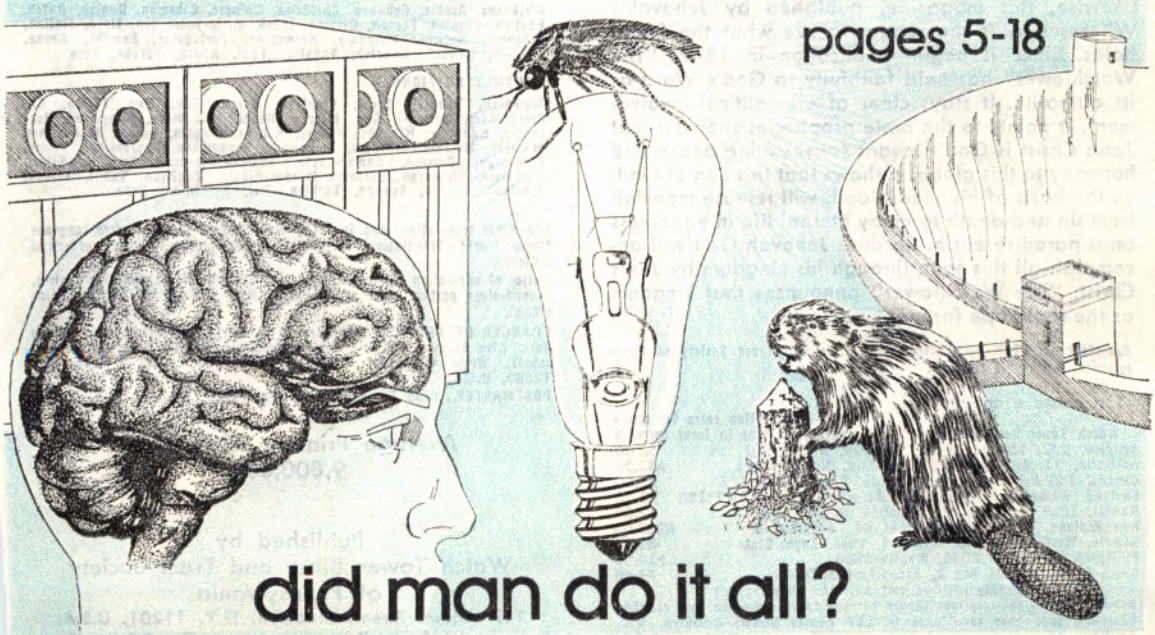
JULY 15, 1978

THE WATCHTOWER

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom

DESIGN REQUIRES A DESIGNER

pages 5-18



did man do it all?

THE WATCHTOWER
Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom

July 15, 1978
Vol. 99, No. 14

IN THIS ISSUE

3 "Why Does God Permit Wickedness?"
In this, and the three following articles, evidence is discussed showing that God lives as Architect of the Universe. Then why has he permitted wickedness? For a purpose that benefits you. Learn what it is. Learn, too, how the human brain bears crowning testimony to Jehovah's creative powers

5 Can Life Arise by Chance?

8 "Perceived by the Things Made"

14 The Human Brain—Three Pounds of Mystery

19 Insight on the News

20 The Beauty of Jehovah's Sovereignty
The excellence and dignity of Jehovah's sovereignty are discussed, and the happiness to be enjoyed by all who submit to his Kingdom rule

25 Can You Endure Trials Successfully?
James chapter 1 shows how true wisdom aids in enduring trials, leading to rich rewards

30 The Sermon on the Mount —On "Gifts of Mercy"

32 Questions from Readers

A WATCHTOWER enables a person to look far into the distance and announce to others what is seen. Likewise, this magazine, published by Jehovah's Witnesses, aids the reader to see what the future holds. Since it began publication in 1879, "The Watchtower" has held faithfully to God's Word as its authority. It stays clear of all political involvement. It points to the Bible prophecies showing that Jesus Christ is God's means for restoring peace and harmony to this globe. It shows that this Son of God, on the basis of his shed blood, will release mankind from sin and death to enjoy eternal life in happiness on a paradise earth. Because Jehovah God will accomplish all this soon through his kingdom by Jesus Christ, "The Watchtower" announces that kingdom as the real hope for mankind.

Copyright © 1978 by Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. All rights reserved.

Ten cents a copy

Watch Tower Society offices	Yearly subscription rates for semi-monthly editions in local currency
America, U.S., 117 Adams St., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201	$2.00
Australia, 11 Beresford Rd., Strathfield, N.S.W. 2135	A$2.50
Canada, 150 Bridgeland Ave., Toronto, Ontario M6A 1Z5	$2.00
England, Watch Tower House, The Ridgeway, London NW7 1RN	£1.70
Hawaii, 1228 Pensacola St., Honolulu 96814	$2.00
New Zealand, 6-A Western Springs Rd., Auckland 3	NZ$3.00
Nigeria, West Africa, P.O. Box 194, Yaba, Lagos State	₦1.40
Philippines, P.O. Box 2044, Manila 2800	₱10.00
South Africa, Private Bag 2, Elandsfontein, 1406	R1,80

(Monthly editions cost half the above rates.)
Remittances for subscriptions should be sent to the office in your country. Otherwise send your remittance to 117 Adams Street, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201.
Printed in U.S.A.

NOW PUBLISHED IN 82 LANGUAGES

SEMIMONTHLY EDITIONS

Afrikaans, Arabic, Cebuano, Chichewa, Chinese, Cibemba, Danish, Dutch, English, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hiligaynon, Ibo, Iloko, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Malagasy, Norwegian, Portuguese, Sesotho, Shona, Spanish, Swahili, Swedish, Tagalog, Thai, Xhosa, Yoruba, Zulu

MONTHLY EDITIONS

Armenian, Bengali, Bicol, Croatian, Czech, Efik, Ewe, Fijian, Ga, Greenlandic, Gujarati, Gun, Hebrew, Hindi, Hiri Motu, Hungarian, Icelandic, Kanarese, Kikongo, Kikuyu, Kiluba, Lingala, Levale, Malayalam, Marathi, Melanesian-Pidgin, Pampango, Pangasinan, Papiamento, Polish, Romanian, Russian, Samar-Leyte, Samoan, Sepedi, Serbian, Silozi, Sinhalese, Slovenian, Solomon Islands-Pidgin, Tahitian, Tamil, Telugu, Tshiluba, Tsonga, Tswana, Turkish, Twi, Ukrainian, Urdu

The Bible translation used in "The Watchtower" is the modern-language "New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures," unless otherwise indicated.

Notice of expiration is sent at least two issues before subscription expires. Second-class postage paid at Brooklyn, N.Y. and at additional mailing offices.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS should reach us thirty days before your moving date. Give us your old and new address (if possible, your old address label). Write Watchtower, R.D. 1, Box 300, Wallkill, New York 12589, U.S.A.

POSTMASTER: Send Form 3579 to Watchtower, Wallkill, N.Y. 12589.

Average Printing Each Issue:
9,800,000

Published by
Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society
of Pennsylvania
117 Adams Street, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201, U.S.A.
Frederick W. Franz, Pres. Grant Suiter, Secy.

"Why Does God Permit Wickedness?"

Many Persons Ask, "If There Is a God, Why..."

MANY persons ask questions prefaced with the words, "If there is a God, why . . . " Some of such questioners are merely wanting to ridicule those who believe in the existence of God. However, many others are deeply disturbed and are searching for answers to bolster their faltering faith. Probably the most frequently recurring question of this kind is, *"If there is a God, why does he permit wickedness?"*

It is true that God permits it. But there are many people on earth who not only permit it; they also perpetrate it. They declare wars; drop bombs on women and children; scorch the earth, causing famines; and spread sickness and death by polluting air and water and soil—both in wartime and in peacetime. Not only do they foster wickedness internationally and nationally, but they also inflict hardship on themselves individually.

They overeat and become obese, overdrink and get cirrhosis of the liver, smoke and suffer lung cancer, practice adultery and sodomy and contract venereal diseases, drive recklessly and kill scores of thousands annually, greedily pursue money and possessions and, in so doing, create stresses that cause ulcers and heart attacks —on and on the list continues.

WHAT DO THEY REALLY WANT?

Such persons do not really want the elimination of wickedness; they want only the elimination of the penalties for wickedness. They want promiscuity without venereal disease, smoking without lung cancer, heavy drinking without liver trouble, reckless driving without accidents, and so forth. They want to sow evil but not reap it. They want to pluck apples from weeds and gather grapes from thistles.

Then, when they do reap the woeful harvest of their wicked sowing, they moan and groan and raise the bitter lament: 'Why me, God? Why me?' But why not? "Whatever a man is sowing, this he will also reap." (Gal. 6:7) Their reaction is exactly as Jehovah foreknew it *would be:*

"A man's own folly wrecks his life, and then he bears a grudge against the LORD." —Prov. 19:3, *The New English Bible.*

Jehovah God condemns sins and excesses. Millions berate God for permitting wickedness, but the bulk of their woes stems from their flouting of his commands. Since they permit the wickedness and perpetuate it, why should not God think that they prefer it? And if God did stop it, if he reached down to take the cigarettes from their mouths, or the highballs from their hands, or to separate the fornicators, or to slow their cars down from 75 miles an hour to 55 (120 kilometers to 90), would they not set up a great howl that their freedoms were being curtailed? If he permits it he is denounced; if he stops it he is denounced.

The time is coming when Jehovah will stop it by removing the wicked:

> ***"The upright are the ones that will reside in the earth, and the blameless are the ones that will be left over in it. As regards the wicked, they will be cut off from the very earth; and as for the treacherous, they will be torn away from it."*** **—Prov. 2:21, 22.**

Some may decry this action by God as cruel, but how else will wickedness be stopped? By rehabilitation? Society has spent millions trying this. The programs fail. Criminals turned loose from prison lapse into their old ways. They soon claim more victims. If the wicked refuse to reform, what is the solution? Can you have a rose garden in a weed patch, or chickens with foxes in the hen house, or a peaceful paradise with vandals running loose?

JEHOVAH'S REASON FOR PERMITTING WICKEDNESS

Jehovah God created humankind to be caretakers of a paradise earth. He did not make them robots, but gave them freedom of choice. Would they choose to care for the earth in keeping with God's purpose? Satan said that they would not, and challenged God with the boast that he could turn all men against God. Jehovah accepted the challenge. Time was required to settle the issue.

That this issue had been raised is shown relative to Job. Jehovah called Satan's attention to Job, saying: "He worships me and is careful not to do anything evil." Satan retorted: "Would Job worship you if he got nothing out of it? You have always protected him." Jehovah then permitted Satan to afflict Job, to try to break his integrity. Job's wife thought that she discerned the cause of her husband's troubles and chided him: "You are still as faithful as ever, aren't you? Why don't you curse God and die?" But Job kept integrity, proved Satan false, and was blessed by God.—Job 1:6-12; 2:1-10; 42:12, *Today's English Version.*

Have you parents ever entrusted some possession or responsibility to your sons or daughters, to see whether they were capable of meriting even greater trusts? So Jehovah God is testing humankind, to see which individuals are to be trusted to care for the paradise earth under Christ's kingdom. He permits wickedness now for a purpose, but he does not cause it. Some calamities come by chance: "Time and unforeseen occurrence befall them all." (Eccl. 9:11) Other calamities come as a result of human foolishness. "God made man simple; man's complex problems are of his own devising." (Eccl. 7:29, *Jerusalem Bible*) Still others are brought about by Satan in his endeavor to turn all persons against God, knowing that they will blame God instead of him, knowing that many do not even believe that he, Satan, exists. —Rev. 12:12.

There is a God, and he has reasons for permitting wickedness. But his time for stopping it is not far off.

can life arise by chance?

If there is no Creator, life must have started of itself. Many think that it did. But does increasing knowledge support this view?

ANCIENT Egyptians saw scarab beetles suddenly appear out of the ground, and believed them to be self-produced. *The Encyclopedia Americana* says: "Tremendous numbers of scarabs were often found on the surface of the mud-banks along the Nile River, and this supported the belief in spontaneous generation." (Vol. 24, p. 336, 1977 edition) But what really happened? Female beetles rolled up a ball of dung, laid eggs in it, and buried it. The eggs hatched, the larvae fed on the dung, and later emerged as beetles. There was no spontaneous generation after all.

The Greek philosophers taught spontaneous generation of life. In the fifth century B.C.E. both Anaxagoras and Empedocles believed in it. A century later Aristotle thought that worms and snails were products of putrefaction. As late as the 17th century C.E., men of science, such as Francis Bacon and William Harvey, taught spontaneous generation.

However, in that same century Redi showed that maggots appeared in meat only after flies laid eggs on it. Bacteria were discovered, and they were hailed as proof of spontaneous generation, until in the 18th century Spallanzani showed that they came from spores. A century later Pasteur settled matters. He proved that life comes only from life. Men of science now accept that view but many insist that life arose spontaneously some two or three thousand million years ago.

CHEMICAL EVOLUTION, THE LATEST SPECULATION

Many scientists believe that a primitive atmosphere of methane, ammonia, water vapor, carbon dioxide and a few other gases was bombarded by ultraviolet rays, thus breaking the molecules into atoms, which recombined to form amino acids, the building blocks of proteins. These and other organic compounds, we

are told, agglomerated in water, acquired a membrane and became a living cell; this derived its energy perhaps first from methane, later from fermentation. Still later, it is said, the cell had to "invent" the process of photosynthesis. But could a simple cell really produce and sustain itself in this way? Why, even the finest scientists will admit humbly that they cannot understand photosynthesis completely, much less duplicate it!

SOME PITFALLS

Many scientists have theorized that the cell evolved spontaneously in this way. But the pitfalls for their theory are many, and very, very deep!

First pitfall: It is a bold assumption that earth's primitive atmosphere contained the necessary gases in the right proportions to start the chain of reactions. There is no evidence to support this.

Second pitfall: If such an atmosphere did exist, and if the amino acids were produced, they would be destroyed by the same source of energy that split the methane and ammonia and water vapor. Amino acids are very complex molecules; therefore they are less stable and more easily destroyed—just as it is easier to topple a stack of 10 bricks than a stack of three. Formed high in the atmosphere, such amino acids could hardly survive to reach water on earth, and, if they did, they would not endure here long enough to become concentrated into the "soup" of the evolutionary theory. The following excerpts from an article by Dr. D. E. Hull in the May 28, 1960, scientific magazine *Nature* confirm this:

"These short lives for decomposition in the atmosphere or ocean clearly preclude the possibility of accumulating useful concentrations of organic compounds over eons of time. . . . the highest admissible value seems hopelessly low as starting material for the spontaneous generation of life. . . . The conclusion from these arguments presents the most serious obstacle, if indeed it is not fatal, to the theory of spontaneous generation. First, thermodynamic calculations predict vanishingly small concentrations of even the simplest organic compounds. Secondly, the reactions that are invoked to synthesize such compounds are seen to be much more effective in decomposing them."

In an experiment, when scientists subjected a carefully prepared gas mixture to an electrical discharge, a few of the simplest amino acids did accumulate, but only because they were quickly removed from the area. If these amino acids had been left exposed to the discharge, the situation could be compared to what would happen if one man is making bricks and another is hitting them with a hammer as soon as they are formed. It takes several hundred amino acids linked together in correct sequence in a chain to make an average protein, and it takes several hundred different proteins to make the simplest of organisms. So in our analogy of the man making bricks: he must cement together hundreds of bricks in a string, and accumulate hundreds of these strings of hundreds —and do all of this while the other man is wildly swinging his hammer! This is still grossly oversimplified, for it takes much more than a chain of amino acids to make a living organism.

MORE PITFALLS

Third pitfall: When amino acids are formed at random they come in two forms that are chemically the same but one is a "right-handed" molecule and the other a "left-handed" molecule. They are all mixed together, in about equal numbers of each kind. But in living organisms only "left-handed" amino acids are used. So returning to our illustration, the man making bricks makes two kinds, red and blue, and accumulates a pile containing millions of bricks, reds and blues mixed together. (Of course, we must assume that the hammer swinger has been eliminated, just as evolutionists assume that the destructive ultraviolet rays have been removed from the action.) Now a monstrous shovel gouges into the pile of millions of red and blue bricks and scoops out several hundred thousand bricks, *and, by chance, every one of them is a red brick!* In the same way, by chance, every one of the hundreds of thousands of amino acids, and sometimes millions, forming a one-celled living organism must be "left-handed," even though

taken from a mixture containing millions of others that are "right-handed."

Fourth pitfall: It is not enough to get the right kind in sufficient quantity. Each of the 20 different kinds of amino acids must link up in the protein chain in the correct sequence. If one amino acid is out of place, the organism may be crippled or killed. So the huge shovel must, not only scoop up all red bricks, but also drop each one of them into its proper place!

Fifth pitfall: The cell membrane is formed from membranous tissue. Evolutionists theorize that a film of water around a glob of proteins became a membrane, or that fatty globules enveloped proteins and became a cell membrane. The membrane is extremely complex, made up of sugar, protein and fatty molecules, and governs what substances can or cannot enter and leave the cell. Not all of its intricacies are understood. Bernal says, in *The Origin of Life:* "What we lack still, as mentioned earlier, is a plausible model for the origin of fats." (Page 145) Without the fats there could be no membrane; without the membrane, no living organisms.

IMPOSSIBILITIES NO DETERRENT

There are literally thousands of pitfalls for the evolutionary theory, en route from a primitive atmosphere, bombarded by lightning or radiation, to a one-celled living organism able to reproduce itself. Every competent scientist knows this. He knows that the many speculations advanced to evade these pitfalls are inadequate. Laws governing energy and matter declare impossible the spontaneous generation of life. Mathematical laws of probability doom its chances.

The simplest known self-reproducing organism (H39 strain of Mycoplasma) has 625 proteins averaging 400 amino acids each. However, some contend that, theoretically, one might get by with 124 such proteins. What are the chances of one of these proteins of 400 "left-handed" amino acids forming from a mixture of both "right-" and "left-handed" ones? One chance in 10^{120} (1 followed by 120 zeros).

However, for this nonexistent cell 124 proteins are needed. What are the chances of spontaneously forming that many, all from "left-handed" molecules? One chance in $10^{14,880}$. But these amino acids cannot be tied together just indiscriminately; they must be in the right sequence. To get these 124 proteins, averaging 400 "left-handed" amino acids each, with the acids in the correct sequence, the chances are 1 in $10^{79,360}$. If we wrote out this last number in full (1 followed by 79,360 zeros), it would take about 20 pages of this magazine to do it! Dr. Emil Borel, an authority on probabilities, says that if there is less than a 1 in 10^{50} chance for something to happen, it will never happen, no matter how much time is allowed. And that number could be written in less than two of these lines.

Prominent evolutionists know the problems. Some try to push them into outer space. British astronomer Sir Fred Hoyle said that 'existing terrestrial theories of the origin of life are highly unsatisfactory for sound chemical reasons,' and that 'life did not originate on earth itself but, rather, on comets.' Others grit their teeth and believe in spite of the lack of evidence. Nobel-Prize-winning biologist Dr. George Wald stated: "One only has to contemplate the magnitude of this task to concede that the spontaneous generation of a living organism is impossible. Yet here we are—as a result I believe, of spontaneous generation." On his own admission, he believes in the impossible. This kind of reasoning is comparable to that of an earlier biologist, D. H. Watson, who said that evolution was "universally accepted not because it can be proved by logically coherent evidence to be true, but because the only alternative, special creation, is clearly incredible."

ARE YOU GULLIBLE OR LOGICAL?

Having no other foundation, writers on evolution stoop to the tyranny of *authori-*

ty: 'All scientists of consequence believe it; no reputable biologist doubts it; informed persons don't question it; all intelligent persons accept it; only those with religious prejudice reject it; it has been proved many times over; no further proof is needed now.' So, on and on go the pressuring and the brainwashing.

You, however, should investigate it for yourself. Then, decide for yourself. Your life could depend on your decision. And consider this: You could jump off a 20-story building. Just before you hit the street a sudden, terrific gust of wind catches you and whisks you back up onto the top of the building. Is that likely? It is very unlikely. Do not count on it. But it is far more likely than that a living organism would form spontaneously! Do not count on that either!

The Bible says at Psalm 36:9: "With you [God] is the source of life." It is gullible to believe that life arose by chance. It is logical to believe that it was created by an intelligent God, as the following article shows.

"perceived by the things made"

If crude stone tools prove the existence of a designer, with far greater force do not living creatures of intricate design declare the existence of a wise and powerful Creator?

IF THERE is a rockslide in the mountains, we expect to see a jumble of boulders where it comes to rest at the bottom. We would not believe our eyes if all the boulders came to rest in the form of a beautiful rock house—for a house requires design and purposeful work. And there is no design without a designer, or purposeful work without an intelligent worker. This agrees with the Bible's statement at Hebrews 3:4: "Every house is constructed by someone."

A scientist digs in the rubble of the earth and finds a round, oblong stone that is smooth and has a groove circling the middle. He has no doubt but that it was shaped by a primitive man. He is convinced that it was attached to a stick by a leather thong and used as a hammer or a weapon. Similarly, he finds a flat stone with a sharp edge and is sure that it was made by a "Stone Age" man for use as a knife or a scraper. Or, a small piece of sharp flint shaped like an arrowhead convinces him that it was designed by man to use on the tip of an arrow or a spear. Such purposeful, designed things, the scientist concludes, are not products of chance.

The work reflects the worker. These tools and weapons are crude. Hence, their makers are considered primitive, for apes do not make weapons, and those of modern man are of ingenious design. So the scientist places the man who made the stone items in a stone age, and speculates that his appearance and brainpower must be somewhere between ape and modern man. Hence, he envisions a stoop-shouldered, low-browed, shuffling, hairy ape-man. This one's creations reflect more purpose and design than the stick the ape might pick up, but far less than the things modern man creates. The scientist sees the worker through his works, and judges his qualities from his works.

THEY ABANDON THEIR OWN LOGIC

However, when it comes to the teeming

plant and animal life found on the earth, most scientists reverse themselves on their view that *design* requires a designer. Of far greater complexity than crude stone tools are the simplest of organisms. Yes, even the single-celled protozoan cannot be considered simple. For within that single cell it has the capacity for performing all the body functions that are cared for by the many organs of a vertebrate. In itself it is a complex organism. Evolutionary scientists insist that such complex organisms had no designer but popped into existence by chance. In comparison to the protozoan's producing itself spontaneously, it would be easy for crude stone tools to be formed by a landslide or a rushing stream, or even simplicity itself for a rock house to be built by an avalanche of boulders!

When it comes to the most complexly designed creations in the universe, is it emotional prejudice that causes many intelligent persons to abandon their logical rule that purposeful work reflects the qualities of an intelligent worker? The Bible agrees with their rule, but they shy away from the Bible's application of it: "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) They would never accept chance as the maker of a crude stone tool, but they readily embrace it as the creator not only of protozoa but of all life on earth, man included! They balk at perceiving in these marvels of design the great Designer and Creator of the universe. Consider a few of such wonders. Ponder whether blind chance has the qualities that they reflect.

THE SOIL BENEATH YOUR FEET

On the third creative day Jehovah said: "Let the dry land appear." (Gen. 1:9) This opened the way for land plants. But for these plants to thrive there must be the marvel of the soil. The soil? Is that a marvel? Is it not one of the commonest things on the face of the earth? Truly, it is. However, the soil is a vital resource, and today there is concern as its erosion causes dust bowls and spreading deserts. It has often taken thousands of years for rocks to turn into fertile soil. They undergo weathering; fungi settle and germinate, sending out shoots that enmesh algae, and thus fungi and algae unite to become lichens. Lichens grow on the surface of rocks, disintegrate them, build up a thin soil that will support mosses, and the mosses, in turn, live and die and make more soil that eventually will support seedlings. Erosive forces move these soils into locations where they accumulate to depths that will support higher forms of plants, and ultimately trees.

As plants shed leaves and die, bacteria cause decay, and rich organic soils are created. Microbes break down these organic compounds into the simple nutrients needed by plants. Although we speak of solid ground, many soils are far from solid, for they are filled with air, water and multitudes of living things. An ounce of soil particles may have surfaces that would cover six acres (2.4 hectares). In temperate regions, a teaspoonful of soil may contain over 5,000,000,000 living organisms! Each one is a marvel of design and purpose and all together are needed before "the land itself will give its yield." (Ezek.

34:27) Is the soil something merely to be trampled on? Without it there would be no life on earth!

NAVIGATORS BEYOND HUMAN COMPREHENSION

To escape cold seasons and to find food, many birds migrate. Their navigational skills are awesome and still defy complete understanding. In the northern hemisphere when the cold starts, how do they know that warm weather and food lie south, and not east or west? And when returning in the spring, how do they know to fly north? Different hormones released in their blood tell them. Some birds migrate hundreds of miles, others thousands, to the same locality they left six months earlier. Terns and plovers make one-way trips of about 4,000 miles (6,400 kilometers). Young birds make the trip alone for the first time. As late as the Middle Ages naturalists refused to believe that birds migrated, but concocted fantastic explanations for appearances and disappearances in spring and fall. But as early as the seventh century before Christ, the Bible spoke of migrations: "Even the stork in the heavens —it well knows its appointed times; and the turtledove and the swift and the bulbul —they observe well the time of each one's coming in."—Jer. 8:7.

Even after migration was accepted for big birds, naturalists argued that small ones crossed oceans by hitching rides on the backs of larger ones. But the little blackpoll warbler, like many other midgets, does it on his own. He leaves Alaska in the fall, travels in stages to the New England coast, waits for the right weather, then takes off over the Atlantic and flies from three to five days to the northeastern coast of South America. Nonstop, for days, over 2,400 miles (3,800 kilometers) of ocean, by a bird weighing less than three quarters of an ounce! What awesome computer is in that tiny head that tells time, computes the movement of the sun, uses the stars, orients all of this to a map of his destination, and even enables the bird to arrive safely if skies are overcast? Can anyone, deep within himself, really believe that chance created this little blackpoll warbler?

Studies with homing pigeons have revealed another guidance system available to birds. Carried in a dark box by circuitous routes and released 600 miles (960 kilometers) from their home coop, they return home in one day. If the sun is shining, they use their guidance system. But they can also return on overcast days or during the night. They sense the earth's magnetic field and use it as a guidance system. A flock was released; half the birds had magnets tied to their backs, and this distorted the earth's magnetic field and made it useless. On a sunny day the entire flock returned safely. However, on an overcast day the ones without magnets returned but those with the attached magnets circled at random. For years it was thought impossible for any creature to sense earth's magnetic field; it is so weak. Now scientists know that it is sensed not only by birds but also by honeybees. Recent experiments seem to suggest that even some snails are sensitive to it.

Not only birds migrate but whales, seals, turtles, eels, crabs, fish, butterflies and caribou do also. However, with some sleepyheads, hibernation is preferred for escaping the rigors of winter. The small 13-lined ground squirrel illustrates some of the remarkable physiological changes that occur in hibernators. Body temperature drops to within a few degrees of the cold outside the den. The heart beats only once or twice a minute. When active, this squirrel may breathe a few hundred times a minute, but in hibernation it takes a slow breath once every five minutes. Yet its blood remains saturated with oxygen, and little-used muscles retain their tone. What

triggers its decision to sleep in fall and wake up in spring? Not just weather. A chemical released in the blood starts it hibernating, and another causes it to wake up. By the use of such chemicals scientists have made hibernators enter their long sleep in midsummer.

Concerning such wonders, Job admitted: "I talked, but I was not understanding things too wonderful for me, which I do not know."—Job 42:3.

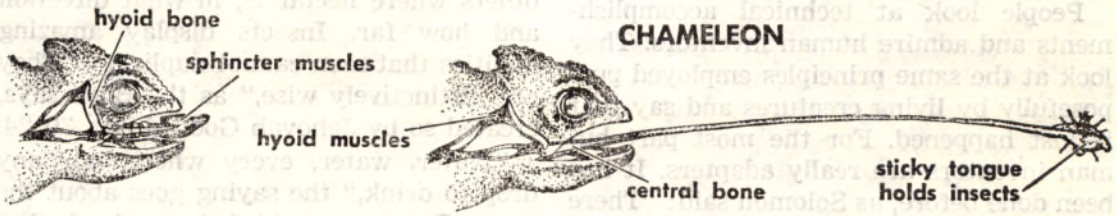
A MISCELLANY OF INGENIOUS DESIGNS

Remember the crude stone tool that could not just happen? Keep it in mind for comparison as you decide whether the following could just happen.

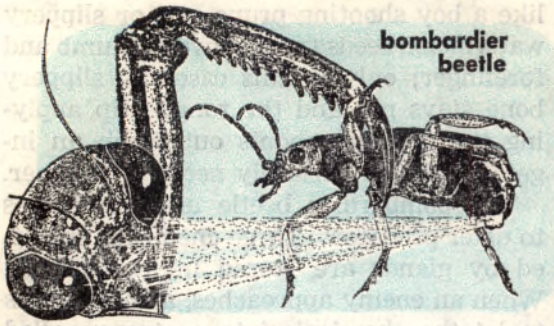
Most persons know that the chameleon can shoot its tongue out several inches to pick off insects. But do you know how this creature does it? Lying horizontally in the back of its mouth is a cone-shaped bone, the point forward. At its base the long, hollow tongue is anchored. Long muscles hold the tongue, pleated like accordion bellows, compressed around this bone. At the tip of the tongue are sphincter muscles that rest at the point of the bone. The chameleon's turret eyes, turning individually, spot an insect within range. The long muscles contract powerfully and hold the tongue over the bone like a compressed spring. Then the sphincter muscles surrounding the tip of the slippery bone suddenly tighten and, as they do, the long muscles compressing the "spring" relax, and the tongue shoots out. The insect is stuck on the gluey tip and the long, limp tongue is slowly drawn in. The action is like a boy shooting prune pits or slippery watermelon seeds from between thumb and forefinger; only in this case the slippery bone stays put and the tongue tip applying the pressure shoots out. Such an ingenious design certainly needs a designer.

The bombardier beetle uses explosives to deter predators. Three chemicals secreted by glands are stored in a reservoir. When an enemy approaches, a valve opens to let the chemicals into a strong-walled compartment. There an enzyme causes them to explode and a noxious mist shoots out of a turret that can aim in any direction. The beetle can explode repeatedly, dozens of times in minutes, with an audible "pop" each time. The enemy retreats, sometimes with seizures. This beetle has a laboratory, makes explosives, and uses them purposefully. It is an appalling little bomb factory!

The whirligig beetle has bifocal eyes to see above and below pond water, but that is the least of its marvels. It can fly, crawl, walk on water or submerge. When doing the latter, it takes along an air bubble that acts like a lung. It receives carbon dioxide wastes from the beetle and puts them into the water, and transfers oxygen from the water to the beetle. The creature can stay under water for hours. The beetle's underparts like water, but the upper parts, including the upper halves of the compound eyes, are kept greased by glands so that water is repelled. It darts rapidly about in all directions on the surface film of the water, setting up bow waves as it does so. When these ripples hit the bank, or objects on the surface film—maybe an-



CHAMELEON



other whirligig or an edible insect—they are reflected back. With two antennae held at the surface of the water, the beetle monitors their messages about its surroundings. It catches food and avoids collisions as hundreds of its fellows join it in darting erratically about, all making waves, but each one monitoring only its own. The system works day or night. The whirligig beetle does with water waves what bats do with sound waves—what a computer encased in that tiny head!

"NOTHING NEW UNDER THE SUN"

People look at technical accomplishments and admire human inventors. They look at the same principles employed purposefully by living creatures and say that it just happened. For the most part human inventors are really adapters. It has been done before, as Solomon said: "There is nothing new under the sun." (Eccl. 1:9) In the book *Bionics,* by Daniel Halacy, Jr., we read on page 19:

> "A commercial airplane was marketed with a wing curve patterned after that of a bird. A rubber company was experimenting with a streamlining artificial 'skin' for boats, copied after that of marine mammals. A new ground-speed indicator for planes was patterned on the eye of a beetle, and a better TV camera simulated the mechanism of the eye of the horseshoe crab."

Men pore over the creations of Jehovah God to discover their ingenious workings and adapt them to human inventions. It reminds us of the words of Job 12:7-9: "Ask, please, the domestic animals, and they will instruct you; also the winged creatures of the heavens, and they will tell you. Or show your concern to the earth, and it will instruct you; and the fishes of the sea will declare it to you. Who among all these does not well know that the hand of Jehovah itself has done this?" Inventors appreciate receiving credit for their clever adaptations, but so often they deny recognition to the One who "in wisdom" originated everything.—Ps. 104: 24.

The Bible speaks of the harvester ant at Proverbs 6:8: "It prepares its food even in the summer; it has gathered its food supplies even in the harvest." For centuries the existence of ants that harvested and stored grain was doubted, but in 1871 a British naturalist discovered their granaries. Ants also tend crops, have slaves and keep livestock. Termites air-condition their nests, as bees do their hives. By a dance in the dark, honeybees also show others where nectar is, in what direction and how far. Insects display amazing abilities that men cannot duplicate. "They are instinctively wise," as the Bible says, created so by Jehovah God.—Prov. 30:24.

"Water, water, every where, nor any drop to drink," the saying goes about the ocean. But some seabirds have glands that desalt seawater. Some fish and eels generate electricity, up to 400 volts. Many fish, worms and insects produce cold light, to the envy of scientists whose own lights lose energy to heat. Bats and dolphins use sonar, wasps make paper, ants build bridges, beavers make dams, certain snakes have thermometers sensitive to a change in temperature of a thousandth of a degree Celsius. Pond insects use snorkels and diving bells, octopuses use jet propulsion, spiders spin seven kinds of webs, make trapdoors, nets, lassos, and have babies that are balloonists traveling thousands of miles at great heights. A female moth

sprays a perfume that a male six miles (10 kilometers) away can detect if only one molecule of it touches his antennae. Salmon return to the stream of their birth, after spending years in the open sea, because each one remembers the characteristic smell of its home stream and can detect it as it swims in coastal waters.

Jehovah called Job's attention to His many creative wonders. What was Job's response? It was this: "I have come to know that you are able to do all things, and there is no idea that is unattainable for you."—Job 42:2.

It is impossible for such amazing design to exist without a designer. Evolutionists claim that 'natural selection and survival of the fittest' is the designer. But the problem is the arrival of the fittest, not the survival. You cannot select until there is a choice available. You cannot build a house before building materials arrive. As the Bible says: "Of course, every house is constructed by someone, *but he that constructed all things is God.*" The evidence is everywhere. Many who see an ape-man reflected by a crude stone tool cannot perceive God's qualities mirrored by all his amazing works. "They are inexcusable." (Rom. 1:20) But let *us* have 'eyes that see' Jehovah's existence as reflected in his creative works.—Matt. 13:14-16.

Navigation, sonar, jet propulsion, gardening, communication—who did it first?

THE HUMAN BRAIN
–three pounds of mystery

Who would argue that a building could build itself, or a television set manufacture itself, or a computer design and program itself? It takes brains to do these things. Yet some argue that brains just happened. Is the human brain simpler than buildings, television sets and computers?

DAVID gazed at the starry vault above and saw the message reflected there: "The heavens are declaring the glory of God; and of the work of his hands the expanse is telling." He was awed by their immensity and wondered why God would be mindful of insignificant man: "When I see your heavens, the works of your fingers, the moon and the stars that you have prepared, what is mortal man that you keep him in mind, and the son of earthling man that you take care of him?" Yet when David contemplated his own body he again marveled: "I shall laud you because in a fear-inspiring way I am wonderfully made. Your works are wonderful, as my soul is very well aware." —Pss. 19:1; 8:3, 4; 139:14.

What a contrast with men today! David was overwhelmed by God's majestic power when he saw some 2,000 stars. Today men discern some hundred billion stars in our Milky Way galaxy, estimate a hundred billion other galaxies in the universe (each with billions of stars), yet deny the existence of a Creator. David marveled at the intricate design of his own body and lauded Jehovah. Today men know far more about the body's wonders, but attribute it all to blind evolution. They are ever learning but seem unable to come to the knowledge of the truth declared by their discoveries, namely, that it takes a wise and powerful Creator to bring into existence such marvels of design.

The *Scientific American* magazine noted this design and said: "It almost seems as if the universe must in some sense have known that we were coming." *The magazine* attributed this preparation for us to "the many accidents of physics and astronomy that have worked together to our benefit." However, it was not the universe but Jehovah God who knew that we were coming, and through no accidents he prepared the earth and its immediate heavens for us. No doubt we feel as David did when we view the grandeur

of the earth and the vast expanse of the heavens—small and insignificant. But when Jehovah tells us that the earth was made for man, that he expects man to be its caretaker, and that he has equipped man with the ability to meet this responsibility, then we need not feel that our smallness disqualifies us from being worthy of his attention.—Gen. 1:14-18, 26-28; 2:15; Isa. 45:18.

THREE POUNDS OF MYSTERY

The greatest of God's gifts to equip us to care for the earth is a gray, mushy substance slightly larger than a grapefruit. Its preciousness is emphasized by its protected location. It is enveloped by three membranes and practically floats in a cushioning fluid, and all of this is encased in solid bone—the skull. It is what sets us apart from unreasoning animals and imparts to us the possibility of being in the image and likeness of God. We think, learn, feel, dream and remember with it—but we cannot understand it. In spite of all the intensive scientific research to fathom its workings, it remains a mystery. British physiologist Sir Charles Sherrington wrote: "The brain is a mystery; it has been and still will be. How does the brain produce thoughts? That is the central question and we have still no answer to it." The noted anthropologist Dr. Henry Fairfield Osborn wrote: "To my mind, the human brain is the most marvelous and mysterious object in the whole universe."

The nervous system is of awesome complexity. Its cells are called neurons and extend throughout the body. Some are only a fraction of an inch in length; others are several feet long. The longest connects the brain with the big toe. The electrochemical impulses carrying messages to and from the brain travel from 2 to 200 miles (3.2 to 320 kilometers) an hour. The larger nerves are composed of thousands of fibers, the optic nerve having some million fibers, each carrying a separate message. The autonomic nervous system directs, without one's conscious thought, the workings of organs, circulatory system, membranes and many muscles, such as those having to do with breathing, swallowing and the peristaltic movements in the intestines.

The brain itself has 10 billion neurons and 100 billion glia cells that form supportive structures and probably have nutritional functions. The neurons of the brain are active day and night, even during sleep, and use up energy at a high rate. In each cell the energy is derived from the oxidation of glucose. The brain is motionless, neither contracts nor grows, and is only 2 percent of the body's weight. And yet, to keep functioning, it must receive 20 percent of the blood pumped from the heart; it requires 25 percent of the blood's oxygen supply. If it is deprived of blood for 15 seconds, consciousness is lost; if for four minutes, irreversible brain damage may occur. Its electrical activity can be measured and recorded on paper as wavy lines, called brain waves, and this recording is called an electroencephalogram, or EEG.

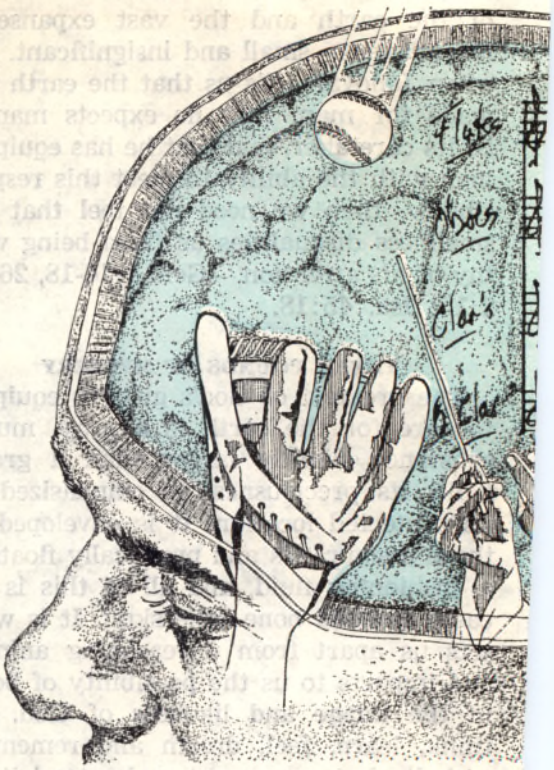
The higher thought processes of the brain are centered in the cerebrum, with its various lobes, and is divided into a right and a left side. The left brain controls the right side of the body, is generally the dominant one, and is the center of logic, verbal abilities and the data processing of the millions of bits of information pouring into the brain every second. The right brain controls the left side of the body, and it is devoted to the creative and intuitive activities of the mind. But if one side of the cerebrum fails at a young age, the other side takes over most of its functions. The brain is considered to be

underutilized; it has a potential for making geniuses out of plain, ordinary folk.

MESSAGES, THOUGHTS, EMOTIONS

"The hearing ear and the seeing eye—Jehovah himself has made even both of them." (Prov. 20:12) The ear receives sound waves and turns them into electrical triggers that touch off impulses in the auditory nerve. When they reach the hearing area of the brain, they are interpreted as sounds, and thoughts are created. Light enters the eye, and rods and cones turn this light into electrical triggers that set impulses moving along the optic nerve to the brain, where they become scenes that stimulate thinking. Similarly, Jehovah has provided sensory nerve receptors in the nose and mouth and skin that turn smells and tastes and touches and heat into electrical triggers. These send impulses to the brain, which, in turn, analyzes the messages thus received, and decides on the appropriate responses to make.

The neurons or nerve cells have on one end dendrites that spread out like the branches on a tree; the other end is a long thread called an axon. The dendrites pick up the impulses and send them along the axon, which passes them on to the dendrites of the next neuron. But axon and dendrites never touch. There is a tiny gap 1/500th as narrow as a human hair that must be bridged as the impulses race on from neuron to neuron until they reach the brain. These gaps, or synapses as they are called, are bridged usually by chemical messengers known as neurotransmitters. The messages do not travel to and from the brain like electricity in a wire. They are electrochemical in nature, travel in impulses that vary in frequencies depending on the intensity of the stimulus, and do not need to be pushed along by an outside source of power as electricity in a wire does. Each neuron is like a small battery, is its own power source, and the



intensity or power of the impulse is constant all the way to or from the brain. There are no losses along the way.

The data-processing abilities of the brain defy understanding. Imagine what must be going on in the brain of the conductor of a great symphony orchestra! There are conductors who have memorized the scores for 50 or 100 instruments. As the orchestra plays, and hundreds of notes a second with their various frequencies are pouring into the conductor's brain, he is comparing them with his memory patterns. If one of the many instruments plays a wrong note, he detects it! Or consider a concert pianist playing a difficult score with all fingers flying! What an amazing kinematic sense his brain must have, to order the exact spacial relationship of the fingers, so that they strike the right keys to match the notes in his memory!

The networks of interconnections among the 10 billion neurons in the brain reach such astronomical numbers as to be incomprehensible, meaningless. The latest research shows not only connections between axons and dendrites but also connections between axon and axon, and microcircuits between the dendrites themselves. The following quotations provide further information.

"Of the many billions of nerve cells in the cerebral cortex, by far the great majority are utilized in associative memory. These cells are linked together in chains by billions of association fibers. These cells and fibers may be reused indefinitely; each time they are used, impulses cross their synapses with greater ease. Memories stored in some cells can thus associate with those stored in others, and new impressions can be compared with memories of previous impressions. Thus logical conclusions can be reached and these can further result in creative thinking."—*Encyclopedia Americana,* Vol. 4, p. 423, 1977 edition.

"The brain weighs less than three pounds, yet a computer capable of handling a single brain's output would cover the entire earth. The brain sorts one hundred million bits of data from the eyes, ears, nose and other sensory outposts each second, yet uses far less electricity than an average light bulb. . . . Since each neuron contains some two hundred thousand synapses along its numerous leaf points, and there are billions of neurons, the synapses provide the brain with an almost limitless flexibility."—*Mainliner Magazine,* March 1978, pp. 43, 44.

A thought, if strong enough, produces a feeling. The feeling, if strong enough, causes an action. You think of Jehovah's creations, you feel gratitude, you serve him. You think of a loved one in danger, you feel fear, you take action to save him. Evil thoughts work the same way. When someone looks at a woman with adulterous thoughts, desire grows; adultery may be committed. Both Jesus and the disciple James confirm this: "Each one is tried by being drawn out and enticed by his own desire. Then the desire, when it has become fertile, gives birth to sin." (Jas. 1:14, 15; Matt. 5:27, 28) Sensory nerves to the brain produce feelings. For example, there are pleasure centers in the brain that, when stimulated with electrodes, produce pleasure. When stimulated by electrodes other emotional centers produce rage, fear or peace. Cats thus stimulated can be made to cringe in fear at the sight of a mouse. Rats with electrodes in one spot feel rage; in another spot, feel pleasure. Pedals have been wired up so that rats, on pressing them, stimulate their pleasure centers. They pressed these pedals up to 5,000 times an hour, ignoring food and sex and sleep until they dropped from sheer exhaustion!

MANY MYSTERIES REMAIN

Much has been learned about the brain, but far more remains a mystery. By the use of electrodes, areas of the cerebral cortex have been mapped out, showing what functions are performed and where. Some false beliefs have been removed, such as phrenology—the study of "character traits" by feeling bumps on the head. The shape of the skull is not determined by the shape of the cerebrum, nor is it possible to assign "character traits" to specific areas of the brain.

However, it is not known how the tips of nerves at sensory receptors turn the stimuli they receive into electrical triggers. It is not known how memory works.

It is not known how thought arises from electrochemical impulses, or how decisions are reached, or how responses sent out on the motor nerves are initiated. Even the transmissions of impulses along the neurons are not completely understood. Beyond our understanding is how these electrical impulses cause dreams, the writing of poems, the composing of music—or, for that matter, cause consciousness itself to exist!

Have you considered the magnitude of brainwork required for acts that we take for granted—walking, talking, eating, swimming, riding a bicycle, or catching a baseball? A beginner weaves around under a high fly ball, and it usually lands several feet from him. In contrast, the professional takes off at the crack of the bat. The sound of the bat on the ball tells him how hard it has been hit, his eye notes its trajectory and speed, and his brain computes the general area where it will land. He races in that direction, but, as he runs, his computer brain is making continuous calculations to pinpoint the spot where he must be to catch it. Is there a wind? How strong is it? Is it pushing the ball to the right or the left? Is it slowing the ball down, or carrying it farther? Must he change direction, run faster or slower? Is the ground uneven, is there a hole to be avoided, is another fielder coming up to catch it, and should he let him have it or wave him off?

All these things he must note, yet *never take his eye off the ball!* To do so would "unplug his computer," and he would miss the catch. There is no time consciously to make these many calculations and decisions. The player's mind and muscles, trained by experiences recorded in his memory, perform automatically because his brain has been programmed by practice to do it all. How he came to have the ability to catch a baseball is in itself a mystery!

Can the intelligence of the brain be attributed to chance, as so many scientists now do? They are very inconsistent when they consider chance. They talk of beaming radio signals to stars to establish communication with a distant civilization on a hypothetical planet. How would those distant receivers recognize the signals as coming from an intelligent source and not being just chance? They might carry simple arithmetic equations, such as two times three equals six. This can be done easily. Or, the signals could be far more complicated, but having an order that would convey information, perhaps even make a picture of a man. Certainly if one of our big radio telescopes probing deep space picked up such a pictorial message scientists would never doubt that it originated from an intelligent source. Yet this is so simple compared to the brain, and far more simple than the single cell in the womb that can make not only a brain but a complete human creature! Is it consistent to say that the brain can just happen, that the cell in the womb can just happen, but that patterned radio signals prove beyond doubt that an intelligent source is behind them? Such a question needs no answer.

While conversing on the nature of God, the universe and man, Albert Einstein suddenly looked up at the sky and said: "We know nothing about it at all. Our knowledge is but the knowledge of schoolchildren." He was asked: "Do you think that we shall ever probe the secret?" He replied: "Possibly we shall know a little more than we do now. But the real nature of things—that we shall never know, never."

Both Einstein and David were awed by the mysteries of the night sky and man. And we continue to be awed by that three pounds of mystery encased inside our skulls—the human brain.

INSIGHT ON THE NEWS

Since WW II —150 Wars!

● According to a recent report in "Esquire" magazine, in the 33 years since the end of World War II, there have been about 150 additional wars, large and small, that have taken an estimated 25 million lives. Moreover, researchers from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute say that 'on any given day, there is an average of 12 wars going on somewhere in the world.'

"Esquire" also notes that "as one Hungarian professor computed it, 'there were no more than twenty-six days [since WW II] . . . in which there was no war somewhere in the world.' " The article is accompanied by a list, year by year, of the 150 wars and their death tolls. "We can count on war —every day, every year," it concludes. "War is here to stay."

Certainly this record of war and bloodshed fits the apostle John's prophetic vision of a fiery-colored horse and its rider who would "take peace away from the earth so that they should slaughter one another." This unprecedented period began with the first world war in 1914, and, as noted above, is continuing to the present time. It is one of the major evidences that Jesus said would mark the "conclusion of the system of things." —Rev. 6:4; Matt. 24:3-14.

Loyalty —from Mouth or Heart?

● "Loyalty to the Nation: Not in Mere Words," is the headline of a column appearing in the Lagos, Nigeria, "Daily Times." In it the writer, Abel Emiko, comments on the case of two students expelled from school for failure, on religious grounds, to recite the pledge of loyalty to the nation. Emiko notes that "the rationale behind the requirement of the loyalty pledge is to inculcate in the youths of this country, early enough the instinct of loyalty to the fatherland."

However, he asks: "Is there any assurance that the mere recitation of words will actually inculcate a sense of loyalty in the youths? . . . Words uttered under coercion are proofs of loyalty to nothing. Love of country and loyalty to the nation must spring from willing hearts and free minds . . .

"We have no evidence before us now to prove that the Commissioner for Education who ordered the latest expulsion of the two students . . . is more loyal to this nation than the students expelled.

"Any spark of love for this country, which may be generated in a child or his associates by forcing him to make what is to him an empty gesture and recite words barren of meaning wrung from him, contrary to his religious beliefs, is overshadowed by the desirability of preserving freedom of conscience to the full."

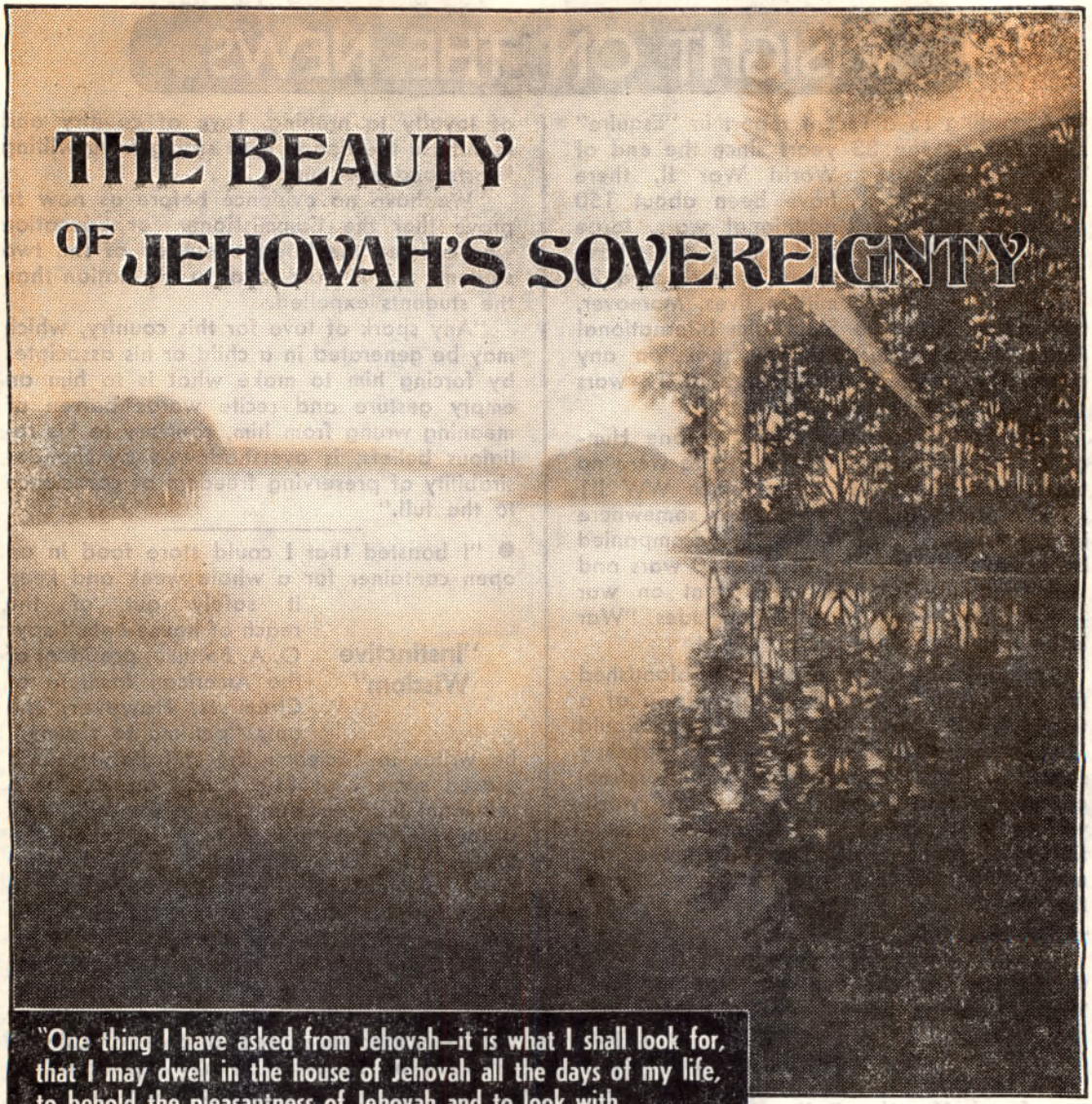
"Instinctive Wisdom"

● "I boasted that I could store food in an open container for a whole week and keep it safely out of the reach of house ants," says O. A. Battista, president of the American Institute of Chemists. However, the ants "put me to shame," he writes in "Science Digest." Battista had placed some chocolate candy on top of a tall stool that was standing in the middle of a large wooden tub of water. Around the tub, he painted a wide band of slow-drying glue. But when he returned six days later to check his "ant trap," "ants were swarming over the bait!" How did they do it?

Well, the ants had made a bridge across the glue with their own (sacrificed) bodies. After reaching the water, he relates, "they had assembled tiny shreds of grass and slivers of wood no longer than a thirty-second of an inch [.8 millimeter], and had glued them together with saliva until their bridge" reached the stool's leg. Not only that, but some ants were walking across the ceiling and, "when they came directly over the bait, they let themselves fall squarely into the middle of their merry brethren."

After citing several other amazing feats, Battista marvels at the ants' "instinctive wisdom." This is also noted in the Bible, where ants are listed among creatures that are "instinctively wise." Surely this instinctive wisdom reflects the work of an all-wise Creator, rather than the vagaries of time and chance.—Prov. 30:3, 24, 25.

THE BEAUTY OF JEHOVAH'S SOVEREIGNTY



"One thing I have asked from Jehovah—it is what I shall look for, that I may dwell in the house of Jehovah all the days of my life, to behold the pleasantness of Jehovah and to look with appreciation upon his temple."—Ps. 27:4.

WHAT does the term "sovereignty" mean to you? You doubtless think of supremacy, particularly the supremacy of a ruler—the power of government. Rulership or domination can be a harsh or a rigid one, strictly meting out full justice according to the law without mercy; or it can be one that deals with partiality toward some and that oppresses others. Few man-made rulerships act out of real love for their subjects.

[1] What comes to mind when the word "sovereignty" is mentioned?

[2] The Bible speaks of God as "Sovereign" and "Sovereign Lord." (Acts 4:24, *Rotherham; Revised Standard Version; The New English Bible; New World Translation*) By what right does he have sovereign-

[2] By what right does Jehovah exercise sovereignty?

ty? Revelation 4:11 answers: "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."

[3] What kind of sovereignty does Jehovah exercise? Is it different from other forms of rule? King David, who exercised rulership over the kingdom of ancient Israel under Jehovah's sovereignty, said: "Yours, O Jehovah, are the greatness and the mightiness and the beauty and the excellency and the dignity; for everything in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O Jehovah, the One also lifting yourself up as head over all."—1 Chron. 29:11.

DOMINANT QUALITIES OF JEHOVAH'S SOVEREIGNTY

[4] Accordingly, Jehovah's sovereignty has beauty, excellence and dignity. The psalmist writes: "Righteousness and judgment [or, "justice"] are the established place of your throne; loving-kindness and trueness themselves come in before your face." (Ps. 89:14) When Moses asked to see God's glory, he was told that he would *not* be able to see God's face, because no man can look on God and live. (Ex. 33:18, 20) Nevertheless, God did come down in a cloud on Mount Sinai and declare to Moses: "Jehovah, Jehovah, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abundant in loving-kindness and truth, preserving loving-kindness for thousands, pardoning error and transgression and sin, but by no means will he give exemption from punishment, bringing punishment for the error of fathers upon sons and upon grandsons, upon the third generation and upon the fourth generation."—Ex. 34:6, 7.

[5] Note that the first things Jehovah brought to Moses' attention were mercy, graciousness, slowness to anger, *loving*-kindness, truth and forgiveness. He says in another place: "I am Jehovah, the One exercising loving-kindness, justice and righteousness in the earth; for in these things I do take delight." (Jer. 9:24) However, when anyone sins against God, even though forgiven for his sin, he cannot escape the consequences of the chain of events that he has set in motion. For example, one committing adultery affects others close to him. His whole family is bound to feel the effects. And those who turn away from God or who reject his sovereignty will suffer punishment. When rebellious men began to build the tower of Babel, God thwarted their scheme by confusing their language. They then scattered over the earth and influenced their offspring, who became worshipers of idols and practicers of very bad things. (Gen. 11:1-9) But God does not take delight in the punishment or suffering of those who do wrong. He says: "I do not take any delight in the death of someone dying, . . . So cause a turning back and keep living, O you people."—Ezek. 18:32.

[6] It is evident from the foregoing Scripture passages that among the dominant features of God's sovereignty are loving-kindness, mercy, righteousness and impartiality in administering justice. Therefore, when we view Jehovah's sovereignty, we are compelled to look at it differently from that of human rulerships. Would it not be fine if you could also view the government that you live under as radiating from its capital pure love and mercy toward all?

THE "GOOD NEWS" RELATED TO GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY

[7] The good news of the Kingdom is directly connected with God's sovereignty.

3. How did King David describe Jehovah's sovereignty?
4. How do Psalm 89:14 and Exodus 34:6, 7 give us a picture of Jehovah's sovereignty?
5. (a) What qualities about himself did Jehovah bring first to Moses' attention, at Mount Sinai? (b) Even though Jehovah is merciful, why does one doing wrong suffer punishment, and how does Jehovah feel about administering punishment?
6. What, then, are some dominant features of Jehovah's sovereignty, and how does it compare with human rulerships?
7. How is the "good news" directly connected with God's sovereignty, and what, therefore, does the proclaiming of the "good news" promote?

The apostle Paul wrote to Christians in Rome: "Thanks to God that you were the slaves of sin but you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were handed over." Those who hear with a good heart and obey are not here told that the "good news" was handed over to them, but that *they* were *'handed over* to that form of teaching,' the gospel or good news of the Kingdom. They are now willing subjects and supporters of God's sovereignty. When they, in turn, proclaim the "good news," the receivers are handed over to such teaching. What does this promote in the earth? Righteousness, loving-kindness and mercy. For, instead of their former uncleanness and lawlessness, these 'now present their body members as slaves to righteousness.'—Rom. 6:17-19.

WHY SUBMIT TO JEHOVAH'S SOVEREIGNTY

[8] What is the motivation for submission to God's sovereignty? It is love for God because of his divine qualities, and also love for what is right and good for all creation. The one who understands what Jehovah's sovereignty means prefers it above all other sovereignties. In fact, those supporting God's rulership prefer it to having absolute independence, if that were possible. Why? Because they know that they will be much happier under God's sovereignty than they would be if they could do altogether as they pleased. They realize that the wisdom, love, knowledge and power of God are so far superior to theirs that there is no comparison. Humans cannot keep themselves living everlastingly, neither can they bring about peace, righteousness and justice throughout the earth. "It does not belong to man who is walking even to direct his step," said Jeremiah, a faithful supporter of Jehovah's sovereignty.—Jer. 10:23.

8. What is the motivation for submission to God's sovereignty?

[9] Jehovah's attitude toward those not acknowledging his sovereignty is one of great kindness. His prophet said: "Let the wicked man leave his way, and the harmful man his thoughts; and let him return to Jehovah, who will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will forgive in a large way. 'For the thoughts of you people are not my thoughts, nor are my ways your ways,' is the utterance of Jehovah. 'For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.' "—Isa. 55:7-9.

SERVING PROPERLY UNDER GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY

[10] In order to serve properly in behalf of God's sovereignty, or under it, a person must come to know Jehovah God and his Son Jesus, the King of the kingdom of God. "This means everlasting life, their taking in knowledge of you, the only true God, and of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ." (John 17:3) To know God is to establish a close relationship with him, to become an intimate of him and his Son, who said: "No one fully knows the Son but the Father, neither does anyone fully know the Father but the Son and anyone to whom the Son is willing to reveal him." (Matt. 11:27) One who knows God knows his wonderful qualities, and by the help of God's spirit develops these qualities, so that he comes to be more and more a true reflector of the image of God. (2 Cor. 3:18) If an individual does not develop the fruits of the spirit, he has not come to know God. For example, the apostle John says: "He that does not love has not come to know God, because God is love."—1 John 4:8.

[11] How does the person act who recog-

9. How does God appeal to those who do not acknowledge his sovereignty?
10. What is an essential requirement for serving properly under God's sovereignty?
11. How does a person act who recognizes God's sovereignty? Give examples.

nizes God's sovereignty? His dominant qualities will be love, mercy, sympathy, kindness and the doing of good to his fellowman. If he is an elder in a congregation or is supervising any activity of his Christian brothers, or of others, he will not be commanding or demanding. The apostle Paul, who had more authority from God than any man on earth today, said to the congregation in Rome: "I *entreat* you by the compassions of God, brothers." (Rom. 12:1) When he was in Rome, Paul found a man named Onesimus, who believed the "good news." Discovering that Onesimus was a slave who had run away from his master Philemon, a Christian in the city of Colossae in Asia Minor, Paul counseled Onesimus to return to his master. Then he wrote to Philemon, urging him to forgive Onesimus, accepting him now as a brother. Note Paul's kind appeal: "Though I have great freeness of speech in connection with Christ to order you to do what is proper, I am exhorting you rather *on the basis of love.*" *"Trusting in your compliance,* I am writing you, knowing you will even do more than the things I say."—Philemon 8, 9, 21.

12 Certainly Philemon would not feel that he was acting under compulsion, and so he would be happy to comply. He would feel genuinely ready to respond to Paul's appeal and also would be more obligated to do so, because Paul put such trust in him. Likewise, the elder or overseer who encourages others and trusts brothers when they are given a job will get much more accomplished than the overseer who dictates, or who feels that no one can do a job as well as he does. Trusting in a brother and showing confidence in him contribute to greater exercise of initiative as well as effort on the part of the brother. Such an overseer is properly representing God's sovereignty and is following Christ's pattern. Christ treated Paul in this way. Paul appreciatively said: "I am grateful to Christ Jesus our Lord, who imparted power to me, because *he considered me faithful* by assigning me to a ministry." (1 Tim. 1:12) Paul, in turn, showed that God, Christ and he himself had confidence in Timothy's faithfulness and ability in carrying out his service assignment when he wrote: "O Timothy, guard what is laid up *in trust* with you." —1 Tim. 6:20.

13 A good Christian will represent God's sovereignty properly when he studies with others, by making effort to teach these people *all that he can,* as Jesus directed: "Make disciples . . . teaching them to observe *all the things I have commanded* you." (Matt. 28:19, 20) If he is an overseer, he will not be jealous about his knowledge or be afraid that someone else might eclipse him by knowing more or by developing greater ability. The apostle charged Timothy: "The things you heard from me with the support of many witnesses, *these things commit to faithful men,* who, in turn, will be adequately qualified to teach others."—2 Tim. 2:2.

14 The overseer should teach *all he knows* to others around him so that they will be able to do the job. Not only does he help them thereby, but also they become capable of handling matters if he is absent. In this way the overseer shows himself to be really concerned about the welfare and progress of the congregation, not thinking just of himself. For what if he should be sick, or die, or should move away? Paul said to the overseers in Ephesus: "I did not hold back from telling you any of the things that were profitable nor from teaching you publicly and from house to house." He met these men while doing public witnessing. He did not teach them

12. (a) Why was Paul's trustful expression to Philemon a proper attitude for overseers to have? (b) How did Christ manifest his trust in Paul and Timothy?

13, 14. (a) How will a Christian properly represent God's sovereignty in studying with interested ones? (b) What important duty of overseers is shown by the apostle Paul's words to Timothy and to the elders of the city of Ephesus?

merely to the point of baptism. Rather, he "thoroughly bore witness" to them until they had a real understanding of God's purpose, his sovereignty exercised through Christ and their relationship to it. He also said to them: "I have not held back from telling you *all the counsel of God.*"—Acts 20:20, 21, 27.

JEHOVAH'S SOVEREIGNTY PROMOTES JOY AND PRAISE

15 If each Christian keeps in mind the fine qualities of God's sovereignty, he will promote joy. Of Jehovah, it is said: "Dignity and splendor are before him, strength and joy are at his place." (1 Chron. 16:27) Without joy, which is a fruit of God's spirit, there is discouragement, apathy, even disorder. The apostle asked the Christians in Galatia who had become spiritually weak, "Where, then, is that happiness you had [when first you believed the good news]?" (Gal. 4:15) An atmosphere of joy is the atmosphere that God's sovereignty prompts among all those who love God and who serve him wholeheartedly. The psalmist sang: "Happy are the people knowing the joyful shouting. O Jehovah, in the light of your face they keep walking. In your name they are joyful all day long and in your righteousness they are exalted. For you are the beauty of their strength."—Ps. 89:15-17.

15. What atmosphere must exist where God's sovereignty is properly recognized?

16 From the starry heavens, which "are declaring the glory of God," to the earth itself, it is evident that God's creatorship is grand and beautiful. (Ps. 19:1) There is peace, order and loveliness in the splendor of the heavenly bodies, and the earth, with life upon it, is matchless in beauty, except where man has done damage. Imagine what a fine place the earth will be when mankind is brought again into harmony with God's sovereignty! Not just the material beauties of the heavens and the earth, but particularly the more essential and more wonderful qualities of the Most High, when 'the knowledge of Jehovah fills the earth as the waters cover the sea,' will certainly cause all then living to sing of the beauty of God's sovereignty.—Isa. 11:9; Ps. 150.

17 Also, in anticipation of that most joyful time, let us joyfully expend ourselves now, during the *dying days* of this "wicked system of things," in making known to all who will hear the "glorious good news of the happy God." For Jehovah alone is to be praised as "Sovereign Lord, . . . the One who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all the things in them."—Acts 4:24; Gal. 1:4; 1 Tim. 1:11.

16. What will Jehovah's sovereignty bring to the earth?
17. How should the "good news" motivate us today?

Can You Endure Trials Successfully?

"Consider it all joy, my brothers, when you meet with various trials, knowing as you do that this tested quality of your faith works out endurance."
—Jas. 1:2, 3.

We have heard people say, "I wonder if I could have endured," when they read about the trials suffered by Christians of the first century, as well as those in Nazi countries during World War II and, in more recent times, in lands all around the earth. Even in the day-to-day life of all Christians, however, problems occur that are not only hard to bear but often very difficult to handle. Can one who expresses faith in Christ and who is a servant of God endure? Can he face trials and problems with real assurance of success?

1. When we read of the trials that Christians have suffered and are suffering, what questions may arise in our minds?

[2] It was to persons undergoing trials and facing such questions that James, the half brother of Jesus Christ, wrote. His words are of great comfort, for he wrote when Christians, not only were undergoing strong persecution, but were approaching a time when affairs of the Roman nation would be more turbulent, as far as Christians were concerned.

[3] In only a short time after James wrote, Christians in Rome would be falsely blamed by Roman Emperor Nero for the great fire of 64 C.E. that would destroy much of that city. Of course, this would lead to the persecution of Christians throughout the empire. Then, a little later, in the year 70, Jerusalem and the land of Judah would be devastated by the Roman armies. Christians in Jerusalem, obeying Christ's warning, would flee across the Jordan prior to the city's destruction, saving their lives, but losing their possessions and facing many hardships.

[4] So James' letter was timely. But whether under heavy persecution or not, Christians have need of endurance. For they must live in a world that flouts Christian principles and, in addition, they have to deal with sickness and many other problems. The 73rd psalm speaks of difficulties encountered by servants of God that non-Christians do not undergo. Why? Because non-Christians usually do not care. They do not have the hope and the faith that Christians have in God, and they are not motivated to please him. James' letter helps Christians to avoid falling into the attitude that Asaph, the writer of that psalm, temporarily had. Asaph said:

> "As for me, my feet had almost turned aside, my steps had nearly been made to slip. For I became envious of the boasters, when I would see the very peace of wicked people. They are not even in the trouble of mortal man, and they are not plagued the same as other men. And they have said: 'How has God come to know? And does there exist knowledge in the Most High?' Look! These are the wicked, who are at ease indefinitely. They have increased their means of maintenance. Surely it is in vain that I have cleansed my heart and that I wash my hands in innocence."—Ps. 73:2, 3, 5, 11-13.

[5] James begins his letter in a modest manner, not by alluding to his family relationship to Jesus Christ, but by designating himself as *"a slave of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ."* He addresses *"the twelve tribes that are scattered about"* with *"Greetings!"* (Jas. 1:1) These are not the twelve tribes of natural Israel. The content of the letter reveals this. James would not have written as he did if his readers were merely fleshly Jews. Moreover, this manner of address was common among Christians, particularly those of actual Jewish descent, as James was. Paul calls the Christian congregation "the Israel of God." (Gal. 6:16; compare Romans 2:28, 29.) By that time Christians were scattered into every part of the Roman Empire. The apostle Paul's exertions in the western part of the civilized world and Peter's efforts in the area of Babylon to the east contributed much toward the increase enjoyed by Christians. Peter addressed his first letter to "the temporary residents scattered about" in parts of Asia Minor.—1 Pet. 1:1.

THE PURPOSE OF TRIALS AND ENDURANCE

[6] James continues: *"Consider it all joy, my brothers, when you meet with various trials."* (Jas. 1:2) Jesus had said in his Sermon on the Mount: "Happy are you when people reproach you and persecute you and lyingly say every sort of wicked thing against you for my sake. Rejoice and leap for joy, since your reward is great in the heavens." (Matt. 5:11, 12) Not only

2, 3. Why was James' letter timely and appropriate?
4. How does James' letter help Christians to avoid falling into the wrong attitude expressed in Psalm 73:2, 3, 5, 11-13?

5. James addresses his letter to "the twelve tribes that are scattered about." To whom was he writing?
6. Why should the Christian "consider it all joy" when encountering trials, and of what value are trials to him?

is there a heavenly reward, but there is an advantage *now,* as James adds: *"knowing as you do that this tested quality of your faith works out endurance."* (Jas. 1:3) Faith that stands up through tests is better—it is proven faith. This kind of faith works for stronger endurance for the next test.

[7] The Christian should not try to evade trials or feel that he has endured long enough. James says: *"But let endurance have its work complete, that you may be complete and sound in all respects, not lacking in anything."* (Jas. 1:4) The work that endurance is performing in the Christian should not be hindered by complaining, murmuring or rebellion. If he does endure faithfully, not complaining against God or his own brothers, and not turning away in fear or weariness from telling others about God's purposes through His kingdom, he will come to be complete and sound in all respects. Such endurance will help him to make over his personality. He will become a person who is able to help others, with reasonableness, sympathy and mercy. Without having undergone trials with endurance, one cannot qualify in this way. He cannot be a complete Christian.—Compare Matthew 5:48; 24:13.

WISDOM TO FACE TRIALS

[8] How assured can we be that we will have the strength and wisdom to face a certain problem—any trial—and endure? James says: *"So, if any one of you is lacking in wisdom, let him keep on asking God, for he gives generously to all and without reproaching; and it will be given him."* (Jas. 1:5) Therefore, we can be *sure* that if we pray for the wisdom to handle any problem or trial that we face, *we will be given it.*

7. Why should the Christian not try to evade trials or become weary under trials?
8, 9. How assured can we be that we will have the wisdom to face a certain trial and endure it?

[9] This does not mean that the problem will always go away or that it will be solved immediately, but that we will be able to take the course that will do good, spiritually, for us and for others concerned. We will endure the trial to the end and come through it better Christians than we were when we went into it. And others who observe us, and who have a right heart, will be helped.

[10] There are many things over which we may pray that may not be answered in the way that we desire. We will get an answer, possibly different from what we expect; it will be what God knows is best for us. In fact, some things that we ask for might not be for our benefit if they are granted as we ask or desire. However, *wisdom* to face a trial is absolutely promised by God. We are sure to get the necessary wisdom if we ask properly. The wisdom will be given in one or more of three ways: (1) Certain Scripture passages that provide the answer that we need will be called to our attention, either through our own study or through our brothers. (2) Circumstances and events as maneuvered through God's providence will enable us to see clearly what to do. Certain obstacles may be removed from our path. (3) God's holy angels may direct our spirit in the right course.

[11] *God gives generously,* that is, with a simple, wholehearted spirit, more than one asks for. (Eph. 3:20; 1 John 5:14, 15) He does this *without reproaching.* Whereas, if you ask a human, he may reply, 'That is a stupid request.' He may even look down on you with contempt. Or, after several requests, he may get impatient and cut you off sharply with a denial. But not so with God. He never says, 'What a foolish request!' Nor does he make one

10. (a) What kind of answer do we often get when we pray for certain things? (b) In the case of prayer for wisdom to face a trial, in what ways may we get the answer?
11. How does God 'give generously, without reproaching'?

feel inferior. He does not reproach you for your past conduct, as humans are prone to do. He deeply appreciates the person who has the faith and enough concern to pray repeatedly for a certain thing.—Compare Luke 18:1-14.

12 *"It will be given him."* Wisdom, which we acquire under the direction of God's spirit, is one of the things that God is very desirous of giving to his servants. He is happy when we ask for wisdom. It always works for our good and helps us when we pray to understand God's Word as it applies to our situation. (1 Cor. 2:9, 10) Jesus said: "If you, although being wicked, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more so will the Father in heaven give holy spirit to those asking him!"—Luke 11:13; Mark 11:24.

THE RUINOUS EFFECT OF DOUBT

13 *"But let him keep on asking in faith, not doubting at all, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven by the wind and blown about."* (Jas. 1:6) The petitioner must have full faith in God and his Son, and in their readiness to provide what is needed, and must have no thought other than the interests of the Christian faith and the purposes of God. He must not be praying for one thing and "halfway" wanting something else. His prayer must be from the bottom of his heart. Otherwise he is like a sea wave, which goes back and forth and up and down. Every wind—every outside influence, every fear—makes a change in him.

14 About such a person, James concludes: *"In fact, let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from Jehovah; he is an indecisive* [Greek, *"two-souled"*] *man, unsteady in all his ways."* (Jas. 1:7, 8) He is double-minded, trying to go in two directions at once, torn between something of the world and the things of God; or influenced by things other than God's Word, being of one opinion and then another. (Compare Matthew 6:24.) He may even hesitate about taking the matter to God. He has enthusiasm at one moment and discouragement at the next. He is that way not only in the matter of prayer but also as to other things in connection with faith. He is not a steady, reliable witness of Jehovah. To the contrary, the Scriptures say: "Without faith it is impossible to please [God] well, for he that approaches God must believe that he is and that he becomes the rewarder of those earnestly seeking him." —Heb. 11:6.

12. Of what can we be assured by James' words, "it will be given him"?
13. With what attitude must one pray for wisdom, and why?
14. What does James say further about the man who doubts?

COUNSEL TO RICH AND POOR

15 Continuing to think of trials, James next speaks of one that is common: *"Let the lowly brother exult over his exaltation."* (Jas. 1:9) Most of the Christians were, and are today, people of humble birth. (1 Cor. 1:26) Being of low estate, their economic condition may make it harder for them when persecution comes. Also, some who had been rich were made poor by persecution. Nonetheless, they could rejoice because, in the Christian congregation, their lowly state is no disadvantage. They are children of God, 'fellow citizens of the holy ones and members of the household of God.' (Eph. 2:19) The poor man can forget his earthly poverty because of the surpassing riches of his relationship with God and Christ, and the love of his Christian brothers. And he can be happy that he is able to help others by imparting the "good news" to them. Over these things he can boast.

16 As to the rich man who has become

15. How can the lowly brother exult "over his exaltation"?
16. How can the rich brother exult "over his humiliation"?

a Christian, he can exult *"over his humiliation."* Now it is not his wealth that really counts. Rather than high-mindedness, which riches often produce, the spirit of Christ is one of lowliness of mind and humility. (Phil. 2:3-8) He can rejoice over the understanding that he can now, through God's undeserved kindness, discern "the deceptive power of riches" and that riches are not the thing in which to put trust. (Matt. 13:22) Also, he realizes that spending time and effort to amass worldly riches is a waste and tends to destroy the spirituality and often the health of a person. James gives reasons why: *"Because like a flower of the vegetation he will pass away."* He knows that his riches do not extend his life-span. *"For the sun rises with its burning heat and withers the vegetation, and its flower drops off and the beauty of its outward appearance perishes. So, too, the rich man will fade away in his ways of life."*—Jas. 1: 10, 11.

17 The vegetation is withered by the sun and its beauty fades away. Just so, when the rich man gets old and dies, the splendor of the wealth that surrounds and 'beautifies' him is gone. Of course, the poor man also dies, but he never presented the beautiful blossoming appearance of the rich man. But this "beauty" of the rich man is taken by his heirs and others, and often the "empire" that he was building is dissolved or the goals that he was pursuing are discarded. While *"in his ways of life,"* perhaps on a business trip or while he is carrying out a plan to get more wealth, he dies. In many cases the rich man's death happens before he has an opportunity to enjoy his riches. On the other hand, the rich man who becomes a Christian can even enjoy his material riches because of his using them to further the interests of God's kingdom. He usually can arrange to devote more time to proclaiming the "good news" and can contribute to the maintaining of meeting places and to the promotion of the Kingdom work as it is done world wide.

17. Explain James' description of what becomes of the rich man and his "beauty."

THE REWARD OF ENDURANCE

18 Whereas James, in verses 3 and 4, points out the immediate benefits of endurance, in verse 12 he emphasizes its final outcome or result—the reward for steadfastness in undergoing trials. He writes: *"Happy is the man that keeps on enduring trial, because on becoming approved he will receive the crown of life, which Jehovah promised to those who continue loving him."* (Jas. 1:12) The "crown of life" is the gift of life that God gives to "those who continue loving him" through the many trials that God causes to work together to perfect his servants, if they endure them steadfastly, uncomplainingly and, by his help, triumphantly. (Rom. 8: 28) This does not mean that he earns the right to life by his works or endurance, for life is the free *gift* through faith in Jesus Christ. But the enduring Christian has *proved* that he has that faith. Its quality is tested and found strong and complete.

19 Consequently, the Christian CAN endure whatever trials come upon him, even the most severe ones. He should not enter into these trials trusting in his own strength. God's wisdom and strength must be sought through prayer in the name of Jesus Christ, who, when on earth, set the perfect example of endurance. The Christian can be fully confident in the apostle Peter's comforting assurance: "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; Rom. 8:35-39.

18. What reward does James describe for the one faithfully enduring trial?
19. What, then, is the proper Christian viewpoint toward trials?

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

'Let Your Gifts of Mercy Be in Secret'

FOLLOWING his admonition on proper treatment of an individual's fellowman, Jesus gave counsel on the type of worship that really counts with God. He began this part of his Sermon on the Mount by saying: *"Take good care not to practice your righteousness in front of men in order to be observed by them."*—Matt. 6:1a.

In this instance, "righteousness" means conduct that conforms to God's standard of what is right. (Compare Matthew 5:6, 20.) God desires people to display righteousness in all aspects of life. This should include a person's deeds when alone and his relations with God and fellow humans.

Jesus' words do not mean that godly acts should never be done in front of others, for that would be contrary to his earlier counsel that his hearers 'let their light shine before men.' (Matt. 5:14-16) But never should the motive be "in order to be observed by them." The individual should not seek to make a spectacle of himself as if he were on the stage of a theater.

Jesus declared to all who might be inclined to make a theatrical display of their virtues: *"You will have no reward with your Father who is in the heavens."* (Matt. 6:1b) That 'reward from heaven,' which includes an intimate relationship with God and the eternal blessings of his Kingdom rule, is not for individuals whose motive in worshiping God is to draw attention to themselves.

For Jews in the first century C.E., three principal aspects of worship were almsgiving, prayer and fasting. Concerning the first of these, Jesus stated: *"When you go making gifts of mercy, do not blow a trumpet ahead of you, just as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, that they may be glorified by men."*—Matt. 6:2a.

The expression "gifts of mercy" means charitable donations for support of the impoverished. The Hebrew Scriptures often stress the importance of assisting needy individuals. (Prov. 14:21; 28:27; Isa. 58:6, 7) In later times, each Jewish community had a fund for the poor that was collected and distributed from synagogues every week. Each resident was expected to contribute according to his financial status. Many individuals would go beyond this obligation and give extra support to the needy by voluntary contributions. Interestingly, Jesus and his apostles had a common fund for the poor. —John 12:5-8; 13:29.

However, with regard to almsgiving, Jesus admonished his disciples: "Do not blow a trumpet ahead of you." In other words, 'Do not publicize your almsgiving.' That was a regular practice of the Pharisees, whom Jesus called "hypocrites," that is, persons who pretended to be what they were not. As for advertising charitable donations "in the synagogues and in the streets," we read in the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament:*

> "Rabb[inic] writings bear rich testimony to the theatrical nature of Pharisaic righteousness. . . . While the means for the communal support of the poor was provided by assessment, almsgiving over and above this rested on free gifts. These were made known to the congregation in the synagogues and at fasting services on the open street." (Vol. III, p. 974) "In the synagogues, esp[ecially] at fasts when in serious crises worship was held in open places in the city . . . , specific sums were often pledged publicly for the poor chest by individuals. . . . We are also told that the givers of greater amounts were specially honoured by being allowed to sit alongside the rabbis at worship."—Vol. VII, p. 86.

Concerning such hypocrites, Jesus declared: *"Truly I say to you, They are having their reward in full."* (Matt. 6:2b) Papyri from the first century C.E. reveal that the Greek word for "they are having . . . in full" (*apékho*) often appeared in receipts and indicated full possession of an item or sum of money. In his *Bible Studies,* G. Adolf Deissmann states that, in view of this, Jesus' words "acquire the more pungent ironical meaning *they can sign the receipt of their reward:* their right to receive their reward *is realised,* precisely as if they had already given a receipt for it." The plaudits of men and perhaps a front seat in the synagogue alongside noted rabbis was all the reward that those hypocrites would get. God would give them nothing.—Compare Matthew 23:6.

"But you," said Jesus to his listeners, *"when making gifts of mercy, do not let your left hand know what your right is doing."* (Matt. 6:3) The right hand and the left hand are the closest of bodily members on account of being on either side of the torso and they generally cooperate together. Occasionally the one hand might act independently of the other. 'Not letting the left hand know what the right is doing,' therefore, would mean that a person would not advertise his charitable deeds, even to those as close to him as the left hand is to the right.

According to Jesus, boastful proclamation of almsgiving should be avoided in order *"that your gifts of mercy may be in secret; then your Father who is looking on in secret will repay you."* (Matt. 6:4) Since he dwells in the heavens and is invisible to human eyes, the Creator remains "in secret" as far as mankind is concerned. (John 1:18; 1 John 4:20) 'Repayment' from the one "looking on in secret" includes God's bringing humble worshipers into an intimate relationship with him, his forgiveness of their sins and his granting them eternal life under perfect conditions. (Prov. 3:32; Eph. 1:7; Rev. 21:1-5) How much more is that to be preferred than mere admiration and praise from fellow humans!

In Coming Issues

- **Are You Self-Indulgent —or Self-Sacrificing?**
- **Sex Without Marriage —Why It Hurts**
- **Her Faith Was Lifesaving**

QUESTIONS from READERS

● Genesis 11:1 says that before the confusion of tongues at Babel, all the earth spoke one language; yet, earlier, Genesis 10:5 seems to suggest that various tongues already existed. How can this be understood?

Speaking of Noah's descendants through his grandson Javan, Genesis 10:5 says: "From these the population of the isles of the nations was spread . . . , each according to its tongue, according to their families, by their nations."

Genesis chapter 10 presents what is commonly known as the "Table of the Nations." It lists 70 families or nations descending from Noah's sons, giving some indication of where these eventually spread to and settled. Of course, Moses recorded this centuries after the Flood and the confusion of languages at Babel. So he was in position to bring together in what is now Genesis chapter 10 details of how things worked out over the centuries.

After Genesis chapter 10 gives the details of the "Table of the Nations," chapter 11 takes up the narrative or chronological history with Babel and shows how it was that many languages came about and why peoples spread over the globe.—Gen. 11:1-9.

Thus the references in the 10th chapter to various languages are not to be understood as meaning that these developed prior to the confusion of languages at Babel. (Gen. 10:5, 20, 31, 32) But those tongues were later found among Noah's descendants, whose lineage is provided in that chapter.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

August 27: The Beauty of Jehovah's Sovereignty. Page 20. Songs to Be Used: 13, 21.

September 3: Can You Endure Trials Successfully? Page 25. Songs to Be Used: 17, 57.