so? (b) Who trust Jehovah to bring better conditions?

3. Why should it not be a source of discouragement that relatively few trust Jehovah?

4. What are we now better able to determine, and why?

human wisdom become evident in the past century. Now, with the added experience of having seen this highly scientific modern age, we are better able to examine the results of human accomplishments. We can set them alongside the works of Jehovah and more clearly see where our trust should be placed.

VAIN HOPES FOR SCIENCE

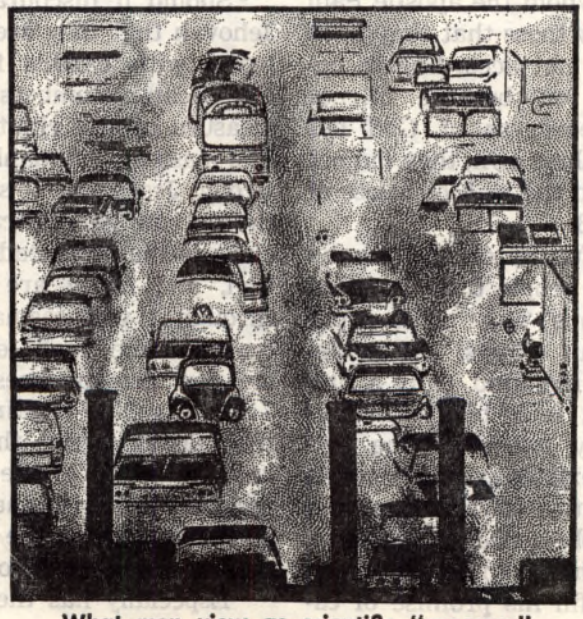
[5] The hopes of mankind for a better world were raised greatly by the scientific advancements of the past century or so. Many thought that mankind was entering a glorious new era. Finally, it was thought, problems such as poverty, hunger, unemployment, disease, old age and war were now within the power of humans to solve. Regarding such high hopes, author Lewis Mumford relates:

> "The notion was that the machine by reason of its rationality of design and its austere perfection of performance was now a moral force, indeed *the* moral force, one that set new standards of achievement for man . . .
>
> "For every human weakness or disorder, there was supposedly a swift mechanical, chemical, or pharmaceutical remedy. Even the electric arc-light, when first introduced, was hailed confidently as a preventative of nocturnal crime."

5. What part did scientific advancements play in the hopes of many for a better world?

[6] Without a doubt science has originated many helpful devices. In many lands, housewives no longer have to spend much time washing and sewing by hand, cooking on a wood fire, preserving food for winter months, drawing water from a well or a stream. Science has harnessed electricity from petroleum, coal and gas to run the new washing and sewing machines, the stoves, refrigerators, heating equipment, lighting and other useful products. Indoor plumbing has done away with unsanitary outhouses. Tractors have provided the power of 50 horses. Milking machines have eased the chores of dairy farmers. Medical advances have helped to control various diseases. Advanced technology, with its computers and missiles, has even put men on the moon.

[7] But while science has helped with some problems, it has created many others. For instance, the automobile, though providing fast transportation and convenience, has produced problems that are not being solved. Enormous congestion and frustration occur in large metropolitan areas. Gas fumes add to the industrial pollution that hangs over many cities. And the automobile has become one of the most deadly instruments ever invented. According to the United Nations' *World Health* magazine, about 250,000 peo-



What men view as scientific "progress" often results in congestion, pollution, frustration and many untimely deaths

6. To what extent did science produce some things helpful to the human family?
7. How has science created many problems?

ple die each year in road accidents. Millions more are injured.

[8] Another grim fruitage of science is noted by the book *Great Events of the 20th Century,* which says: "Without question, the great shaping force of the 20th century has been the phenomenal growth of scientific knowledge—and never has that knowledge been more vigorously pursued than in times of war." Tanks, airplanes, flamethrowers, machine guns, submarines, missiles, atomic bombs and other weapons have been produced by science. They have taken the lives of over 100 million people in this century, more than in any other age. "Woe to those," God's Word accurately stated, "who put their trust in war chariots, because they are numerous, and in steeds, because they are very mighty, but who have not looked to the Holy One of Israel and have not searched for Jehovah himself." (Isa. 31:1) Although scientific militarism has proved to be catastrophic, the nations now spend a record 300 billion dollars a year on war preparation. About 25 percent of all scientists in the United States and the Soviet Union do war work; less than one-hundredth of one percent work at arms control or disarmament.

[9] Has science helped to stem the worldwide rampage of crime? No, for crime has increased just as God's prophetic Word said it would in these "last days." (Matt. 24:12; 2 Tim. 3:1-5, 13) Why, in the United States alone, a Census Bureau survey indicates that 37 million *major* crimes are committed each year, triple the number actually reported to police. Too, while medical science has helped to fight some illnesses, others have raged out of control. Heart disease has reached epidemic levels, as has venereal disease; and cancer has become a major killer. Health problems have been made worse due to man's pollution of the air, land and water, and his chemical treatment of foods. And science is completely helpless before the ravages of old age and death. Mankind's condition remains just as God's Word says: "Through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men." (Rom. 5:12) Furthermore, in spite of all the advances of modern science, *Parade* magazine states: "There are more starving, impoverished, illiterate and unemployed people in the world than ever before."

[10] Thus, the results of this scientific age are clearly to be seen. We know from actual experience what it has brought forth. We can conclude as did the book *Environmental Ethics:* "The present technology is already a failure." Author Lewis Mumford also stated: "The notion that mechanical and scientific progress guaranteed parallel human benefits . . . now has become completely untenable." And historian Arnold Toynbee declared: "We have tried allowing the machine to run us, with shocking results. . . . Unregenerate man is hardly to be trusted with the dangerous toys his laboratories have hatched."

[11] Now we can see clearly what has happened to the human family because of putting trust in man. It is just as foretold by God's prophet Jeremiah who said: "Cursed is the able-bodied man who puts his trust in earthling man and actually makes flesh his arm, and whose heart turns away from Jehovah himself." (Jer. 17:5) Also proved trustworthy are these words of the inspired psalmist: "Unless Jehovah himself builds the house, it is to no avail that its builders have worked hard on it."—Ps. 127:1.

8. How has scientific militarism affected our century?
9. Has science helped to solve the human family's distressing problems?

10, 11. (a) How have some worldly authorities recognized the failure of science? (b) What did the Bible accurately say about human efforts?

JEHOVAH WORTHY OF OUR TRUST

12 As human experience has shown, it is folly to trust human wisdom respecting essential matters of life. We cannot trust man to solve the huge problems of the human family. It is Jehovah alone, the Almighty Creator, who has the remedy. So when it comes to such a vital matter as looking to someone for guidance during these critical times, it is to Jehovah that we need to turn. Would you trust the scribblings of an infant as a map for a dangerous journey? Or would you depend upon the directions of an expert thoroughly familiar with the route? For our journey through these dangerous "last days" and in our quest for eternal life in God's new order, human wisdom is totally unreliable as a guide. That is why the Bible says: "Blessed is the able-bodied man who puts his trust in Jehovah, and whose confidence Jehovah has become."—Jer. 17:7.

13 Jehovah's works, backed by his wisdom and power, inspire in us confidence. When we see what he already has done and is capable of doing, our appreciation of his ability to direct our lives and to

12. Who only deserves our trust as regards life's essential matters?

13-15. (a) How does the universe manifest Jehovah's wisdom and power? (b) Why should this enhance our confidence in Jehovah? (Isa. 40:28, 29)

fashion a righteous new order is enhanced. An example of Jehovah's ability is to be found in the material universe itself. Before telescopes were invented, the few thousand stars that could be seen by the naked eye were considered to be all that existed. But the first crude telescopes revealed many more. Modern instruments now probing the universe reveal so many billions of stars that, as Jeremiah stated, "the host of heaven cannot be numbered" by man.—Jer. 33:22, *American Standard Version.*

[14] It was then discovered that the heavenly bodies are not just scattered about haphazardly. They are grouped together into what are called "galaxies," each one containing billions of stars and other matter. The galaxy we live in is called the Milky Way, having an estimated 100 billion stars like our sun. The diameter of our galaxy is calculated to be about 100,000 light-years; and light travels about six trillion miles (9,600,000,000,000 kilometers) in just one year! And that is not all. Recent observations by man, says *National Geographic,* have "left him stunned." So many galaxies have been observed that one estimate of their number is ten billion; another observer estimates 100 billion! Further, it has been observed that these galaxies are organized too. They are arranged in "clusters," a number of galaxies being grouped together in each cluster.

[15] The immensity of the universe, its order, and the precise laws governing the movements of heavenly bodies, have astonished some scientists. As *Science News* observes: "Contemplation of these things disturbs cosmologists because it seems as if such particular and precise conditions could hardly have arisen at random." Of course, the universe did not just arise "at random." The wisdom, power, order and law manifest in the universe all stem from the grand Creator, Jehovah God: "The heavens are declaring the glory of God; and of the work of his hands the expanse is telling." (Ps. 19:1) So far-reaching is Jehovah's ability that he does with ease what men find impossible, even to "counting the number of the stars; all of them he calls by their names."—Ps. 147:4.

[16] Many scientists are becoming more awed, also, by the wisdom and complexity manifest in living things on earth. *Science Digest* contained this item: "With new discoveries being made almost daily in molecular biology, the likelihood that life began as an accident is becoming more remote, if not impossible." A scientist estimates that the coded instructions found in one human cell would fill a 1,000-volume encyclopedia. From where did all of this come? A volume of encyclopedias on a shelf surely tells one of the existence of intelligent authorship. So does the amazing amount of information, as well as the wisdom and complexity, found in living things. Thus, simply and truthfully, the Bible states of Jehovah God: "With you is the source of life."—Ps. 36:9.

[17] Humble persons will acknowledge what many scientists and others do not, that Jehovah is indeed "the Creator of the heavens and the Grand One stretching them out; the One laying out the earth and its produce, the One giving breath to the people on it, and spirit to those walking in it." (Isa. 42:5) This glorious Creator, who demonstrates such ability and wisdom, surely is worthy of our trust. As the twenty-four elders acknowledged in vision: "You are worthy, Jehovah, even our God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power, because you created all things, and because of your will they existed and were created."—Rev. 4:11.

[18] So, in comparing the works of God

16. New discoveries about living things should lead to what conclusion?
17. What should humble persons acknowledge?
18, 19. (a) How do God's works compare with man's? (b) What should be our attitude in regard to trusting God or man?

with the works of man, we can ask: Who deserves our complete trust? Surely it is not man, even with all his scientific advancements. The tremendous damage and confusion he already has caused on earth show that he does not have the answers to the problems of life and cannot be trusted to get them. As the *World Book Encyclopedia* observes:

> "Despite the great advances made in science, scientists still have many unsolved problems. . . .
>
> "Botanists still do not know exactly how the process of photosynthesis works. Biologists and biochemists have not yet found the answer to the question of how life originated. Astronomers have not yet developed a satisfactory explanation of the origin of the universe. Medical scientists and physiologists do not know the cause or cure of cancer or how to cure the various virus diseases. . . . Psychologists do not know all the causes of mental illness."

[19] Jehovah does know the answers to all these things. And he certainly has the wisdom and ability to provide the solutions to mankind's plaguing problems. Hence, appropriate is the Bible's warning: "Do not put your trust in nobles, nor in the son of earthling man, to whom no salvation belongs." (Ps. 146:3) Instead, those who love what is right, who love life, and who want to see better conditions in the future will be among those described by the psalmist: "Those knowing your name will trust in you, for you will certainly not leave those looking for you, O Jehovah."—Ps. 9:10.

Keep TRUSTING JEHOVAH *for the* REWARD

"Happy is he that is trusting in Jehovah."—Prov. 16:20.

THOUSANDS of years of history have demonstrated that humans, however well intentioned and scientifically advanced, cannot remedy mankind's huge problems. Only the Creator of the universe, and of life on this earth, can be trusted to do so. He alone has the wisdom, the power and the will required. Appreciating this, the psalmist declared: "You are my hope, O Sovereign Lord Jehovah, my confidence from my youth." (Ps. 71:5) That hope is well placed, since God's Word promises: "The hope does not lead to disappointment." (Rom. 5:5) Rightly, then, the Bible counsels: "Trust in Jehovah with all your heart and do not lean upon your own understanding." —Prov. 3:5.

1, 2. Why should we trust Jehovah to remedy mankind's problems?

[2] A very compelling reason why we should trust Jehovah is that the future of mankind will be decided by him, not by humans. Nor will it be determined by any mythical idea such as "evolution," nor by any blind force labeled "progress." Indeed, the future *already has been* determined by Jehovah. And we can trust him to fulfill what he has purposed for the future since "it is impossible for God to lie." (Heb. 6:18) Further, Jehovah comfortingly tells us: "So my word that goes forth from my mouth will prove to be. It will not return to me without results, but it will certainly do that in which I have delighted, and it will have certain success in that for which I have sent it." (Isa. 55:11) No human can be so trustworthy.

[3] In addition, Jehovah shows his loving concern for his servants by keeping them informed about his purposes: "The Sovereign Lord Jehovah will not do a thing unless he has revealed his confidential matter to his servants the prophets." (Amos 3:7) Says Jehovah: "New things I am telling out. Before they begin to spring up, I cause you people to hear them." (Isa. 42:9) How reassuring it is for God to tell his trusting servants ahead of time what he will do in the future. And as his promises are fulfilled, it builds even greater trust in him. Jesus said: "I have told you before it occurs, in order that, when it does occur, you may believe." —John 14:29.

TRUSTWORTHY AT ALL TIMES

[4] From the very beginning of mankind's history, Jehovah has demonstrated the trustworthiness of his promises and that his warnings are to be heeded. An example is what happened to our first parents, Adam and Eve. They misused the fine gift of free will that God had given them. In fact, Eve believed that independence from God's rule would actually improve matters, enabling her to "be like God." (Gen. 3:5) But was that the case? No, for Jehovah already had warned that turning away from his rule would be certain to result in misery and death. Jehovah knew that humans were not created with the ability to be successful, independent of their Creator. —Gen. 2:17; 3:17-19.

[5] Jehovah's words to our first parents certainly proved to be true. When they moved out from under God's direction they also lost contact with the sustaining Source of life. In time, they grew old and died, just as God had warned. They also passed on imperfection to their offspring. All mankind has thus experienced the calamity of sin and death brought upon us by our first parents, who trusted human rule instead of God's rule. (Rom. 5:12) And it has been a calamity for the animal realm too. Man no longer exercises loving dominion over the animals as he did in the beginning. (Gen. 1:26) Instead, man has exploited the animals, causing the extinction of many varieties, especially in recent years. Man has also exploited, plundered and polluted the earth so that in many places it too is in disorder. "All creation keeps on groaning together and being in pain together until now" as a consequence of man's not trusting Jehovah.—Rom. 8:22.

[6] By Noah's day, centuries after the rebellion in Eden, the world of mankind had become exceedingly corrupt and violent. God told Noah that the ancient world was to be destroyed by means of an earth-wide flood. Noah and his family trusted Jehovah, so they began preparing for it: "Noah proceeded to do according to all that God had commanded him. He did just so." (Gen. 6:22) But Noah had to *keep trusting*

. What reassurance does Jehovah give his servants?
, 5. (a) How did Jehovah's words to our first parents rove to be true? (b) In what ways have other parts f God's earthly creation suffered?

6. What resulted from trusting, or not trusting, Jehovah during the days of Noah?

Jehovah for many years, since he was told about the flood decades before it occurred. What of the other people in that ancient world? "They took no note," Jesus said. Yet, right at the appointed time "the flood came and swept them all away." (Matt. 24:39) Our existence today demonstrates that Jehovah's words were trustworthy. It also proves that the best course for humans is to keep trusting Jehovah. Why so? Because all of us are descendants of Noah. Those who did not trust Jehovah in Noah's day did not have any more children. They all perished under the floodwaters, cutting off their lines of descent. —Gen. 7:22, 23.

[7] Jehovah's trustworthiness was again demonstrated in the days of Abraham. Jehovah had informed Abraham and his wife Sarah that they would have a child. However, Sarah was well past the age of childbearing. When she heard the news, she laughed. Noting this, Jehovah said to Abraham: "Is anything too extraordinary for Jehovah? At the appointed time I shall return to you, next year at this time, and Sarah will have a son." Exactly at Jehovah's appointed time, Sarah had her son, Isaac. Jehovah had miraculously rekindled the procreative powers of Sarah in line with his purpose to bring forth the Messiah through Abraham's line of descent. —Gen. 18:9-14; 21:2.

[8] In the days of Moses, God's servants were severely oppressed by the brutal world power of that time, Egypt. But Jehovah said: "Unquestionably I have seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt, and I have heard their outcry as a result of those who drive them to work; because I well know the pains they suffer. And I am proceeding to go down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a land good and spacious, to a land flowing with milk and honey." (Ex. 3:7, 8) These promises were fulfilled, as God caused the release of his servants from Egypt, taking out of the way other strong enemy nations too. His servants, several million of them, ultimately came into a "land good and spacious," "flowing with milk and honey." So Jehovah's promises to that entire nation proved to be trustworthy, being fulfilled in every detail. —Josh. 21:43-45.

[9] Had ancient Israel kept trusting Jehovah, they would have continued to prosper in their new land. But instead, they began trusting their own human wisdom. Eventually gross apostasy and corruption became habitual in spite of Jehovah's undeserved kindness. God's spokesman Ahijah prophesied regarding the ten-tribe northern kingdom of Israel: "Jehovah will indeed strike Israel down . . . and he will certainly uproot Israel off this good ground that he gave to their forefathers." (1 Ki. 14:15) Jehovah's words again came true: "The king of Assyria captured Samaria and then led Israel into exile in Assyria." "Jehovah removed Israel from his sight, just as he had spoken by means of all his servants the prophets. So Israel went off its own soil into exile in Assyria." (2 Ki. 17:6, 23) Later, Jehovah's words again proved true, when the southern kingdom of Judah was taken into exile by the Babylonians.—2 Chron. 36:15-21.

TRUSTING JEHOVAH IN OUR DAY

[10] Today God's servants are surrounded by a grossly corrupt and violent world, similar to that of Noah's day. To keep from being swallowed up in wickedness, discouragement, or disbelief, we very much need to keep trusting Jehovah fully. We need to have the same attitude of mind

7. How did Jehovah's promise prove trustworthy in Abraham's time?
8. How were Jehovah's promises fulfilled for an entire nation?
9. What happened to Israel and Judah because of not trusting Jehovah?
10. In our day, what kind of trust do Jehovah's servants need to show?

Only Jehovah's servants are unitedly, world wide, teaching people about the one government that God has purposed for all mankind

that Joshua, a faithful servant of Jehovah, had long ago. He said: "You well know with all your hearts and with all your souls that not one word out of all the good words that Jehovah your God has spoken to you has failed. They have all come true for you. Not one word of them has failed." "Not a promise failed out of all the good promise that Jehovah had made to the house of Israel; it all came true."—Josh. 23:14; 21:45.

[11] However, it is not only in ancient times that God's servants have seen the fulfillments of his words and promises. Similar fulfillments have come to pass in our day. An example of this is what has happened to the world in this generation. Contrary to the predictions of many human leaders that this century would mark a glorious new scientific age where mankind's problems would be solved, God's Word accurately foretold: "Know this, that in the last days critical times hard to deal with will be here." The greed, hatred, lawlessness, world wars, juvenile delinquency, family breakdown, religious hypocrisy and disbelief in God, foretold to take place in our time, have all come to pass. This has happened according to Jehovah's precise timetable, beginning with the year 1914, the turning point of modern history.—Matt. 24:3-14; 2 Tim. 3:1-5, 13.

[12] Yet, in the midst of this very difficult period, these "last days" of the present system, Jehovah has protected and prospered his trusting servants in a marvelous way. Despite immense cruelties heaped upon them by persecutors, his worshipers have grown until they number into the millions. As Jehovah's Word had foretold: "The little one himself will become a thousand, and the small one a

1. How have Jehovah's words for our generation been fulfilled?

12. In what ways has Jehovah prospered his servants today?

mighty nation. I myself, Jehovah, shall speed it up in its own time." (Isa. 60:22) In addition, his servants are learning how to produce the fruitage of God's guiding spirit, for they are cultivating "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, mildness, self-control." (Gal. 5:22, 23) Fulfilled upon God's servants are the words of Psalm 29:11: "Jehovah himself will give strength indeed to his people. Jehovah himself will bless his people with peace." And all of this is happening while the world, in contrast, descends deeper into "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." —Gal. 5:19-21.

[13] Secular authorities acknowledge the critical condition of the world. But they do not look to Jehovah for the remedies. They are still looking to human wisdom for the way out. An example is noted in the book *Environmental Ethics,* which says: "Any realistic examination of man on earth today shows that he is headed for the cataclysmic disasters of famine, pestilence, and war." But what remedy is suggested? The authors state:

> "Some form of world government such as a universal United Nations must be established so that mankind can consider himself as a species and manage himself as a whole.
>
> "A world-wide educational program is needed to convince the people of the world of the necessity of programs to bring population and resources into ecological balance, and this can be accomplished only with international cooperation. . . .
>
> "One can hope that the power elite of the world—the leaders of government, business, industry, and the military—will see the need of planned world cooperation for the good of the human species, and thus form a world government."

After thus pointing to the need for a world government, however, they expressed the fear "that the need will not be acted on . . . until famine, pestilence, and war strike a large proportion of the world's people."

[14] Similarly, in the book entitled *Ark II,* scientists D. Pirages and P. Ehrlich observe:

> "Noah had ample warning from a respected authority to build his Ark, and he used his time to good advantage. Skeptics laughed, ridiculed, and drowned—but Noah . . . survived.
>
> "We too have been warned that a flood of problems now threatens the persistence of industrial society, but this time the ark cannot be built out of wood and caulking.
>
> "We must ensure our survival by redesigning the political, economic, and social institutions of industrial society. If a new institutional ark cannot be made watertight in time, industrial society will sink."

[15] Does human history give any sound reason to believe that this corrupt system can be "redesigned"? Is there any basis for trusting the nations suddenly to cooperate world wide, unselfishly, in every sphere of human activity? Are they conducting a worldwide educational program that would unite all mankind under one government, and motivate all people to a common purpose? None of these things are being done by them. In all the nations Jehovah's servants alone are peacefully and unitedly cooperating to teach people about the incoming one government for all mankind that Jehovah has purposed, his heavenly kingdom under Christ. They do not promote a redesigning of this present unworkable system of things, since that is not God's purpose. He will not redesign it, but will demolish it. In that promise we can trust.—Dan. 2:44; Matt. 6:9, 10.

[16] Jehovah's servants must not be misled by any schemes to perpetuate this

13, 14. While secular authorities recognize mankind's critical problems, what remedies do they still offer?

15. (a) Why is there no reason to trust human remedies at this late date? (b) Who are truly cooperating with the only remedy for mankind's problems?

16. In what promises should we have full confidence

present corrupt system of things. They should, instead, keep trusting Jehovah with full confidence to bring this wicked system to an end and to replace it with his new order of righteousness. (2 Pet. 3:10-13) We must be confident that Jehovah alone can and will, for his trusting servants, "wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore." (Rev. 21:4) Precisely at his appointed time, Jehovah will fulfill such promises, for "these words are faithful and true."—Rev. 21:5.

17 In addition, as an encouragement to keep trusting in him, Jehovah asks his servants to keep their eyes focused on his rewards. "He that approaches God must believe that he is and that he becomes the rewarder of those earnestly seeking him." (Heb. 11:6) The hope of the reward was a stimulus to first-century Christians. The apostle Paul said: "My beloved brothers, become steadfast, unmovable, always having plenty to do in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in connection with the Lord." "God is not unrighteous so as to forget your work and the love you showed for his name." —1 Cor. 15:58; Heb. 6:10.

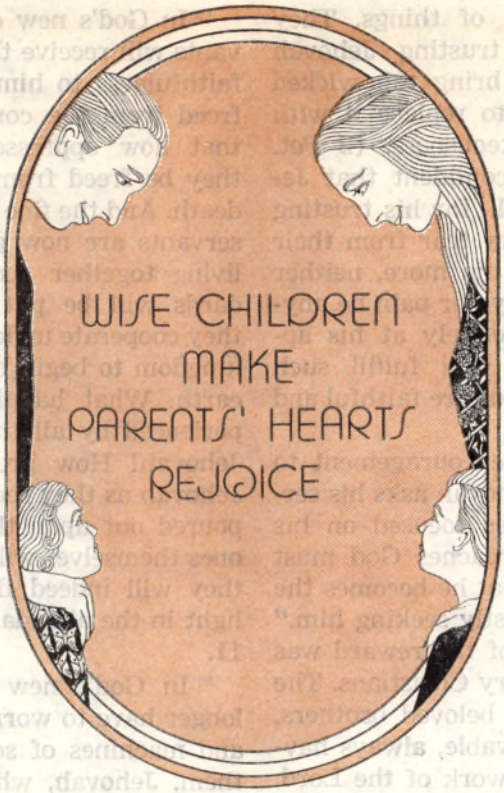
18 Our trust in Jehovah should not be diminished even if we should have to face death before God's new order becomes a reality. We can have the same trust that Abraham had when he was asked to sacrifice Isaac. "He reckoned that God was able to raise him up even from the dead." When Jehovah intervened, Isaac was as good as dead, which is why the Bible says that, from the dead, Abraham "did receive Isaac] also in an illustrative way." (Heb. 11:19) Can any human agency bring back the dead? Surely not. Only Jehovah can, through the arrangements that he provides.—Acts 24:15.

17. What serves as a source of encouragement to us?
18. Should our trust in Jehovah be diminished even if we have to face death?

19 In God's new order, his trusting servants will receive the full reward for their faithfulness to him. Forever will they be freed from the corrupt system of things that now oppresses them. Forever will they be freed from the curses of sin and death. And the fine training that Jehovah's servants are now getting in working and living together according to God's standards will be put to immediate use as they cooperate under the direction of God's kingdom to begin building a paradise new earth. What happiness will then be experienced by all those who kept trusting Jehovah! How grateful they will be to Jehovah as they see blessing after blessing poured out upon them! Truly, "the meek ones themselves will possess the earth, and they will indeed find their exquisite delight in the abundance of peace."—Ps. 37:11.

20 In God's new order, people will no longer have to worry about the inventions and machines of science working against them. Jehovah, who created all material things, including energy, knows what his servants should use to make the earth a paradise. Advances in knowledge or in living standards will no longer work to damage and pollute the earth. The Creator and Regulator of the billions of galaxies in the universe knows how to direct his people in the most beneficial and lasting use of the things he has made for their enjoyment. Thus, from the record of the past and present, we have every reason to keep trusting Jehovah, as his Word counsels: "Trust in Jehovah and do good; reside in the earth, and deal with faithfulness. Also take exquisite delight in Jehovah, and he will give you the requests of your heart. Roll upon Jehovah your way, and rely upon him, and he himself will act."—Ps. 37:3-5.

19. What are some of the rewards Jehovah's trusting servants will receive in the New Order?
20. What confidence can we have as to how earth's resources will be used under God's kingdom?



"A WISE son is the one that makes a father rejoice." (Prov. 15:20) How true are those inspired words! When children act wisely, they make their parents' hearts rejoice.

However, training is required for this happy result to be obtained. As in all parts of the earth, in Burma, too, Jehovah's Christian witnesses have found this to be the case.

There is six-year-old Joanna, for example. Her mother has trained her well. One day, when her mother visited some friends, Joanna also went along. Just before having lunch in that home, Joanna asked the children there whether they prayed before meals. Finding out that they did not even know how to pray, she asked everyone to repeat after her while she prayed aloud. Even the mother of the children joined in. After eating, Joanna went out to tell the other children about her God, Jehovah. She asked them whether they had a God. When they said that they did, her next question was: "What is your God's name?" They, of course, could not answer her question. So Joanna proudly said, "My God's name is Jehovah." —Ps. 83:18.

Eight-year-old Peter has been taught by his parents how to use the Bible to explain his beliefs to others. He uses pieces of paper to mark appropriate texts in his Bible. When one of his markers dropped out of his Bible, Peter simply repeated the text from memory.

But what if a person does not have time to mark his Bible or to make a note on a slip of paper? He might learn something from seven-year-old Joshua. He was listening attentively to an appointed elder of his congregation showing how to present Scriptural thoughts to unbelievers. But Joshua had no paper for taking notes. Getting up to obtain some would have meant missing out on good instruction. So what did Joshua do? He quickly marked down a text on his palm. Later, he was able to share this Scriptural point with others.

When parents give fine training, they may find that the example of their children is faith-strengthening. This was the experience of one elder. A few years ago he and another elder were imprisoned on false charges and because of their neutral stand in politics. There was no other elder or servant in that congregation. Hence, twelve-year-old Zami, his daughter, took the initiative to keep some activity going until her father's release. Every Sunday morning the father would stand near a small hole in the cell, to watch his daughter and others calling on people to tell them about the Bible.

Of course, training is not confined to speaking to others. Children should also be taught to listen carefully at congregation meetings and to apply what they learn. This is what the parents of four-year-old Sanju did. He would be asked to listen carefully at the meetings. Later, at home, he would climb on a chair and give the same talk to his parents in his own childish way. Visitors to the home were sure to hear Sanju's talks. Now seven, Sanju gives talks in the congregation's Theocratic School.

Proper training can also help children to withstand pressure to violate God's law. That was the experience of six-year-old Christine. Once she spent a few days with her unbelieving grandparents. While sitting at the table for lunch, she noticed that her grandmother had prepared some small roasted animals. She asked: "How were these slaughtered?" Learning that they were not properly bled, Christine said that she could not eat them. "Why not?" asked the surprised grandparents. "My father," said Christine, "told me that as a Christian I should not eat that which is not properly slaughtered." (Gen. 9:3, 4) Trying to persuade her, the grandmother pointed out that the girl's father would never know anything about it. But Christine answered: "I don't worship my father. Even though he is not here to see me, Jehovah God, whom I worship, is here." This paved the way for those elderly people to get interested in the Bible's message.

How true are the inspired words: "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings you [Jehovah] have furnished praise"!—Matt. 21:16.

"What was on his mind he came out with, a freeness of speech that likewise appeals to ever so many. And it must be said that, time and again, he spoke to the point."

THE APOSTLE PETER —WHY SO LOVED BY MANY

AMONG the most favored persons who ever walked the earth must be included the twelve apostles of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

What blessings the twelve enjoyed as they accompanied their Lord and Master! They heard him expound God's righteous principles, as in his Sermon on the Mount, listened to him explain his parables and saw him refute his religious opposers and castigate them for their sanctimonious hypocrisy. And then to observe Jesus day after day as he cured the sick, healed the lame, caused the blind to see and even raised the dead—what a privilege was theirs!

The inspired record of Jesus and his apostles contains no complete biographies of the twelve. If we know anything about them, it is only a few facts or some outstanding characteristics. For example, Nathanael was the Israelite "in whom there [was] no deceit." (John 1:47) Matthew stands out because of his having been a tax collector, which, incidentally, only his account reveals. Thomas' characteristic gave rise to the expression "doubting Thomas." And John is well known as the apostle for whom Jesus had special affection. But Peter is the exception. Repeatedly his words, his actions, his personality comes to our attention in the Gospel accounts.

To begin with, Peter is referred to by name more than all the rest put together, upward of 180 times. More than that, whenever he and others are named, his name always comes first; and this is so whether all the others are named, or only three, two or one of them.

Doubtless there are good reasons for this being so. The Gospels indicate that Peter was far more outspoken than were any of the others and also that he was often the spokesman for his companions.

Peter is mentioned in the Scriptures in five different ways. His name "Peter" (which he alone bears) was given to him by his Lord and means "a stone, a piece of rock." "Symeon" (Hebrew), "Simon" (Greek), has the meaning of "hearing." (Gen. 29:33) He is also called "Cephas," the Semitic equivalent of "Peter," and many times the combination "Simon Peter" appears.

Peter's father was named John (Jonah). Peter was from the fishing village or city of Bethsaida, situated on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. It was in the upper Jordan River valley that his brother Andrew, a disciple of John the Baptizer, introduced Peter to Jesus as the Messiah. It was at that time that Jesus gave Simon the name of Peter and from that time on he was a disciple, a follower of Jesus.—John 1: 35-42.

Some months later, apparently, Jesus called Peter and his brother, as they were fishing, to leave their nets and follow him as 'fishers of men.' (Luke 5:1-11) Then, in the following year and after a night of prayer, Jesus chose Peter and eleven others to be apostles.—Luke 6:12-16.

PETER THE IMPULSIVE APOSTLE

Why do so many of us especially love Peter? It might be said that it is because of Peter's "humanness." Helping toward this end doubtless is the fact that we know so much more about Peter than about any of the rest. Endearing us to him is his warm, ardent nature. With it went an impulsiveness, at times even impetuousness. He was quick to transmit thought and feeling into actions, something that ever so many of us are prone to do.

Thus, when Jesus caused Peter and his companions to have a large catch of fish after having toiled in vain all night, Peter felt so overwhelmed that he fell down at the feet of Jesus and said: "Depart from me, because I am a sinful man, Lord." (Luke 5:8) When Peter saw Jesus walking on top of the water, he asked Jesus to empower him to do the same, and Peter actually was able to do so, as long as he had sufficient faith. (Matt. 14:25-32) Then, when the mob came to arrest his Master, some of the other apostles asked, "Lord, shall we strike with the sword?" (Luke 22:49) Not Peter. He at once struck with the sword, but with such poor precision that he cut off only the ear of the slave of the high priest.—John 18:10.

There was also the time when, after the resurrection, Jesus appeared as a stranger to a number of the apostles as they were fishing. He again caused them to have a large catch of fish. By this the apostle John recognized him and remarked that it was their Lord. Hearing this, Peter did not wait until the boat, heavy with fish, was pulled to the shore. At once Peter dove into the water and swam to shore to be with his Master. (John 21:1-8) No question about it, all such impulsiveness finds an empathetic response in many Bible lovers.

ALSO OUTSPOKEN

Peter was as ready to speak as he was to act. What was on his mind he came out with, a freeness of speech that likewise appeals to ever so many. And it must be said that, time and again, he spoke to the point. Peter may not have been highly educated, but he was an intelligent man, a thinker. A thinker? Yes, because we find him repeatedly asking meaningful questions; it takes thinking ability to do that. Thus on one occasion, when Jesus used an illustration, Peter asked Jesus to make the parable plain to them. (Matt. 15:15) On still another occasion, after Jesus had sounded a warning as to his return, it was Peter who asked, "Lord, are you saying this illustration to us or also to all?" (Luke 12:41) And it was Peter who asked on behalf of himself and his companions: "Look! We have left all things and followed you; what actually will there be for us?" Jesus assured them that Jehovah would indeed richly reward them both now and in the future.—Matt. 19:27; Mark 10:29, 30.

By his outspokenness Peter also revealed a keen appreciation of his Master. After Jesus had cursed a certain fig tree, it was Peter who called attention to the effectiveness of Jesus' curse: "Rabbi, see! the fig tree that you cursed has withered up." (Mark 11:21) When Jesus asked his apostles who they believed him to be, it was Peter who made that striking, confident confession: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." (Matt. 16:16) Again, when Jesus asked his apostles if they would also leave him as other disciples had done, it was Peter who said:

"Lord, whom shall we go away to? You have sayings of everlasting life; and we have believed and come to know that you are the Holy One of God." (John 6:68, 69) Surely all such appreciation and loyalty on the part of Peter cause us to love him.

REPEATEDLY GETS SET STRAIGHT

However, Peter also, time and again, spoke out of turn or ill-advisedly, requiring that Jesus set him straight. Never did Peter remonstrate on such occasions, but he humbly accepted the correction, all of which further makes us feel a kinship with him. Thus, when Jesus told his apostles about what lay before him, that he would suffer many things, be killed and on the third day be raised from the dead, the well-meaning Peter took him aside and, rebuking him, said: "Be kind to yourself, Lord; you will not have this destiny at all." Yes, he meant well, but how mistaken he was! So mistaken that Jesus felt it necessary to say to him: "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me, because you think, not God's thoughts, but those of men." (Matt. 16:21-23) Here again, how often might *we* have meant well, only to find out that it was a mistaken kindness!

On another occasion Peter wondered about having to forgive his brother so often. Did he need to forgive "Up to seven times?" Jesus set him straight: "I say to you, not, Up to seven times, but, Up to seventy-seven times." How easy it is for us to appreciate the way Peter must have felt, especially if someone close to us repeatedly transgresses against us!—Matt. 18:21, 22.

Once Jesus felt strength going out of him by means of which a certain woman was cured due to her faith. So Jesus asked, "Who was it that touched me?" Peter implied a reproof of Jesus, saying, "Instructor, the crowds are hemming you in and closely pressing you." In other words, 'Jesus, what a foolish question to ask!' But Jesus corrected Peter, saying in effect, 'I know what I'm talking about!' Then the woman made herself known, at which Jesus said to her: "Daughter, your faith has made you well; go your way in peace." Was not Peter like us at times, making an objection because of not being familiar with all the facts?—Luke 8:43-48.

Similarly Peter spoke out of turn when Jesus, after celebrating the last passover with his apostles, began washing their feet. Peter had seen Jesus wash and dry the feet of some of the others. So Peter told Jesus, "You will certainly never wash my feet." In fact, Jesus had to admonish him twice on that occasion. Peter meant well, but he was mistaken.—John 13: 5-10.

On that same evening Peter further spoke ill-advisedly. Jesus told his apostles that they would all be stumbled that night. But Peter felt so sure of his loyalty for his Master that he just could not endure the thought that *he* would desert his Master. Others might, but not *he!* When Jesus added that Peter would even disown him three times, Peter made it still stronger: "Even if I should have to die with you, I will by no means disown you."—Matt. 26:31-35.

Yet Peter was to learn of his own weakness. Doubtless, had he been brought before a judge and asked about Jesus he would have handled matters in a fine manner. But what happened was so unexpected. Nine of the apostles had fled. Only John and Peter had followed Jesus into the courtyard of the high priest, and there a servant girl said to him, "You, too, were with Jesus the Galilean." In turn, others also accused him. The circumstances, the time, who said it, and most likely how they said it, all combined to throw Peter off guard, causing him not only to deny his Master three times, but even to swear that he did "not know the man!" Right after

that, the cock crowed. It had all happened even as Jesus had foretold. At the very time, Luke tells us, "The Lord turned and looked upon Peter." Peter "went outside and wept bitterly." There was no rationalizing on his part, no inventing excuses, just humble, contrite repentance. Certainly all who have wept bitterly because of some serious wrongdoing feel a kinship with Peter and can appreciate how he felt at that time.—Luke 22:61, 62; Matt. 26:69-75.

STRENGTH COMBINED WITH WEAKNESS

Truly the Bible's description of Peter makes absorbing reading. His record is a wonderful revelation of human nature and of what God's spirit can do for imperfect humans. As serious as was Peter's transgression, he did not let it cause him to become so discouraged as to quit. He kept his humility and his love for his Master. This is further seen in what took place after Jesus' resurrection and his appearing to Peter and some others on the shore of the Sea of Galilee. Peter humbly accepted the reproof implied by Jesus' asking him three times if he loved him and then commanding him to "feed my little sheep." —John 21:15-17.

Time and again Peter had taken the lead among the twelve. Thus, after Jesus' ascension into heaven it was Peter who initiated the action of replacing Judas by Matthias. On the day of Pentecost it was Peter who was the spokesman for the twelve, there using one of the "keys of the kingdom" Jesus had previously committed to him. Later on, he made further use of these keys by bringing the good news to the first uncircumcised Gentile converts, Cornelius and his household. —Acts 1:15-26; 2:14-40; 10:1-48; Matt. 16:19.

We find Peter speaking out boldly in connection with a miracle in which he and John healed a man lame from birth. (Acts 3:12-26) When brought before the rulers, Peter and John were so outspoken that the rulers started to wonder. Then they "began to recognize about them that they used to be with Jesus." (Acts 4:13) And repeatedly Peter and his companions reminded the rulers that their first obedience was to God. In fact, in the first eleven chapters of the book of Acts we find Peter giving six speeches. No wonder that Herod Agrippa I had him arrested and intended to do away with him! But God had other things in mind for Peter and so he sent an angel to deliver him. —Acts 12:3-17.

Peter also played a prominent role in the meeting of the governing body of the Christian congregation to consider the question of circumcision for the Gentiles. (Acts 15:7-11) However, not long thereafter we find him letting the fear of man, fear of certain Jewish Christians from Jerusalem, cause him to compromise his principles by withdrawing from association with Gentile Christians. This weakness prompted the apostle Paul to give Peter a stinging rebuke seemingly in front of the entire congregation where this happened. (Gal. 2:11-14) Here again, we note the "humanness" of Peter. All who at one time or another have yielded to the fear of man can empathize with Peter's example and take comfort and benefit from it.

In conclusion, we must not overlook the two fine letters that Peter wrote and which contain so much valuable information and encouraging admonition, especially to all who suffer for righteousness' sake. These letters cause us to appreciate Peter still more. Truly the apostle Peter was a most lovable person, greatly used by his God and his Master, in spite of his weaknesses. What an encouragement his life is to all who try hard to follow their Master even as Peter did!—1 Pet. 2:21.

"FIRM TO THE END"

IT IS with mixed feelings that the announcement is made that a faithful servant of Jehovah, Brother Nathan H. Knorr, after many months of illness, died in the late evening of June 8, 1977. His zealous and steadfast course over many long years is a fine example of one who looked "straight ahead." His ways were "firmly established," and he did not "incline to the right hand or to the left." (Prov. 4:25-27) To those who were in close touch with him he always gave the encouragement to "make fast our hold on our freeness of speech and our boasting over the hope firm to the end."—Heb. 3:6.

Brother Knorr was born on April 23, 1905. He was baptized on July 4, 1923, and entered Bethel service the same year. From 1932 on he held various positions of responsibility in guiding the activity of Jehovah's Witnesses, and in 1942 he became the president of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. He married Audrey Mock, January 31, 1953. His natural abilities in organizing and expanding the work were fully used in the oversight of the Society's branches world wide, involving frequent and extensive traveling and lecturing. The educational aspect of our Christian work was especially advanced during the years he served as president. In 1943 he was instrumental in establishing the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead for the training of missionaries. He was privileged to see the number of Witnesses increase from 115,240 in 1942 to 2,248,390 in 1976.

Though death brings a sense of loss and the need for comfort, yet we rejoice on Brother Knorr's account, especially in view of the record he made of love for God's people and God's work, shown by unflagging zeal and willingness to expend himself down to the end. We rejoice still more because we are living in the day when those with the heavenly hope, on finishing their earthly course, are "changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," and are "raised up incorruptible." (1 Cor. 15:51, 52) Let the hope of life everlasting in God's kingdom cause us also to "make fast our hold on the confidence we had at the beginning firm to the end."—Heb. 3:14.

Insight on the News

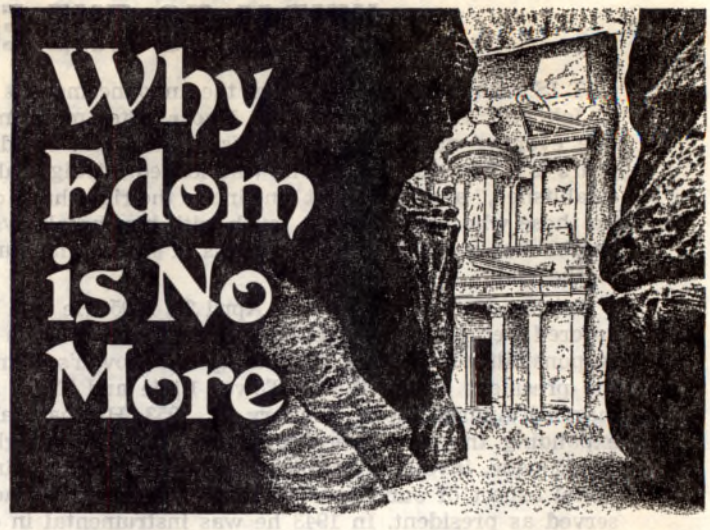
Church Downgrades Bible

● The Roman Catholic Church in Italy has published a new version of the Bible, with the imprimatur of the Cardinal Archbishop of Milan. In the introduction, the Church expresses its attitude toward the Bible, stating: "The Bible . . . cannot be called either true or false. For example, is it true when it explains the origins of the world?" The Church answers: "The truth of the first chapters of the Bible is not on the level of scientific research," but these chapters are "early traditions and early corrected myths."

The introduction also says: "As to the historical narratives, they often relate facts as they really happened; sometimes they are embellished to the point of becoming epic poems." As examples it mentions that the book of Jonah and passages in the book of Daniel are "not a series of historical facts." It says that such Bible writing is like a "fiction novel."

Yet the Bible says: "All Scripture is inspired by God and can profitably be used for teaching, for refuting error, for guiding people's lives and teaching them to be holy." (2 Tim. 3:16, Catholic "Jerusalem Bible") Is it reasonable to think that the God of truth would inspire falsehoods to be taught to people? Would Jesus teach falsehoods and then tell his followers, "You will learn the truth and the truth will make you free"?—John 8:32, Catholic "Jerusalem Bible."

Why Edom is No More



HOW pleasant life is when members of a family deeply care about one another! Strong bonds of natural affection prevent jealousies, bitterness and hatreds from developing and wrecking family peace and unity. But when natural affection breaks down, untold trouble can result. In one case, the corroding of natural ties finally led to the total extinction of an entire people, the Edomites.

Edom is but another name for Esau, the twin brother of Jacob from whom the Israelites descended. So the Israelites and the Edomites were as closely related as any people could be. The Originator of the family arrangement, Jehovah God, therefore commanded the Israelites to show due regard for their fleshly relationship with the Edomites. They were instructed: "You must not detest an Edomite, for he is your brother."—Deut. 23:7.

From the start of their contact with the Israelites as a nation, however, the Edomites, who settled in "the land of Seir," gave no consideration to this brotherly relationship. (Gen. 32:3-8) They treated their brother nation as an outright enemy. It was an Edomite tribe, the Amalekites, who launched the first unprovoked attack against the Israelites after their leaving Egypt under Moses' leadership.—Ex. 17:8-16; Gen. 36:12.

About forty years later, Moses' respectful request for the Israelites to be allowed to pass through Edom over the king's highway met stiff opposition. Twice the Edomites refused permission, threatening to stop the Israelites by force of arms. The second time a strong military force actually took a position to block the Israelites from going through the land. This was despite the fact that the appeal had been made on the basis of a brotherly relationship. The message conveyed through the messengers sent by Moses began: "This is what your brother Israel has said, 'You yourself well know all the hardship that has overtaken us.' "—Num. 20:14-21.

In the centuries that passed, the attitude of the Edomites did not change toward their brother nation. During the reign of Israel's first king, Saul, warfare broke out with Edom. (1 Sam. 14:47, 48) Then, when David was king, the Edomites seized the opportunity to invade Judah. From Psalm 60 and its superscription, it appears that at this time the Israelites had suffered reverses while warring in the north with the forces of Aram-naharaim and Aram-Zobah. Nevertheless, the Edomites were subdued, and David stationed garrisons of Israelite troops throughout Edom.—2 Sam. 8:14.

Thereafter, whenever the power of the Judean kings weakened, the Edomites were quick to take advantage, even allying themselves with other peoples in fighting against Israel.—2 Chron. 20:1, 2, 10, 11, 22; 28:16-20; Ps. 83:4-8.

Toward the close of the seventh century B.C.E. the intensity of Edom's hatred fo

Israel came especially to the fore. At that time the Babylonians conquered the Kingdom of Judah. The Edomites rejoiced over the disaster of their brother nation, shared in taking spoil and even turned over Judean escapees to the Babylonians. (Obad. 1, 12-14) They greedily sought to enlarge their territory by taking over the land formerly controlled by the kingdoms of Israel and Judah.—Ezek. 35:10-12.

These unbrotherly deeds did not escape the notice of Jehovah God. By means of his prophets Obadiah, Ezekiel and Jeremiah, he decreed doom for Edom. In essence, Jeremiah and Obadiah presented the same message, making the fulfillment of Jehovah's word about Edom's downfall doubly certain: "If it were thieves that came in to you, if despoilers came in by night, to what extent would you have been silenced? Would they not steal as much as they wanted? Or if it were grape gatherers that came in to you, would they not let some gleanings remain? O the extent to which those of Esau have been searched out! How his concealed treasures have been sought out!" (Obad. 5, 6; Jer. 49:9, 10) Yes, thieves steal only what they want, and grape gatherers leave gleanings. But, in the case of Esau (Edom), nothing would be passed over at their going down in defeat.

And through whom would the calamity come? The prophetic answer was: "The very men in covenant with you have all deceived you. The men at peace with you have prevailed against you. Those eating food with you will place a net under you as one in whom there is no discernment." (Obad. 7) So defeat would come at the hands of the very ones with whom the Edomites had been in alliance, evidently the Babylonians to whom they had handed over escapees from Judah.

In time, according to Obadiah's prophecy, 'there would prove to be no survivor to the house of Esau.' (Obad. 18) The Edomites were to cease to exist as a people. According to the prophetic word through Ezekiel, the Israelites were going to share in the fulfillment of God's judgment against them. Jehovah's word through Ezekiel was: "I will bring my vengeance on Edom by the hand of my people Israel; and they must do in Edom according to my anger and according to my rage."—Ezek. 25:14.

No one today can deny that the prophetic word about Edom has been fulfilled. The Edomites have completely disappeared as a people. And this has happened in the manner pointed to in Bible prophecy.

The ancient Jewish historian Josephus tells of Nebuchadnezzar's military campaign in Syria-Palestine during that monarch's twenty-third year. Doubtless at that time Edomites were subjugated, but that defeat did not yet spell total ruin for their land. From about the fifth century B.C.E. onward, Arabian nomads began pressuring the Edomites. By the third century B.C.E. the Nabataeans had pushed them out of their heartland into the Negeb to the south of Judah. Eventually the Edomites moved farther north, into the region around Hebron. According to the apocryphal book of 1 Maccabees (5:3) they suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of the Levite Judas Maccabaeus. Later, according to Josephus, John Hyrcanus, Jewish king of the tribe of Levi, subdued the Edomites, permitting them to remain in the land only if they submitted to circumcision and agreed to abide by Jewish law. The Edomites complied with the condition and were in time absorbed by the Jews. After the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 C.E. the Edomites ceased totally to exist as a people.

Thus an unbrotherly attitude led to the end of the Edomites as a people, in fulfillment of God's prophetic decree. This forcefully illustrates that Jehovah God does

not overlook willful disregard for his will and purpose. Moreover, those who persist in attitudes and actions contrary to his ways will not escape adverse judgment. Wise indeed are all who live in harmony with his Word. For, as the inspired apostle John wrote, "the world is passing away and so is its desire, but he that does the will of God remains forever."—1 John 2:17.

HUMILITY—a most desirable quality

PRIDE—rather than humility, meekness or lowliness—is all too often the dominant trait reflected by imperfect humans. The Supreme Sovereign of the universe, however, is humble. This is evident from Jehovah God's willingness to deal compassionately with lowly sinners who earnestly seek his approval and blessing.

Jehovah's humility is beautifully portrayed in the third chapter of the book of Lamentations. There the prophet Jeremiah pours out his intense feelings about the terrible afflictions that befell the Israelites at the hands of the Babylonians. As a nation, the Israelites were laid low in utter defeat. Eventually, however, Jehovah God would remember repentant ones of the nation. Confidence in this is expressed in Jeremiah's prayerful words at Lamentations 3:19, 20: "Remember my affliction and my homeless state, the wormwood and the poisonous plant. Without fail your soul will remember and bow low over me." Yes, in expression of his superlative humility, the Almighty God would "bow low" or stoop down to give the repentant ones favorable attention and lift them up from their debased condition.

Thus, Jehovah God, though supreme and answerable to no one, condescends to look favorably even upon those who have been brought to the lowest state. Rightly, then, he requires that his servants be humble. Only to the humble ones does he give favorable attention, making them the object of his special consideration. His Word tells us: "Jehovah is high, and yet the humble one he sees; but the lofty one he knows only from a distance." (Ps. 138:6; Jas. 4:6) Great distance separates the proud from Jehovah God who dwells in the highest heavens. Nevertheless, he discerns their

motivations and, hence, refuses to acknowledge them as his servants. In effect, they are not even passing acquaintances.

CULTIVATING HUMILITY

However, if we desire Jehovah's recognition, we do well to consider the example of his humble servants in ancient times. One of these was David. Though anointed as king, he did not seek to get the position by force but willingly endured humiliations and persecutions at the hands of King Saul. At heart David did not have a conceited opinion of himself. He did not look with envy upon those in superior positions nor did he look with disdain upon the lowly and afflicted. He recognized his limitations and did not reach out for things beyond his capacities. That is why he could say: "O Jehovah, my heart has not been haughty, nor have my eyes been lofty; nor have I walked in things too great, nor in things too wonderful for me." —Ps. 131:1.

Cultivating this humility required effort on David's part, for he acknowledged under inspiration: "Surely I have soothed and quieted my soul like a weanling upon his mother. My soul is like a weanling upon me." (Ps. 131:2) Evidently, therefore, at one time David's soul, that is, the soulful *desire* that filled him, needed to be calmed so that he might reflect true humility. His desires and yearnings put him in a turmoil like that of a babe that longs for the breast of its mother. Once weaned, however, the child does not take long to get used to a new way of feeding and finds contentment in its mother's arms. Similarly, David succeeded in calming his desires. Appreciating that exaltation comes from Jehovah, he patiently waited on him and could therefore encourage fellow Israelites to do the same: "Let Israel wait for Jehovah from now on and to time indefinite."—Ps. 131:3.

Similar humility today will make a man patient about his being used as a ministerial servant or as an elder in a congregation of God's people. He will not try to push himself forward with a view to gaining prominence but will gladly exert himself in doing 'good toward all, especially toward those related to him in the faith.' (Gal. 6:10) Though his good qualities and works may be overlooked for a time, he can rest assured that they will not remain concealed. As 1 Timothy 5:25 states: "Good deeds are obvious, or even if they are not, they cannot be concealed for ever."—*New English Bible.*

HUMILITY LEADS TO PEACE

By keeping a humble attitude and not making a big issue about not being used in a certain capacity, a man contributes to the preservation of peace among his Christian brothers. Even if an error in judgment were made involving you, it is not always wise to expose it and try to vindicate yourself. While a person might be able to prove that he is right, he could in the process injure others. In fact, he could undermine a congregation's respect for its appointed elders. This would certainly make it very difficult for him to work with the elders whom he humiliated in the eyes of others.

So if a brother feels that an error in judgment has been made, he might ask himself: Was the error serious enough to be exposed despite possible adverse effects? Or, can it not, rather, wait for later correction? Would making an issue of it needlessly give rise to trouble that could disturb the peace of the congregation?

The humble person appreciates that he, too, makes mistakes and is therefore willing to accept and apply Scriptural counsel. If he has been misjudged, he can strive to

profit from the experience, working hard not to make similar errors himself in dealing with others.

SERVING WITH HUMILITY

As for appointed elders and ministerial servants, they do well to imitate the apostle Paul's example in humbly serving others. Of himself and his fellow workers, Paul wrote: "Neither have we been seeking glory from men, no, either from you or from others, though we could be an expensive burden as apostles of Christ. To the contrary, we became gentle in the midst of you, as when a nursing mother cherishes her own children. So, having a tender affection for you, we were well pleased to impart to you, not only the good news of God, but also our own souls, because you became beloved to us." (1 Thess. 2:6-8) Such humility in being willing to serve without any desire for "glory" and such giving of one's time and energies, in expression of self-sacrificing love, appeal to the hearts of others and make one a fine instrument in the hands of Jehovah, to the blessing of fellowmen.

Besides aiding us to reflect the spirit of one ministering to others, humility also enhances appreciation for fellow believers. The apostle Paul counseled the Philippians to 'do nothing out of contentiousness or out of egotism, but with lowliness of mind considering that others are superior to you.' (Phil. 2:3) The person who follows this counsel is able to see fine qualities in others, qualities that may in certain respects be superior to his own. His modest evaluation of himself prevents him from being hasty about insisting on his way or trying to override the recommendations of others. He appreciates that there may be several ways to handle a matter and his judgment may not necessarily be the best. Therefore, he is willing to take into consideration the feelings and views of others. He exercises care not to take sole credit for doing something in which others have shared. His humility makes him a desirable associate.

Humility is indeed vital in preserving a good relationship with God and fellowmen. It is therefore a quality that all of us as devoted servants of Jehovah will want to cultivate to a greater degree.

What did the Wise Man mean?

Wisdom's Superior Value

An inheritance is of value. But of what benefit would it be if the one getting it lacked the insight to manage it properly? King Solomon wrote: "Wisdom along with an inheritance is good and is advantageous for those seeing the sun. For wisdom is for a protection the same as money is for a protection; but the advantage of knowledge is that wisdom itself preserves alive its owners."—Eccl. 7:11, 12.

Thus wisdom is shown to have greater value than material possessions. A person who lacks wisdom may quickly squander an inheritance. While money provides a measure of protection, enabling its possessor to get what he needs, it can still be lost or stolen. The rich person may ever

become a target for robbery and violence. On the other hand, wisdom, the ability to use knowledge in solving problems or in attaining certain goals, can safeguard a person from taking foolish risks that can jeopardize his life. It can save a person from a premature death and, when based on a proper fear of God, can lead to his gaining eternal life.

Wisdom definitely has protective value. The wise man said: "Wisdom itself is stronger for the wise one than ten men in power who happened to be in a city." (Eccl. 7:19) Because of its protective value, wisdom can accomplish more than "ten men," a complete number of warriors, in protecting the inhabitants of a city under siege.

In view of the fact that all humans are imperfect, we cannot get along without the wise guidance Jehovah God has provided in his Word. Being sinners, humans fall far short of God's perfect standard. Solomon said: "For there is no man righteous in the earth that keeps doing good and does not sin." (Eccl. 7:20) Surely, then, we should make the wisdom revealed in the Bible our own. This will enable us to make our way successful both now and in the future.

Things Man Cannot Change

Many things that happen in this imperfect world are beyond human control. Though undesirable, they cannot be changed. King Solomon remarked: "See the work of the true God, for who is able to make straight what he has made crooked?" (Eccl. 7:13) In other words, who among mankind can straighten out the defects and imperfections that God allows? No one, for not only is there a purpose behind everything that the Most High himself does, but also there is a purpose in his permitting other things to happen.

For this reason Solomon recommends: "On a good day prove yourself to be in goodness, and on a calamitous day see that the true God has made even this exactly as that, to the intent that mankind may not discover anything at all after them." (Eccl. 7:14) According to this advice, a person should appreciate a day when things go well and show this by reflecting goodness, generosity, kindness, and joy in his own words and actions. He should view a good day as a gift from God. But what if the day brings calamity, trouble? A person does well to "see," that is, to recognize that God has allowed the calamity to take place. Why has he done so? Solomon says, "to the intent that mankind may not discover anything at all after them."

The fact that God permits us to face both joys and troubles, not only gives us opportunity to develop endurance, but also, as Solomon pointed out, should impress upon us that we cannot tell just what the future will bring. There are no exceptions; calamity can befall both the righteous and the wicked. In fact, righteous people may be suffering, while wicked men may apparently be prospering. Solomon continued: "Everything I have seen during my vain days. There exists the righteous one perishing in his righteousness, and there exists the wicked one continuing long in his badness."—Eccl. 7:15.

This situation, of course, disturbs many people. They even become angry with the Most High. But this is something to be avoided. We should instead trust God, remembering that he is a God of love. (1 John 4:8) Whatever he permits will never result in permanent harm to anyone.

The fact that both good and bad can come to a person should make us realize the importance of depending, not on ourselves, but on God. While we may not understand certain things now, we can rest assured that, after everything has run its full course, what God has permitted will have served a beneficial purpose for all concerned.

The apostle Peter made this clear when commenting on the suffering coming upon fellow believers in his time: "Beloved ones, do not be puzzled at the burning among you, which is happening to you for a trial, as though a strange thing were befalling you. On the contrary, go on rejoicing forasmuch as you are sharers in the sufferings of the Christ, that you may rejoice and be overjoyed also during the revelation of his glory. If you are being reproached for the name of Christ, you are happy, because the spirit of glory, even the spirit of God, is resting upon you." (1 Pet. 4:12-14) "After you have suffered a little while, the God of all undeserved kindness, who called you to his everlasting glory in union with Christ, will himself finish your training, he will make you firm, he will make you strong."—1 Pet. 5:10.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

August 21: Trust Jehovah, Not Man. Page 425. Songs to Be Used: 17, 21.

August 28: Keep Trusting Jehovah for the Reward. Page 430. Songs to Be Used: 41, 95.