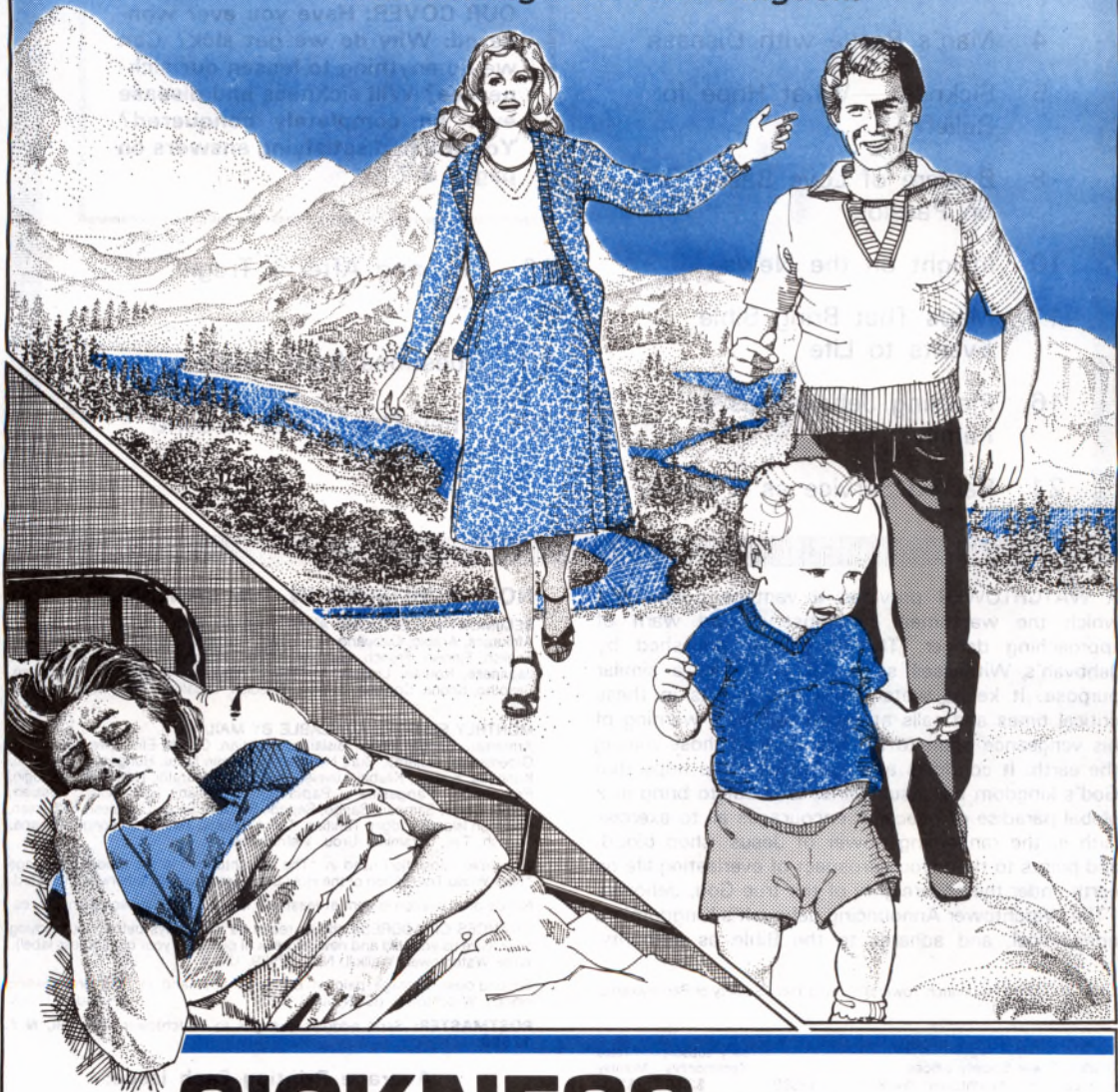


OCTOBER 15, 1981

THE WATCHTOWER

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom



SICKNESS—

WHAT HOPE FOR RELIEF?

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OUR COVER: Have you ever wondered: Why do we get sick? Can we do anything to lessen our sicknesses? Will sickness and disease ever be completely conquered? You will find satisfying answers on pages 3-7

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A WATCHTOWER provides a vantage point from which the watchman can observe and warn of approaching danger. This magazine, published by Jehovah's Witnesses since 1879, serves a similar purpose. It keeps watch on world events in these critical times and calls attention to God's warning of his vengeance soon to be executed on those ruining the earth. It comforts all peoples with the hope that God's kingdom by Jesus Christ is about to bring in a global paradise of peace. It encourages all to exercise faith in the ransoming power of Jesus' shed blood, and points to the joyous prospect of everlasting life on earth under the sovereignty of the true God, Jehovah. "The Watchtower Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom" is nonpolitical, and adheres to the Bible as authority.

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OUR HERITAGE OF SICKNESS

THE young couple were so excited! It was a joy to behold their glow of anticipation as they awaited the birth of their first child. Then the baby was born, a little girl. But she was extremely retarded. She would never live a normal life. Only another parent could understand their shock and grief.



He is a high school student, respected by his teachers, popular among his fellows. Everyone predicted a bright and successful future for him. During this, his final school year, he has developed pains in his legs. An examination has revealed multiple sclerosis. "Why me?" he is asking. "Why now?"

Do you suffer from headaches, like this woman? Or are you among the multitudes who experience stomach disorders, muscular pains, bad backaches, severe palpitations, nervous tension, arthritis or something similar? Such problems are rarely fatal, but they detract from our enjoyment of life. And they make some days very difficult to get through.



Is there hope that such scenes as these may one day be eliminated? Will the time come when man will no longer suffer from his old enemies, sickness and death? Or are they a permanent part of the human scene?

MAN'S BATTLE WITH DISEASE

YES, sickness is an enemy, and man has fought a continuing battle against it for centuries. In the past 150 years, doctors have won some notable victories. Improved sanitation, as well as new vaccines and drugs, has, in some lands, helped make such ancient scourges as bubonic plague just a fading memory.

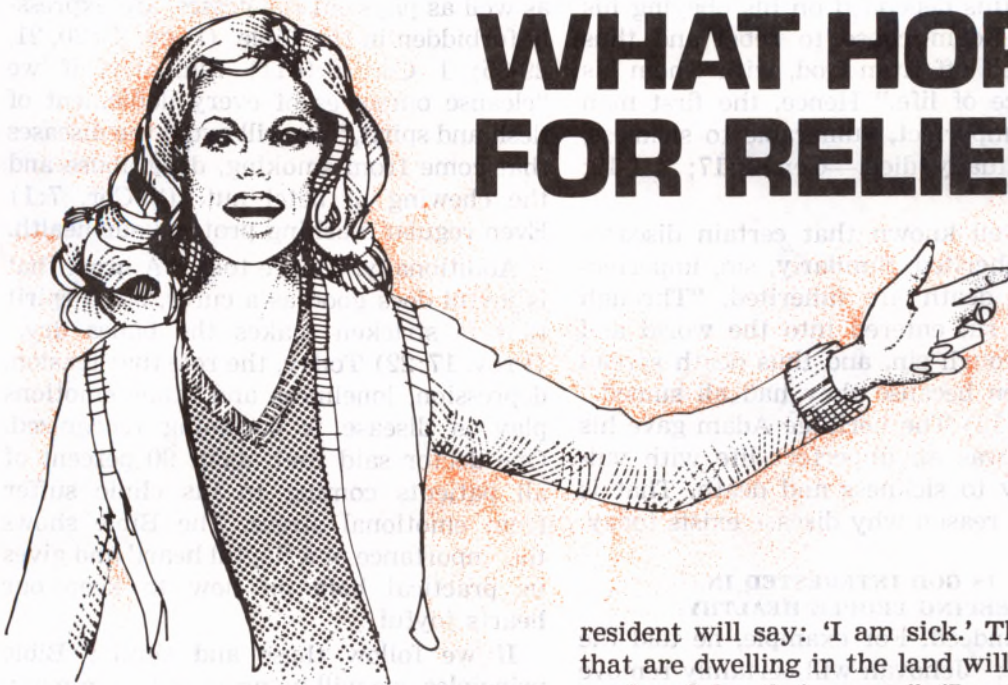
But the battle is far from over. Problems remain, some of them despite the advances of medical science, as the following box shows. Even if science were to find the remedies for all modern diseases, there would still remain the greatest scourge of all—*death*. Will there be any relief from this situation?

MORE GET SICK THAN NEED TO BECAUSE—

- * A large section of the human race suffers from malnutrition. This has led to many cases of rickets, scurvy, blindness, goiter and the like. Moreover, an undernourished person is open to other sicknesses, such as tuberculosis and pneumonia. These diseases could be greatly reduced by the simple expedient of the better feeding of poor people.
- * Malnutrition poses a threat even in advanced countries. Why? "Changes have occurred in the diet of Americans that could cause a wave of malnutrition (from both overconsumption and underconsumption) as damaging to health in the United States as the widespread, contagious diseases of the early part of the century. Overconsumption of fats, sugar, salt, and alcohol has been related to 6 of the 10 leading causes of death . . . heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes, arteriosclerosis, and cirrhosis of the liver."—"Health," 1979.
- * The World Health Organization estimates that 80 percent of all sickness in the world is caused by inadequate water or sanitation. Between 10 million and 25 million people a year die because of disease brought on by unclean or inadequate water. About the same number of children die each year from one of these diseases—diarrhea—as victims were killed each year by the first world war.
- * The air we breathe is being poisoned by fumes from industry and automobiles. The following headlines tell the story: "Air Pollution Victims in Tokyo on Rise"; "Smog Cloud Thickens over Choking Greeks"; "Toxic Smoke Chokes Mexico City"; "Breathing Indoors May Be Hazardous"; "U.S. Study Warns of Extensive Problems from Carbon Dioxide Pollution." Meanwhile, creation's great air purifiers, the trees, are being cut down at a rate of from 25 million to 50 million acres yearly. A crisis of unknown proportions lies ahead.
- * Immorality has led to an epidemic of venereal disease. The smoking of tobacco has caused an epidemic of lung cancer, emphysema, bronchitis and coronary heart disease. Recent studies indicate that not only smokers but also their marriage partners and children suffer.
- * These are some of the practices and social problems that are preventing even existing medical knowledge from being applied successfully for the alleviation of the sicknesses of mankind.

SICKNESS—

WHAT HOPE FOR RELIEF?



IT IS undeniable that, armed with a deeper understanding of the causes of human sickness, doctors have made remarkable progress in controlling some diseases. Yet social problems have prevented many from enjoying the benefits of these medical advances. Thus, there is much room for improvement.

However, there is an underlying cause of sickness and death that is beyond the power of doctors to deal with. Because of this, men on their own will never be *wholly* successful in battling disease. But if we can recognize that basic cause, it will help us to see whether we can hope for relief from this enemy.

WHY DO WE SUFFER FROM ILLNESSES?

The basic reason why men get sick and die is revealed in a remarkable promise God made to the ancient Israelites: "No

resident will say: 'I am sick.' The people that are dwelling in the land will be those pardoned for their error." (Isa. 33:24) It is here that sickness is connected with "error," or sin. And freedom from sickness is related to the forgiveness of sin.

IS SICKNESS A PUNISHMENT FOR SIN, THEN?

Sickness can be a direct result of sin. The Bible warns us: "Whatever a man is sowing, this he will also reap." (Gal. 6:7) As we have already seen, those "sowing" immorality, those who are smoking, those guilty of drunkenness and gluttony are 'reaping' many diseases. It is true that not all sicknesses are caused by such things. Nevertheless, all sickness can ultimately be traced to "error," or sin.

WHY DO GOOD PEOPLE GET SICK?

It is because the sin that is the *root* cause of disease is not our own. It happened a long time ago, right at the beginning of human history. The Bible tells

us that God made the first man, Adam, perfect, healthy, and having the prospect of living forever. His continued enjoyment of all of this depended on his obeying his Creator. Adam chose to rebel and thus cut himself off from God, with whom "is the source of life." Hence, the first man became imperfect, vulnerable to sickness, and eventually died.—Gen. 2:17; 3:1-19; Ps. 36:9.

It is well known that certain diseases can be inherited. Similarly, sin, imperfection and death are inherited. "Through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men because they had all sinned." (Rom. 5:12) The heritage Adam gave his children was an imperfect life with vulnerability to sickness and death. That is the basic reason why disease exists today.

IS GOD INTERESTED IN KEEPING PEOPLE HEALTHY?

He is indeed! For example, he told the Israelites: "Jehovah will certainly remove from you every sickness."—Deut. 7:15.

HOW DID GOD PROTECT THE HEALTH OF THE ISRAELITES?

He gave them a code of laws that included provisions for protecting their health. Regarding these laws, one doctor said: "The best informed medical researchers now doing the best work are arriving at the conclusion that the Bible is a very accurate scientific book . . . The facts of life, diagnosis, treatment, and preventive medicine as given in the Bible are far more advanced and reliable than the theories of Hippocrates." Hippocrates, sometimes called the "father of modern medicine," lived about 1,000 years *after* God gave the Law to the Israelites.

DOES GOD HELP US TO KEEP HEALTHY TODAY?

Yes, the Bible contains commands for us today that serve to protect our health

if we follow them. Drunkenness, gluttony, homosexuality, adultery and fornication, which lead to many emotional problems as well as physical sicknesses, are expressly forbidden in the Bible. (Prov. 23:20, 21, 29-35; 1 Cor. 6:9-11) Similarly, if we "cleanse ourselves of every defilement of flesh and spirit," we will avoid the diseases that come from smoking, drug abuse and the chewing of betel nut. (2 Cor. 7:1) Even regular washing protects our health.

Additionally, we are told: "A heart that is joyful does good as a curer, but a spirit that is stricken makes the bones dry." (Prov. 17:22) Today, the role that tension, depression, loneliness and other emotions play in disease is becoming recognized. One doctor said that about 90 percent of all patients coming to his clinic suffer from emotional stress. The Bible shows the importance of a 'joyful heart' and gives us practical help on how to keep our hearts joyful.

If we follow these and similar Bible principles, we will be protected from many of the sicknesses afflicting men today.

WILL WE EVER HAVE PERMANENT GOOD HEALTH?

Yes, we will, if we do what Adam failed to do—put full trust in God and obey Him. Our complete liberation from sickness is being accomplished by means of Jesus Christ. Jesus was born in a unique way, having his life transferred by the power of Almighty God from his glorious position in heaven to the egg cell in the womb of a virgin. Hence, having no human father, he did not inherit the imperfect life that Adam gave as a heritage to the rest of us.

Jesus was perfect. In an act of great love, he sacrificed his perfect life for us, so that we could get back that perfection lost by Adam. When the merit of that sacrifice is fully applied to mankind, sickness, death and all the problems brought

on by imperfection will be removed.
—Matt. 1:18-23; 20:28; Heb. 7:26.

In this way, the prophecy about Jesus will be fulfilled: "He was being pierced for our transgression . . . and because of his wounds there has been a healing for us."—Isa. 53:5; 1 Pet. 2:24.

DID JESUS REALLY HAVE THE POWER TO HEAL PEOPLE?

Yes, in front of innumerable witnesses Jesus cured "every sort of disease and every sort of infirmity." (Matt. 9:35) He even raised the dead. (John 11:43, 44) Jesus accomplished this not by a study of medical science but in the power of God's spirit. It was thus demonstrated that one day all sickness, and even death, could and would be removed. Of course, the healings performed by Jesus then were temporary. The healed ones could get sick again, and the resurrected ones died again.

WHY DO WE STILL SUFFER FROM DISEASE, SINCE JESUS DIED FOR US NEARLY 2,000 YEARS AGO?

The answer is that the removal of sickness is tied in with God's other purposes—such as the settling of the issue of sovereignty, the removal of Satan the Devil, the judging of mankind, the salvation of those found faithful and the providing of a satisfactory government for this world. These purposes will all be accomplished by means of God's kingdom through Christ. (Matt. 6:10) Such grand purposes need time to be worked out.—2 Pet. 3:5-13.

WHEN WILL SICKNESS FINALLY BE DONE AWAY WITH?

We know it will not be long! Jesus gave his followers a highly detailed "sign" so that they could recognize the time when he had started to rule as king in the heavens—the event that leads to the fulfillment of other purposes of God. That "sign" included world wars, intense fear of the

future, widespread famine, pestilences and similar events that we see occurring today. Why not read Jesus' words, and the further information added by the apostle Paul? See if you do not agree that we are living in the time to which Jesus referred.—See Matthew, chapter 24, Mark, chapter 13, Luke, chapter 21, and 2 Timothy 3:1-5.

Now is the time for God's kingdom to intervene in human affairs. (Matt. 24:14; 25:31-46; Dan. 2:44) If we learn about God's will for us and carry it out, we can live to witness the fulfillment of some of the grandest promises in the Bible. Conditions such as those God promised to the ancient Israelites will be seen: "At that time the eyes of the blind ones will be opened, and the very ears of the deaf ones will be unstopped. At that time the lame one will climb up just as a stag does, and the tongue of the speechless one will cry out in gladness."—Isa. 35:5, 6.

No more will parents grieve over the sicknesses of their children. Neither will the promise of youth be frustrated; nor will mature age be made difficult by bodily weakness. Rather, it will be as the apostle John saw in vision: "And [God] will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore."—Rev. 21:4.

Will these things really happen? They will indeed. John heard Jehovah himself guarantee it, for we read: "The One seated on the throne said: 'Look! I am making all things new.' Also, he says: 'Write, because these words are faithful and true.' " (Rev. 21:5) At that fast-approaching time, man will enjoy complete relief from sickness. In a wonderful way it will be true that "no resident will say: 'I am sick.' The people that are dwelling in the land will be those pardoned for their error."—Isa. 33:24.

ALMIGHTY GOD placed in man and woman a marvelous attraction for each other. But when this attraction is not controlled, real tragedies often occur. This is shown in the case of Amnon, the son of King David.

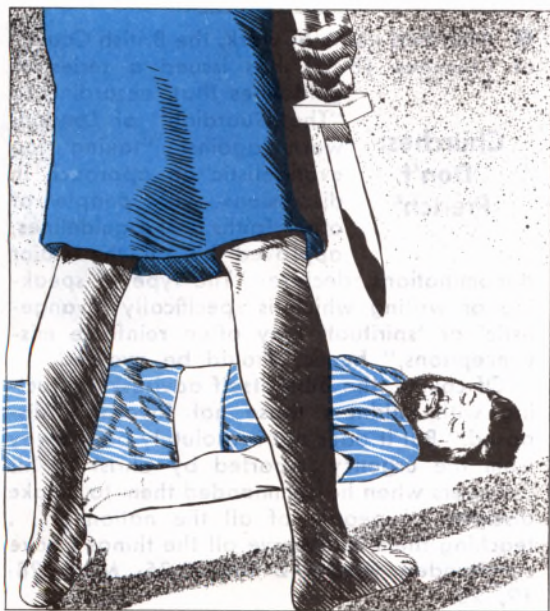
Beware of love based only on passion

Amnon fell deeply in love with his beautiful half sister Tamar. His feelings were so strong that he became lovesick. But he felt distressed because he could not get close to Tamar. When Amnon's cousin Jehonadab learned how much Amnon was in love with Tamar, he told him: 'Play sick. Then when your father, King David, comes to see you, tell him, "Please let Tamar come and prepare some food for me."'

Well, David did just as Amnon asked. Tamar came and, as you can see, prepared some food for Amnon. However, when she took it to him, he refused to eat. He said: 'Send everyone away.' The persons in the house may have thought Amnon felt so sick that he did not want company, and they all left except Tamar.

Now Amnon said: 'Bring the food here to my bed and serve me as a patient.' As she did, Amnon grabbed her and said: 'Come to bed with me.' But Tamar tried to get away. Amnon, however, was stronger, and he forced himself on her. What happened then? Did this make Amnon's love for Tamar stronger?





No, the effect was just the opposite. Amnon began to hate Tamar even more than he had loved her. So he told her: 'Get out.' When she refused to go, he called his personal servant and told him: 'Throw this woman out and lock the door.' But that was not the end of the matter.

Tamar tore her robe, put ashes on her head, and went away crying. When her full brother Absalom saw her, he learned what Amnon had done. This caused Absalom to hate Amnon, and he waited to repay Amnon for violating Tamar.

Two years later Absalom invited all the sons of King David to a banquet. But Absalom told his servants: 'When Amnon has had too much to drink, kill him.' And that is what they did at Absalom's command. After that Absalom fled the country. So, can you see what a lot of trouble was caused because Amnon did not control his passionate desire for beautiful Tamar?—2 Sam. 13:1-38.

The marvelous attraction between the sexes is truly a blessing, contributing to a happy courtship and marriage. Yet, when sexual desires are not controlled, illegitimate births, abortions and venereal diseases, not to mention many other troubles, often occur. Will you benefit from Bible accounts such as this one by seeking God's help to keep passionate desires under control?—Gal. 5:22, 23; Col. 3:8; 1 Thess. 4:3-7.

INSIGHT ON THE NEWS

● After Pope John Paul II was shot by a terrorist earlier this year, reports the New York "Times," "he was given about 10 pints of blood, which means that virtually his entire blood volume was replaced."

The Pope's Transfusions

With what result? The pope acquired a lingering viral infection—cytomegalovirus (CMV)—causing a lengthy delay in his recovery. A spokesman for the Apostolic Delegation in Washington, D.C., admitted: "We understand the transfusions were the apparent cause of the infection."

It is just possible that John Paul may have died without the transfusions. However, is it not proper, in this respect, for Christians to obey that part of God's law that the Catholic Bible includes among "essentials" for them? It states: "You are to ABSTAIN from food sacrificed to idols, FROM BLOOD, from the meat of strangled animals and from fornication. Avoid these, and you will do what is right." Explains a footnote in the Catholic "Jerusalem Bible": "Blood symbolises life, and that belongs to God alone." Since there are several modern alternatives to blood therapy, such doing "what is right" Scripturally often contributes to the good health of those confronted with problems related to blood and leaves them with a good conscience before God as well.—Acts 15:20 (footnote), 28, 29, "Jerusalem Bible," Imprimatur: John Cardinal Heenan.

● "Are we, then, all heretics?" asked a recent letter in London's "Daily Telegraph."

'Are We All Heretics?'

The writer had just drawn attention to a "theological puzzle" created by the words of the early Christian churchman Justin Martyr: "If you have fallen in with some who are called Christians . . . who say that their souls, when they die are taken to heaven, DO NOT IMAGINE THAT THEY ARE CHRISTIANS." In response to this "puzzle," the newspaper published the following letter from John Dunnnett, senior lecturer in Theology at Newbold College:

"The early Church Fathers, basing their beliefs and teachings on Holy Scripture . . .

were under no illusion as to the experience of man, even of a Christian, in death. They understood death to be an unconscious state, a 'sleep,' from which there would eventually be a resurrection. It was said repeatedly of Old Testament kings that they slept with their fathers. The psalmist described death thus: 'He breathes his last breath, he returns to the dust; and in that same hour all his thinking ends.'—Psalm [146:] 4 (New English Bible)."

After citing other examples of the "consistent Biblical teaching" of a resurrection after sleep in death, the theologian observed: "So it was that not only Justin Martyr and Irenaeus but also Ignatius, Polycarp, Lactantius and other early Fathers could not hold that Christian souls are taken to heaven when they die." Then how did this unscriptural teaching get into the Church? Answers professor Dunnnett: "It was under the influence of Platonic philosophy . . . that the concept of the immortality of the soul came largely to permeate the Christian Church and to make acceptable the idea that souls go to heaven at death; but it remains a non-Biblical belief." Hence, it can be said that most so-called Christians today are Scriptural "heretics." —Ezek. 18:4, 20.

● After two years of work, the British Council of Churches (BCC) has issued a series of guidelines that, according to

Churches: 'Don't Preach'

"The Guardian" of London, warn against "taking too evangelistic an approach in discussions with people of other faiths." The guidelines, approved by all the major denominations, declare: "The type of speaking or writing which is specifically 'evangelistic' or 'spiritual' may often reinforce misconceptions," hence, should be avoided.

Of course, the Bible itself advises "instructing with mildness those not favorably disposed." But it does not irresolutely back away from the urgency imparted by Christ to his followers when he commanded them to "make disciples of people of all the nations . . . teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you."—2 Tim. 2:25; Matt. 28:19, 20.

MAPS

that bring Bible events to life

"IT LOOKS like rain," said an anxious English tourist in Israel, peering at a few clouds through the coach window. The local guide, hearing the remark, laughed and shook his head. "It will *never* rain in Israel at this time of the year. You are not in England now."

How easy it is for us to judge the Bible lands by our own country and our own experience, especially if we have not visited the Middle East! Without realizing it, we can miss so much when we are reading God's Word, simply because we do not have that background. By finding out more about the customs and ways of the people and the lands in which they lived, however, we can gain a deeper appreciation of so many incidents recorded in the Bible.

Maps play an essential part in conveying this information to us, and in many ways they speak more eloquently than words. Yet some people find maps difficult to read and understand. The little time used to become familiar with maps, their symbols and contours, and the meaning of the different colors, will aid us in that we will be well repaid when we use them as tools in our study. Maps should not just be used for finding the location of places. In the words of Bible geographer Denis Baly, having found the place we want, "one should know also, at the very least, how it is related to the physical landscape, to the valleys, hills, rivers and plains."

It is then that we begin to build a visual picture, and if this is added to actual photographs of the type of area involved, the setting will come to life. As we read a Bible account, how easy for us then to people that setting with the characters

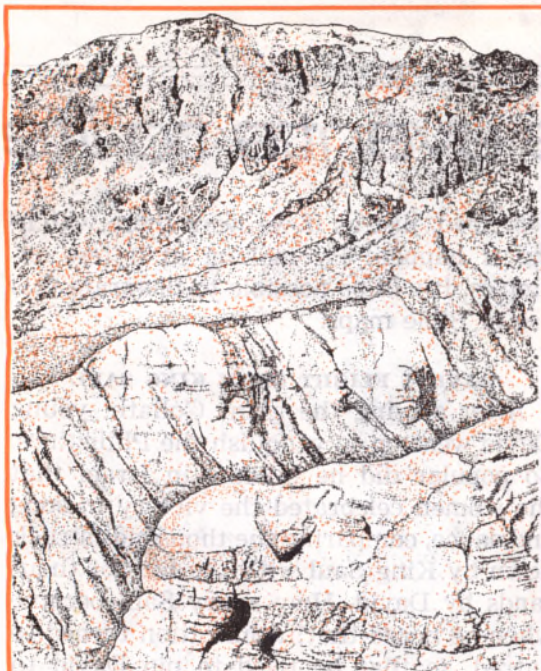
described, just as if we were there watching it happen! By looking at a few examples, it will be possible to illustrate this use of Bible maps.

DAVID'S FLIGHT FROM KING SAUL

After slaying the giant Goliath, young David went on to vanquish the Philistines. So popular did he become in Israel that the women celebrated the victory in song and dance, comparing the thousands struck down by King Saul with the tens of thousands by David. How angry Saul became when he heard that! Admiration turned to hatred, so that he tried to pin David to the wall with his spear. David's continuing success made matters worse, and Saul "felt still more fear because of David, and Saul came to be an enemy of David always."—1 Sam. 18:6-29.

Despite help from Saul's son Jonathan and his own wife Michal, David came to see that, as he put it: "There is just about a step between me and death!" (1 Sam. 20:3) He finally fled to the cave of Adullam, located southwest of Jerusalem in an area where the mountains of Judah descend toward the coastal plain. In this inaccessible region are numerous limestone caves, and here hundreds of men gathered together to David. (1 Sam. 22:1, 2) But warned by Jehovah that the people of Keilah, near Adullam, would betray David into Saul's hands, he sought a safer refuge.—1 Sam. 23:6-13.

The wilderness of Judah was just such a haven. Hundreds of years later Jesus Christ spent 40 days here protected by the angels from its wild beasts—leopards, wolves and hyenas. (Mark 1:12, 13) In



Caves of the Judean wilderness

our own day spectacular discoveries have been made in some of its thousands of caves. Ancient Bible scrolls dating back some 2,000 years have been found, preserved by the exceptionally dry climate. Not far away another cave disclosed remains from the second Jewish revolt against the Romans in 132-135 C.E. Why had its leader, Bar Kokhba, fled to this region, and why did these scrolls remain hidden for so long? For the very same reason that David "took up dwelling in the wilderness in *places difficult to approach*, and he kept dwelling in the mountainous region in the wilderness of Ziph." —1 Sam. 23:14, 15.

The wilderness of Ziph and of Maon close by form the high central part of the wilderness of Judah. (1 Sam. 23:24) When we look at a map, this wilderness can be seen to the south of Jerusalem, stretching right along the western side of the Dead Sea, with the three cities of Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Hebron approximately

forming its other boundary. Next, we notice a number of valleys, or wadis, intersecting the wilderness from west to east, making travel from north to south almost impossible.

Walking down the Kidron valley from beside the temple mount in Jerusalem, a person very quickly leaves behind the busy city, and in the words of Israeli archaeologist Yohanan Aharoni, enters "this frightening wilderness." Following this valley in its continuation, the Wadi en-Nar ("fire wadi"), it drops some 3,000 feet (c. 900 m) to the Dead Sea, becoming a deep gorge or canyon with precipitous cliffs rising more than 200 feet (c. 60 m) on each side. To walk along its bed in winter is to be in danger of being caught by a flash flood of water rushing down the wadi after a sudden downpour. In summer the heat can be devastating. Each of the wadis in the region presents similar problems.

No wonder David found this to be a safe refuge! Even with an army of 3,000 men, it was difficult for King Saul to search the innumerable caves that pock the limestone cliffs, many only being accessible by rope from above. He and his men later heard a report that David had



The southern end of the Dead Sea, as viewed from En-gedi

moved to En-gedi, an oasis near the shore of the Dead Sea, and Saul went searching "upon the bare rocks of the mountain goats." Hidden right back in the darkest part of one cave, David had a fine opportunity to kill Saul, but would not touch Jehovah's anointed.—1 Sam. 24:1-15.

On another occasion, when he could have slain the sleeping king in his camp, David merely took his pursuer's spear and water jar from his side, later standing on the other side of the gorge to point out the failure of Saul's men to protect their king. His voice echoing around the barren hills, David called across, asking what he had done that Saul should chase after him "as one chases a partridge upon the mountains."—1 Sam. 26:1-20.

How valuable this picture is when we consider many of David's cries for help in the Psalms! Though he might be tempted to think that literal crags and rocks—yes, high mountains—were his refuge, yet he constantly reminded himself that Jehovah was his real protector and salvation. As a shepherd, David was used to the hills. He was nimble and fleet of foot like the long-horned mountain goat, or ibex. Yet it was his God who kept his feet from slipping on the narrow path. (Ps. 18:1-3, 31-33) When betrayed by the people of Ziph and sought by his enemies who set traps for him, David's heart could still remain steadfast in Jehovah, and he could play his harp and accompany it in song amid the desolate cliffs and gorges. (Ps. 54, 57) Even when the pressure from David's enemies brought him to a low state of depression, he could still talk to Jehovah and look to Him for deliverance. (Ps. 142) Are we able to do this when great difficulties beset us? We can do so if we build our faith in God.

AN ATTACK ON JUDAH

When Jehoshaphat was king over Judah in the 10th century B.C.E., he received

some disturbing news. A confederation of tribes from the east, inhabiting Moab, Ammon and Seir, were reported to be heading for Judah "from the region of the sea, from Edom; and there they are in Hazazon-tamar, that is to say, En-gedi." (2 Chron. 20:1, 2, 10, 11) When we look at our map, En-gedi already is familiar to us, and we can soon find Moab, Ammon and Edom. But we may be inclined to ask: How did this army get to En-gedi, and why did it come that particular way?

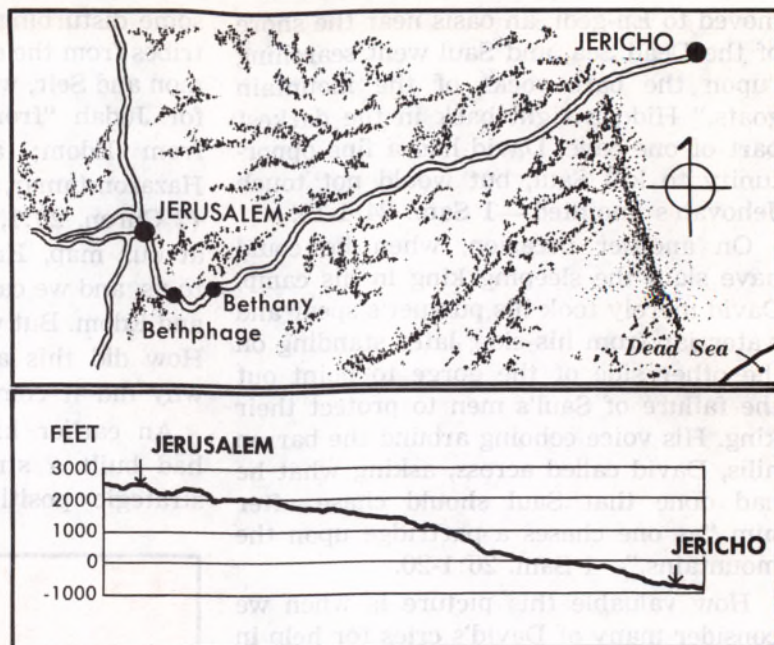
An earlier king of Judah, Rehoboam, had built a string of fortified cities in strategic positions. Our map identifies



those of Bethlehem, Etam, Tekoa, Beth-zur, Hebron and Ziph as protecting the eastern flank of Judah. (2 Chron. 11: 5-12) To be successful, the enemy needed the element of surprise, and likely they thought that the empty and forbidding wilderness of Judah would provide that unexpected approach. They may have come around the southern end of the Dead Sea. Or they may have marched over the low Lisan peninsula, crossing the Dead Sea at its narrowest point (about two miles [3 km]), by an ancient and shallow ford that some scholars say existed. Then, passing the great rock of Masada, they reached En-gedi before they were spotted, perhaps by a scout from one of the forts above.

This gave Jehoshaphat little time, for the enemy was about a day's march from Jerusalem. Like David, he trusted in Jehovah and cried out to him for help. The reply: "The battle is not yours, but God's." He was told to station his men just below Tekoa at the end of the torrent valley, for the enemy forces were "coming up by the pass of Ziz." This was done by Jehoshaphat, with the singers placed in the forefront.—2 Chron. 20:3-21.

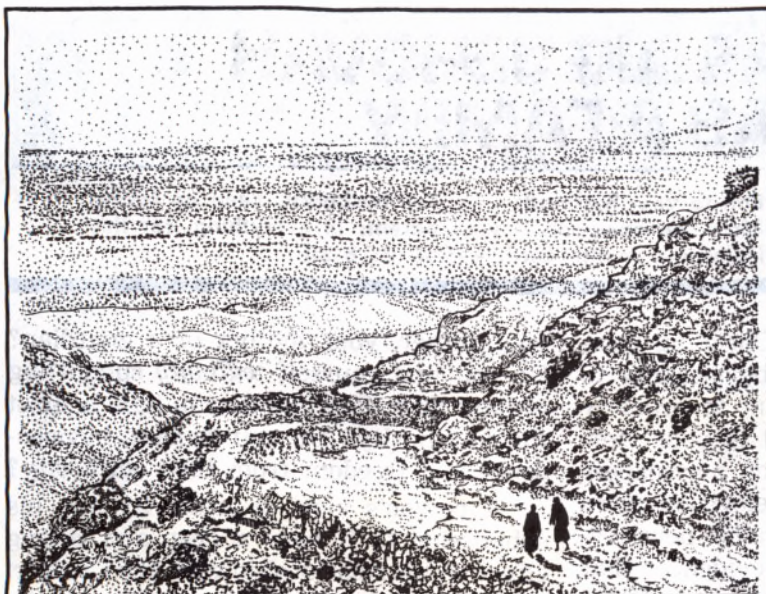
The pass or ascent of Ziz ran northwest from near En-gedi, first climbing for some 1,300 feet (c. 390 m) by a steep zigzag path winding back and forth. Then it went on across a hilly plateau and followed a twisting route up toward Tekoa at nearly 2,700 feet (c. 820 m) above sea level. What a climb, with many ups and downs as the route crossed smaller wadis and tributary



streambeds! Hot and tired, the enemy probably hoped to rest unseen near the top. But not a chance! They were discovered and ambushed. What confusion set in as they wondered where the ambush came from, not realizing that Jehovah was assisting Judah! As the hills rang with Judean shouts of praise, the invaders thought their own allies were to blame. Disagreements broke out, and they started fighting one another until the entire army was routed and destroyed. Can we see and hear that battle raging amidst those rugged and desolate heights, with songs of praise echoing across the mountains all around? How Judah blessed Jehovah for his great victory!—2 Chron. 20:22-30.

THE GOOD SAMARITAN

Jesus' well-known illustration about the Samaritan who helped a man attacked by robbers was played out along a road just north of the wilderness of Judah, or Judaea. More than once, the account em-



"Going down" to Jericho—a 3,000-foot descent

phasizes the fact that those traveling on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho were "going down." (Luke 10:29-37) How well Jesus knew that route! And we can travel almost the same road today. Check the map, and notice that it descends more than 3,000 feet (c. 914 m) in the 14 miles (c. 23 km) from Jerusalem to Jericho. Bordering the desert wilderness most of the way, it runs below sea level for quite a distance. With very little habitation on the route, how lonely and blisteringly hot this road could be, and how easy for robbers to hide near a projecting cliff or boulder waiting for the unsuspecting traveler!

Not without purpose did Jesus give his illustration this setting. Many of his hearers knew that road, and they could picture it in their mind's eye. They could "see" what was happening, and they could imagine the kindly Samaritan giving his instructions at the isolated inn. Can we picture this, too, as we read the account?

USING BIBLE MAPS

The examples considered herein show how we can use maps of Bible lands. If detail is required, find a large-scale map of the area. Check the locations given, and then look at the contour lines and coloring that appear on some maps, noticing any rivers, highways or relevant boundary lines. Try to visualize the region, bearing in mind that crowded, twisting contour lines and swiftly changing colors indicate many hills and valleys, whereas contours that are widely separated and gentle, using

only one or two colors, show plains and less undulating land. If you can find some pictures of the area, these will add to your mental vision.

Small-scale maps can be useful for tracing longer routes, such as Paul's journeys, where detail is not so important. For instance, see endsheet maps in the *New World Translation*. But the smaller a map is, the less likely is it to contain all the names you require, and their position will be only approximate. Also, maps are often related to particular periods in history, for names have a habit of changing quite frequently. Many helpful maps are found in *Aid to Bible Understanding*.*

Though you may never have the opportunity to visit the lands of the Bible, get to know them with the help of maps. Make your reading of the Holy Scriptures more meaningful by creating a picture in your mind. Then it will stick and help you to recall a Bible event more easily.

* Published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.

PLEASING JEHOVAH AS A FAMILY

"You wives, be in subjection to your husbands . . . You husbands, keep on loving your wives . . . You children, be obedient to your parents in everything, for this is well-pleasing in the Lord."—Col. 3:18-20.

A BASIC need for a Christian family that desires to be pleasing to the Creator is to be obedient to properly constituted authority. What is your view of authority? A reading of newspapers and magazines, watching television news programs or listening to radio news reports provides abundant evidence that worldwide there is a defiant attitude toward authority. This attitude can easily influence an individual's thinking. On the level of the family it can cause great disturbance if a person's view of obedience to authority is shaped by events happening around him day by day.

² If you are a husband and father, how do you view your exercise of authority in the family? Is it your feeling that the head of the family, the husband, should have the absolute say in matters related to the family, and that it is your right to rule your household? Or, would it be more pleasing to you just to let your wife exercise headship responsibilities so as to maintain peace in the family circle?

³ If you are a wife and mother, do you chafe under the authority exercised by your husband? Do you find it difficult to accept the way in which your husband exercises authority in the family? Do you find yourself rebellious, demanding liberation from such authority?

⁴ If you are a boy or a girl, how do you view the authority of your parents, be it

your father, your mother or a guardian? Do you find yourself *willingly* submitting to their directions? Or do you fight against their authority? Do you demand independence and freedom from their authority?

⁵ A person's view of authority and his submission to it have a deep and lasting effect on his relationship with the Creator, Jehovah, and with others, both in the everyday world in which we live and in the family relationship. Hence, it is good to know just how those claiming to be Christians today should react to authority, especially as it relates to the family arrangement. We should want to please the Creator as a family.

THE FAMILY ARRANGEMENT

⁶ To begin with, Jehovah God, our Creator, is the One who originated the family unit. It began in Eden with God's command to the first man and woman to "be fruitful and become many and fill the earth and subdue it." (Gen. 1:28) To this day the family unit continues to play a most important role in the outworking of Jehovah's purpose toward the earth.—Eph. 3:14, 15.

⁷ We are told that, in the first family arrangement made by God, the woman was made to be a complement to the man, not an inferior creation in any way. Rather, the woman was created to play a sup-

1. What is a basic need for a family to be pleasing to Jehovah, but what obstacle has to be faced?

2-4. What questions face families when it comes to recognizing authority?

5. What relationships are affected by a person's view of authority?

6, 7. What command did Jehovah give to the first human couple, and what role did he purpose for the woman?

portive role as the helper to her husband. (Gen. 2:18) Together they were to bring forth children and form the family unit.

THE ROLE OF HUSBAND AND WIFE

⁸ For a family to be pleasing to the Creator, it is necessary to have order and direction. The first human couple were told to "have in subjection the fish of the sea and the flying creatures of the heavens and every living creature that is moving upon the earth." (Gen. 1:28) The man, Adam, was the first human creation of God. Because Jehovah is the Almighty God and the Creator, he has the right to say how authority is to be exercised on the earth. God determined that authority would flow through the man to the woman and then to their offspring. (1 Cor. 11:3)

8. (a) How was authority to be exercised? (b) What was to be the man's view of his wife?



Jehovah purposed that husband and wife complement each other and that they be united in serving him

From the Biblical account it is evident that this authority was not to be exercised in a dictatorial or authoritarian way. Note the expression of Adam upon seeing for the first time the complement God had created for him: "This is at last bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh." (Gen. 2:23) This beautiful expression does not give any indication that Adam was to be a dictator over an inferior. He said that the woman brought to him was 'bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh,' something to be cherished and cared for even as his own body. Many centuries later, the apostle Paul wrote to Christians, giving directions on how a man is to love his wife and care for her. He said: "Husbands ought to be loving their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself, for no man ever hated his own flesh; but he feeds and cherishes it."—Eph. 5:28, 29.

⁹ Jehovah purposed that man should be the head of the woman. (Eph. 5:23, 24) The woman, as man's complement, was to be treated with dignity and love, so that she, in turn, could have "deep respect" for her husband and could willingly be "in subjection" to him. (Eph. 5:33; 1 Pet. 3:1) The two, working together, were to produce offspring, passing along to them by word and example what was pleasing to Jehovah so that the family arrangement would have his blessing. As God later indicated, in exercising authority over their children the father and the mother are to re-

9. (a) What attitude should a woman have toward her husband? (b) How are both parents to handle the raising of children in the family?

frain from irritating their children. Rather, the children are to be raised in the discipline and mental-regulating of Jehovah. They are to be given Christian discipline and instruction. (Eph. 6:4; compare Proverbs 1:8, 9.) Parents are also called upon to use the rod of correction when necessary. (Prov. 13:24; 29:15) While we have but briefly touched on the responsibilities of husband and wife, it is clear that the arrangement of Jehovah is that, within the family, authority is to be exercised with love and in fairness.

CHILDREN'S RESPONSIBILITY

¹⁰ The news media and other sources in our day have filled the minds of people with the desire for independence. Many young people rebel against any supervision of their lives by their parents or any other authority. While it is true that the father and mother have much responsibility in properly exercising authority in the family, children, too, have responsibilities. It is because of the need for strong, spiritually healthy family units that please Jehovah that we will consider some problems relating to children, as well as appreciation for authority and proper submission to it on their part.

¹¹ "*Honor your father and your mother*": The apostle Paul in discussing this, the fifth of the Ten Commandments, said it was "the first command with a promise," namely, "that it may go well with you and you may endure a long time on the earth." (Ex. 20:12; Eph. 6:2, 3) A child claiming to be a Christian is *under obligation* to be obedient to the command to honor his father and mother. How does a child render honor, or esteem, and manifest respect for his parents? Certainly

that child must show love for his parents and appreciation for the effort they are making to care for and train such a child. Children have to learn to respect the judgment and decisions of their parents. (Prov. 22:15) Even when the children may think their individual rights are being interfered with, they are obliged to be obedient to their "parents in union with the Lord." (Eph. 6:1) If children are to "endure a long time on the earth" and have Jehovah's approval for a future life, they must honor their parents.

¹² *Recognition of authority*: Closely akin to the honoring of one's parents is the recognition of authority, the parents' right to set certain limits and to determine what their children may or may not do. Submission to authority is often very difficult for children and may cause many disputes in the household. As mentioned earlier, the news media and other sources often present information that undermines parental authority, encouraging youths to demand freedom from parental authority. A case in point is the attitude taken today toward promiscuity. This situation has developed to the point that often young men or women who maintain virginity are thought ill of by their contemporaries. Such persons consider those holding to the Bible's high moral standards to be lacking in some way, to be unattractive, "out of it" as far as their so-called friends are concerned.—See 1 Peter 4:4.

¹³ Some governmental laws actually serve as an encouragement for young women to engage in loose conduct by providing for abortions without parental consent. One 15-year-old girl pointed out that a doctor had refused to pierce her ears without parental permission but that the Supreme Court of the United States had ruled

10. Because of a desire for independence, how do many young people react, and what is the purpose of the information to follow herein?

11. (a) What does it mean to "honor your father and your mother"? (Prov. 1:8, 9; 4:1-3) (b) How should a child react though he thinks his individual rights are being interfered with? (Prov. 3:11, 12)

12. (a) What authority of one's parents, or guardian, must be recognized in order to please Jehovah? (b) How do one's contemporaries sometimes view those who maintain virtuous conduct? (Prov. 1:10-16)

13. At times, how do some laws of man serve as an encouragement to wrongdoing?

that a minor girl may have an abortion without permission from her parents. Recently one doctor, writing in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* about efforts to broaden advertising of contraceptives, declared: "I am appalled at the willingness of medical professionals to accept promiscuous sexual conduct—and even to promote it. . . . I believe we should invest some of our resources in learning to promote responsible and healthy sexual practices, including abstinence and fidelity."

¹⁴ The pointed counsel of God's Word at Ephesians 6:1 is: "Children, be obedient to your parents in union with the Lord, for this is righteous." Obedience requires recognition of authority. Parents are charged with the responsibility of raising their children in the ways set forth in God's Word so as to be pleasing to him, and that Word forbids promiscuity, loose sexual conduct. (Ex. 20:14; 1 Cor. 6:9, 10) If children have parents who are interested in their being safeguarded from the immoral world, those parents deserve the loyal support of their children. Rather than chafing under the authority of such parents, the sensible, God-fearing child will follow the Biblical advice to be obedient to them, knowing that this has divine approval, is for his or her own good and promises a secure future.—Prov. 3:1, 2.

¹⁵ To refuse to show subjection to one's parents is to be disobedient to Jehovah God. Just as Jehovah has set out his rules and regulations for the governing of the

human family, so he has given parents the right to set out upright regulations—house rules, you might say—for the conduct of the family unit of which the children are a part. If those rules and regulations are not contrary to the Word of God, children are obligated to be obedient to the authority of the parents.



Youths, are you genuinely interested in your role in the family? Parents, do you deal with your children according to God's recommendations?

LOVE IN THE FAMILY

¹⁶ *Love of one's family:* For Jehovah to be pleased with the family unit, there must be love shown toward one's parents. Husbands are told to love their wives as themselves, and wives are to have deep respect for their husbands. All, parents and children alike, should carry out toward one another the kingly law of love. (Jas. 2:8) The apostle Paul gave some pointed coun-

14. How should boys and girls wanting to please Jehovah view parents who try to safeguard them from immorality?

15. What is so serious about refusing to show subjection to the authority of one's parents?

16, 17. (a) For a family that wishes to please Jehovah, how important is love? (b) What pointed counsel does Colossians 3:12-14 contain? (c) For Paul's counsel to the Colossians to be effective, what is recommended?

sel on this matter when he wrote: "Clothe yourselves with the tender affections of compassion, kindness, lowliness of mind, mildness, and long-suffering. Continue putting up with one another and forgiving one another freely if anyone has a cause for complaint against another. Even as Jehovah freely forgave you, so do you also. But, besides all these things, clothe yourselves with love, for it is a perfect bond of union."—Col. 3:12-14.

¹⁷ Those are not just words to be read or parroted out of one's mouth. They are the sayings of holy spirit that are to be considered seriously. It is recommended that everyone reading this material go over each one of those Christian requirements. Ponder over them. Think about them in relation to the family of which you are a part. How do Paul's words affect your relationship with your husband, your wife, your father, your mother or others in the immediate family? Are you pleasing Jehovah in each of these ways mentioned by the apostle? A person cannot conform his life to those words of counsel and at the same time be crying for independence from parental rule or engaging in shouting matches with his or her parents. Nor can parents deal in such a way with their children. The happy family that has the blessing of Jehovah must deeply, seriously and regularly consider the admonition found in God's Word, so as to imitate the "Hearer of prayer," who by holy spirit inspired such words to be written.—Ps. 65:2; Eph. 4:31, 32; Col. 3:15-17.

¹⁸ Whether there is both a father and a mother in the household, or just one parent, the admonition and the responsibility are the same. Sad to say, however, there is an intense, and sometimes successful, effort being made by Satan to break up families, to divide and conquer. Each person reading this material should bear in

18. What sobering facts do we face today, leading to what questions?

mind that the Devil goes about "like a roaring lion, seeking to devour someone." (1 Pet. 5:8) Will we allow him to break up our family unity that is so pleasing to Jehovah? Will we succumb to a spirit of independence, one that says: "I do not have to listen to my parents; I will do as I like"? Pursuing such a course can cost us happiness and bring God's disfavor.

¹⁹ If we are to enjoy Jehovah's approval—and, after all, he does hold life and death in the power of his hand—we have to support authority as he has constituted it within the family arrangement. It is to our advantage to subject ourselves to it. Only then can true happiness and contentment be found. Because of promoting family unity and harmony, we may seek to have applied to us the blessing King David of old spoke about when he said: "Who may ascend into the mountain of Jehovah, and who may rise up in his holy place? Anyone innocent in his hands and clean in heart, who has not carried My soul to sheer worthlessness, nor taken an oath deceitfully. He will carry away blessing from Jehovah and righteousness from his God of salvation."—Ps. 24:3-5.

19. How does a Christian family come to enjoy Jehovah's blessing?

WHAT WILL YOU TAKE AWAY FROM THIS DISCUSSION?

- Why is your view of authority involved in achieving family happiness?
- What Bible verses outline the role of the husband and the wife in a Christian family?
- What good effects are there when children honor and recognize the authority of their parents?
- How can working to increase family love help to counteract forces that tend to divide many families?
- From what has been discussed, what area will you work on so that your family can be more pleasing to Jehovah?

SACRED SERVICE AS A FAMILY



"I entreat you . . . to present your bodies a sacrifice living, holy, acceptable to God, a sacred service with your power of reason."—Rom. 12:1.

IN THE Christian congregation the family is recognized as the basic unit. If there is love, peace and unity in the family circle and an awareness of the importance of performing "sacred service" to Jehovah, then the family can be a fine asset to the Christian congregation. (Rom. 12:1) The challenge is to build and maintain such a family unit.

² There are many things working against the success of Christian families in our day. For example, a husband and wife often feel it necessary to be employed in order to earn enough to support the family. In this situation, families may tend to drift apart. At times, due to the unequal pull of this system of things, the family may be torn by the desire to live beyond its means, rather than to heed the Bible's counsel to be content with their "sustenance and covering." (1 Tim. 6:8) The spirit of independence and the desire of

1, 2. (a) To carry on acceptable "sacred service," what requirements must a Christian family meet? (b) Outline some of the problems that might interfere with the "sacred service" of a Christian family.

each one to do what he wants, rather than working together, are also factors that separate families instead of bringing them together in unity. Whatever the influence may be, there is a course that, if followed, can be of tremendous assistance to the Christian family.

³ This course is set out in a statement made in the Sermon on the Mount. The Lord Jesus said: "Keep on, then, seeking first the kingdom and his righteousness, and all these other things will be added to you." (Matt. 6:33) This discus-

sion will be concerned with that course. It will not deal with the domestic aspects of family life but with the positive procedures a family can follow in seeking first the Kingdom and promoting those things that result in a happy, loving Christian family, one that can effectively render "sacred service" to God.

"SEEKING FIRST THE KINGDOM"

⁴ If something is first in a person's life, then it is primary, of No. 1 importance. Jesus said: "If anyone wants to come after me, let him disown himself and pick up his torture stake day after day and follow me continually." (Luke 9:23) To be a true follower of Jesus and disown oneself requires that a person truly 'seek first the Kingdom.' Because of our imperfect inclination of mind and heart from birth onward due to inherited sin, we must all be schooled in or taught about what is expected of us in order to please God.

3. What course is suggested?

4. Because of what inherited condition do we need schooling on how to please Jehovah? (Jer. 10:23)

(Gen. 8:21; Rom. 5:12) We must be taught to 'seek first the Kingdom,' because, left to ourselves, we would invariably seek first our own personal desires and wants. Jehovah has therefore provided instruction that comes to us through his Word and gives proper direction.

⁵ Jehovah commanded his chosen people, the ancient Israelites, to teach their children his laws and commandments. They were to repeat the teachings at home, when they were away from home, when they were resting and when they were working. (Deut. 6:6-9) That same instruction is appropriate for families today in their rendering of "sacred service" to God. When we are taught to 'seek first the Kingdom,' we learn to assume responsibilities. One of those responsibilities is sharing.

SHARING

⁶ We do not here wish to dwell on the meaning of sharing in a material sense, which, of course, is essential also for true happiness. (Acts 20:35) Our concern is sharing in providing others with the opportunity to have the hope Christians have in God's kingdom. One of the finest qualities a parent can implant in his child is the desire to share the Kingdom "good news" with others. From an early age children can be taught to have a share in speaking with others about the "good news of the kingdom." (Matt. 24:14) This takes much effort on the part of the parents because the nature of the Kingdom message is such that it is not readily accepted or desired by the majority of those to whom it is offered. That is because Satan, "the god of this system of things," has blinded the minds of the people to the "glorious good



Youths can learn vital lessons about sharing while they accompany a parent who is sharing the Christian message

news about the Christ." (2 Cor. 4:4) The apostle Paul made a statement about our fulfilling this responsibility and its effects. He said: "God uses us to make the knowledge about Christ spread everywhere like a sweet fragrance. For we are like a sweet-smelling incense offered by Christ to God, which spreads among those who are being saved and those who are being lost. For those who are being lost, it is a deadly stench that kills; but for those who are being saved, it is a fragrance that brings life." (2 Cor. 2:14-16, *Today's English Version*) The problem is that the vast majority of mankind view this all-important message as something deadly, unacceptable to them. To share in spreading this message to such persons can be difficult and disheartening.

⁷ This makes the role of Christian parents very important in the training of their children to be sharers in this "sacred

5. At Deuteronomy 6:6-9, how extensive was the training program outlined by Jehovah for the ancient Israelites?

6. (a) With what sharing in particular are we here concerned? (b) How great is the responsibility of parents in the matter of sharing? (c) What obstacle did the apostle Paul outline at 2 Corinthians 2:14-16, and what condition can this cause in some?

7. What encouragement do children need so that they may continue on with what they learn?

service." Such service spreads the "knowledge about Christ," which is a cause for great joy to a few, but which meets with total rejection by many. Parents have the opportunity and obligation to begin training their children early in life so that they are prepared and equipped to share in this "sacred service," spreading the message about Christ and the Kingdom to others. Children need much help to appreciate that, even though many view the glorious message from God as death-dealing, the young proclaimers of the "good news" should not lose their joy and zeal. Nor should they slack the hand and stop having a part in rendering "sacred service" to Jehovah.—1 Cor. 9:16, 17.

⁸ It is readily apparent, then, that parents have a deep and abiding responsibility to reflect in their own lives the zeal and devotion they have by regularly sharing in the work of Kingdom declaration. They must make it a part of their own routine in life to be with their children in Kingdom service, not sending their young ones off to be cared for by others all the time. No one else can shoulder this responsibility for them. Setting a good example is the finest way to inculcate right goals and motives in children. Remember the Scriptural injunction: "Train up a boy according to the way for him; even when he grows old he will not turn aside from it." (Prov. 22:6) To give proper training, the father or mother, or both where possible, should be with their children. They should share in "sacred service" as a family.

⁹ This sharing of the "good news" with others has beneficial results, besides giving one the satisfaction of knowing that he is doing what Jehovah has commanded. It gives one's children proper goals to work toward in life. The pursuit of empty

8. (a) How important is parental example in the performance of "sacred service"? (b) Why is it good for parents to take a direct part in such training?

9. Outline two beneficial results of engaging in sacred Kingdom service.



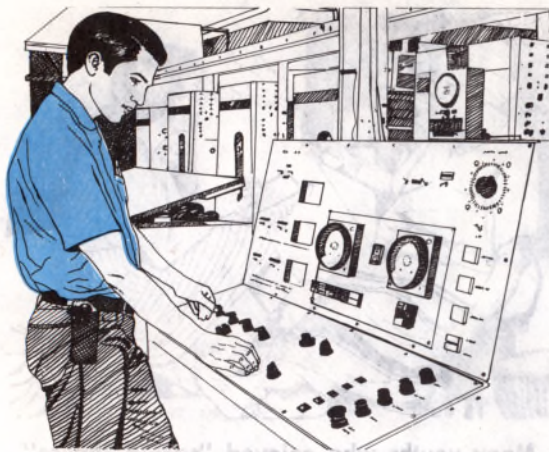
Many youths who enjoyed "sacred service" with their family have found pleasure in serving as full-time pioneer ministers

goals by the great majority of young people does not bring genuine and lasting happiness to them. The pursuit of a goal that is pleasing to Jehovah brings godliness with contentment, the most worthwhile goal of all. While the world in general searches for contentment, godly families in the Christian congregation find it well within reach, if only they will seize it. There are many avenues of satisfaction available.—Eph. 5:15, 16.

PIONEER SERVICE

¹⁰ Around the world during the 1980 service year there were over 137,000 of Jehovah's Witnesses who shared in some form of the full-time ministry, the pioneer service. These individuals found great satisfaction in having such a full share in the Kingdom proclamation. This form of "sacred service" brought them many blessings from Jehovah. At times, family members can arrange for one of their number to enter full-time pioneer service. It may require that each one sacrifice to some extent, but the rewards are well worth it. Have you considered the possibility of one of your family members sharing in this

10. How can pioneer service be encouraged in the Christian family, and with what benefit?



Serving in a Bethel home can be a source of deep satisfaction. It is a vital contribution to the earth-wide "sacred service"

field of "sacred service"? Many single persons and married couples who start out in the pioneer service, first as auxiliary pioneers, then as regular or special pioneers, find that they are even in position to expand their ministry into other fields of "sacred service."

MISSIONARY SERVICE

¹¹ For over 38 years the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead has been in operation, training and equipping people to go into foreign fields where they have been able to 'seek first the Kingdom.' Many Christian fathers and mothers have been willing to forgo the pleasure of having their children nearby, but have encouraged them to expand their ministry and thus help others in foreign countries. Thousands of single brothers and sisters, as well as married couples, have been blessed with the privilege of taking up missionary service in foreign lands. They have been enriched by many blessings in that form of "sacred service" and have been instrumental in spreading the "good news" to the far-off parts of the earth. To this day

11. (a) Into what other field of "sacred service" have many gone? (b) Of what value has this proved to be in carrying on "sacred service"?

there are graduates of the first classes of Gilead School serving in foreign lands, and in many instances they form the firm foundation of the work that was started decades ago. In carrying on your "sacred service" as a family, are you in position to encourage any of your children to consider this field of activity?—Mal. 3:10.

BETHEL SERVICE

¹² Throughout the earth at the branch offices of the Watch Tower Society there are Bethel homes in operation where wholly dedicated young men and women can serve their Creator in the days of their young manhood and womanhood. (Eccl. 12:1) This form of "sacred service" also brings many joys to those who qualify for it, since they are able to render a service in behalf of their brothers and sisters who are in the preaching and teaching ministry. Many families are blessed with the privilege of having children or relatives serving in a Bethel home. While this field of full-time activity does not allow for one to share in the public ministry to the same extent that the pioneer or missionary work does, still those serving at Bethel share in preaching from house to house and spreading the Kingdom message. (Acts 20:20) Moreover, they are providing essential services that help keep the world-wide ministry moving forward.

WHAT WILL YOU DO?

¹³ Paul, in his letter to the Corinthian congregation, wrote that he was staying on in Ephesus for a time because 'a large door that leads to activity had been opened to him.' (1 Cor. 16:9) Before Jehovah's people today there continues to be a large door of activity, "sacred service," that is open. We are living in the days of the final fulfillment of many Bible proph-

12. What part can Bethel play in the "sacred service" of some families?

13. What opportunity continues to be available to Christian families?

ecies dealing with the "time of the end" when the good news of the Kingdom is to be preached in all the world for a witness. (Dan. 12:4; Matt. 24:14) What will the Christian families of Jehovah's Witnesses do? The urgency is there, for the time is limited. The provisions are there, for Jehovah has provided his Word the Bible and publications furnished by the "faithful and discreet slave" for the benefit of God-fearing ones. (Matt. 24:45-47) The families are there, and Jehovah has continued to add thousands to the ranks of those sharing in Kingdom proclamation.—Compare Isaiah 60:22.

¹⁴ So the questions are: What are you doing? Are you seizing the opportunity you now have, both as a family and individually, to render "sacred service" to the Creator? Are you encouraging others to do so? Is your family unit one of those in the congregation that gives evidence of being based on a solid foundation, desiring to produce the fruits of the Kingdom? When speaking about being a sweet-smelling incense that spreads among both those being saved and those who are being lost, Paul further said: "Who, then, is capable of such a task? We are not like so many others, who handle God's message as if it were cheap merchandise; but because God has sent us, we speak with sincerity in his presence, as servants of Christ."—2 Cor. 2:16, 17, *TEV*.

¹⁵ By promoting love, peace and unity in the family circle, by giving primary importance to 'seeking first the Kingdom,' by sitting down and counting the cost, Christian families may find they will indeed be able to increase the share they are having in advancing the most important message ever proclaimed on this

14. (a) What pertinent questions can families ask themselves? (b) How is it that we can be considered qualified to share in "sacred service"?

15, 16. (a) How may some be able to increase their share in advancing Kingdom interests? (b) What are the blessings of increased "sacred service"?

earth, the "good news" of God's established kingdom. For their sincere, united efforts the blessing of Jehovah will be theirs, and he adds no pain with the blessings he grants.—Prov. 10:22.

¹⁶ Why not sit down together as a family and consider what you are doing and what you can do? Honesty will no doubt force most of us to admit that with a little more effort we could expand the part our family has in sharing in Jehovah's "sacred service." Remember that Jehovah does not ask us to do more than is reasonable. Our love for him, for our family and for mankind in general should prompt us to examine ourselves and determine what we might do. Think about the various features of your "sacred service," your glorious ministry as Christ's disciple. (2 Cor. 4:7) Take the matter to Jehovah in prayer, asking his direction and help in connection with the efforts you make. The blessings are many now with godly contentment, and the future holds promise of life that is life indeed, in God's new system of things.—Matt. 25:34; 1 Tim. 6:6, 17-19.

POINTS TO DISCUSS AS A FAMILY

- Beyond our personal application of Jesus' words at Matthew 6:33, why should families be concerned about unitedly applying those words?
- How can you have a greater part in the family program to teach children to share the Kingdom message with others?
- What practical adjustments can you think of that can be made in your family so that children can have a fuller share in this work?
- What special features of "sacred service" might be reasonable goals for you or some member of your family?
- How might your family work together so that at least one of you might reach such a goal?



ENDURING AFTER A TRAGIC LOSS

As told by Elise Harms

FORTY years ago, on January 8, 1941, my husband, Johannes Harms, was executed by the Nazis. Why? Because his conscience would not permit him to share in war, slaughtering his fellowmen on the other side of the Nazi battle line. He had steadfastly refused to “heil” Hitler. Johannes was not afraid to maintain such Christian neutrality even at the cost of his own life.

I will never forget the touching letter that he sent to his father, Martin, just before being executed. My husband wrote:

“Now I, too, have been given an opportunity to prove my faithfulness to the Lord unto death, yes, in faithfulness not only up *unto* death, but even *into* death. My death sentence has already been announced and I am chained both day and night—the marks (on the paper) are from the handcuffs—but I still have not conquered to the full. Remaining faithful is not made easy for one of Jehovah’s Witnesses. I still have an opportunity to save my earthly life, but only thereby to lose the real life. Yes, one of Jehovah’s Witnesses is given an opportunity to break his covenant even when in view of the gallows. Therefore, I am still in the midst of the fight and I still have many victories to win before I can say that ‘I have fought the fine fight, I have observed the faith; there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness which God, the righteous judge, will give me.’ The fight is doubtless difficult, but I am wholeheartedly grateful to the Lord that he not only has

given me the necessary strength to stand up until now in the face of death but has given me a joy I would like to share with all my loved ones.

“My dear father, you are still a prisoner, too, and whether this letter will ever reach you, I do not know. If you should ever go free, however, then remain just as faithful as you are now, for you know that whoever has laid his hand to the plow and looks back is not worthy of the kingdom of God. . . .

“When you, dear father, are at home again, then be sure to take particular care of my dear Lieschen, for it will be particularly difficult for her, knowing that her dear one will not return. I know that you will do this and I thank you ahead of time. My dear father, in spirit I call to you, remain faithful, as I have attempted to remain faithful, and then we will see each other again. I will be thinking of you up until the very last.”

Perhaps you are wondering what happened to Johannes’ father and me after his execution. Have we endured, remaining faithful to Jehovah, as Johannes encouraged us to do?

Well, Johannes’ father, Martin, was in the concentration camp at Sachsenhausen when Johannes was executed, and he remained there until the end of the war. Then he returned home to Wilhelmshaven and helped to rebuild the congregation of Jehovah’s Witnesses there. He served Jehovah God faithfully until his death in 1976, at the ripe old age of 90.

As for me, presently I live in a small apartment here in Wilhelmshaven, where I grew up and where I married Johannes back in 1936. Although I do not enjoy the best of health, yes, I am still active as one of Jehovah's Witnesses.

Have I remarried? No. Of course, Scripturally I was free to remarry. But the thought of finding happiness in the arms of another man, after Johannes had had such a struggle to remain faithful—no, for me personally the thought was just not appealing.

Before I explain what has helped me to endure various things during the past 40 years, let me first go back and tell you the circumstances that led up to Johannes' execution.

ARREST AND EXECUTION

Johannes was arrested on September 3, 1940. This was already his second imprisonment after our marriage. My sister and I were able to visit him every three or four weeks. During our second visit we learned that he had been sentenced to death. So it did not come as a complete surprise to me when he was beheaded on January 8, 1941, although it was still a shock, of course. It hit me very hard.

But I knew that Johannes had not died as a criminal. I also knew that the officials had repeatedly tried by various means to make him compromise. I knew the difficult times he had gone through. There was little I could do to help him. So when I was notified that he had been executed, I was relieved to know it was over. For the moment, I forgot about myself, just thinking: "Now they cannot make him compromise. There is no danger any longer of his being unfaithful. He has endured faithful unto death."

We had been married only about four years and eight months. Since we had been engaged for three years, we could

have been married sooner, but kept putting it off. We knew the problems that we might have to face. Even then, times were critical in Germany. In fact, the activity of Jehovah's Witnesses had been banned in the country.

When Johannes' father (who was already serving his second term) was unexpectedly released from prison, we had used the occasion to get married. I can still recall that it was a beautiful spring day in May of 1936. We found joy together as a married couple until the Nazis arrested Johannes.

KEEPING FROM BECOMING BITTER

Some people let adversity make them bitter. They begin to doubt God's love. They find fault with him, even going so far as to doubt his existence. When Johannes was executed, I knew that this was for a reason; he was killed for maintaining integrity to God. But just six months after I lost Johannes, death struck again—my mother died! This, I must admit, almost caused me to become bitter against God. I wondered: "Why, in my time of grief, did she, the one person I could count on most for support, also have to die?"

However, shortly thereafter we began to experience the real horrors of the war—the terrible air raids, for example, that almost totally destroyed some German cities. Since I had to work to make a living, I began to think: "Who would have cared for mother during this difficult time, had she still been alive? Since she was blind, who would have taken the time to help her to the air-raid shelter?" What a hardship it would have been for her! Slowly I regained my balance, realizing that at times Jehovah permits things that we may not understand, but that in reality show he "is very tender in affection and merciful." (Jas. 5:11) I became convinced that



Johannes Harms and his death notice received from the Nazi authorities

well-meaning efforts, I found genuine comfort elsewhere—in Jehovah God and his Word, the Bible.

There were times, sorry to say, when others did not always say the most encouraging things. I remember one time when a woman said to me (and this was shortly after Jo-

hannes had been put to death): "It's your own fault; it did not have to happen. It was Johannes' own fault!"

A cruel thing to say? Yes, in a sense, although—and I told her this—she was right. It *was* 'our own fault.' Johannes *could* have avoided it. And if I had tried to persuade him to compromise, perhaps I, too, could have avoided it. But how happy I was that we had both remained spiritually strong and had endured! I was happy that I had been 'partly to blame.'

Of course, I have had my sad moments. But Jehovah "is very tender in affection," and he has always provided comfort. Sometimes it has come in the most unusual ways. I recall one Sunday about three months after Johannes had been executed. The weather was gloomy. This, plus all that I had been through, was really getting me down. I spent most of the day crying, wandering from room to room with my mother close behind, trying to console me. I struggled with my tears, but

as long as I keep a proper attitude and trust him completely, things will always turn out for my own good.

Here is another example. We had had a four-room apartment. However, when my husband was executed, I lost my right to keep it. I was ordered to leave. But where would I go? As if by a miracle, an army officer's wife, who with her husband was being transferred to another location, arranged for me to take over three rooms in the apartment they were vacating. Still, it was with a heavy heart that I moved from the place that Johannes and I had shared together. Yet, what do you think happened to it about six months later? It was completely destroyed in an air raid!

COMFORTED—NOT BY MAN, BUT BY GOD

At the time Johannes was executed, I was working in an office. When my co-workers heard about what had happened, they tried, in their own way, to comfort me. They would invite me to their social get-togethers. While I appreciated their

I could not control them. I remember thinking: "At least you used to get a letter once a month, but now you will not even get that—not a single line! If only I could get just one more letter—just one more!"

Later, during that same day, I went to the closet and began looking through some of my husband's things that had been sent home after his execution. Among them was a small leather case that was used for holding pencils and other things. Suddenly, I noticed that one side was unusually thick. There seemed to be something inside. I ripped it open, stuck my fingers inside and began to pull out little pieces of paper. Yes, they were letters that Johannes had written in very small print, like a diary. There were 20 letters in all! You can just imagine how I felt. One letter would have been cause for rejoicing. But 20? I remember promising Jehovah: "I will never complain again!"

THE EXCITING POSTWAR YEARS

During the past 40 years I have never thought of giving up. Why should I? Johannes made a contribution to Jehovah by maintaining his integrity to the point of death; I can make a contribution by enduring as long as I am alive. (Compare Romans 12:1.) Of course, it has not been easy, and I could never have made it on my own. Prayer has been an extremely

important aid for me. And preaching to others about God's kingdom has been a real blessing, too. Whenever I felt sadness getting the better of me, I would go out to share in preaching the "good news." Trying to comfort others with the message of the Bible made me forget my own problems.

Later, I was able to give up my secular job. Then I had more time to spend in preaching the "good news" to others. A Witness gave me a small car so that I could preach in outlying areas, and I was able to start a number of Bible studies with interested persons. One I particularly remember.

I called on a woman on a Thursday afternoon and remember telling her: "It would be much better if we could discuss these points systematically with the help of a book." She agreed. Then I added: "And we have some wonderful meetings. I can pick you up on Sunday, if you would like to come." Since I didn't want to waste time, I got right to the point!

She agreed to come to the meeting. So the following Sunday afternoon I knocked at her door, only to be told: "Come in for a minute. My husband is not quite ready."

"What?" I guess I showed my amazement. "Your husband wants to come along, too?"

And come he did. Later, I told them about our other meetings and they began to attend those also. Soon they were baptized, and a congregation book study was started in their home. Today, almost 30 years later, it is still being conducted there.

THE HAPPINESS OF ENDURING

On looking back, I would say that several things have helped me to endure. First of all, Johannes and I tried to be prepared, to think about what *could* happen in the way of trials. In our case, thinking about the situation beforehand and deciding what we wanted to do is

In Coming Issues

- Youth, Is Bible Morality the Best Way?
- Could Christ Return Without Being Seen?
- "Peace and Security!"—Then "Sudden Destruction"

what helped us to cope when it developed.

We also avoided doing anything that might have made our tests more difficult. For example, as a young married couple we did not needlessly go into debt. This would certainly have made the situation even more difficult—for both of us.

Over the years I have also learned not to expect too much of others. At times we may think our Christian brothers do not visit us often enough or pay us sufficient attention. But why should I want to rob them of the time and energy they need for their own families and various congregation responsibilities? I have come to appreciate that if I do not expect *too* much of others, I will not easily be disappointed. Any act of kindness and thoughtfulness that comes my way means just that much more and gives me added reason to thank Jehovah.

Of course, the most important thing that

has helped me to endure has been trusting in Jehovah, presenting all my problems to him in prayer.

In the very last letter Johannes ever wrote to me, just hours before his execution, he expressed this thought that has remained with me ever since and that also has encouraged me to endure: "We do not want to be faithful to our God for the sake of a reward, but in order to prove by our steadfastness in His service that humans, like Job, can maintain integrity under the most difficult of trials."

How happy Johannes would have been if he could have known *then* what I know *now*! He would be delighted to know that his father, after some five decades of service to Jehovah, remained faithful unto death, and that 40 years after his execution I, his "dear Lieschen," am still among the happy ones who are striving to endure faithfully.

QUESTIONS from READERS

● How should a Christian view using blood as fertilizer, as animal food or in some other way that does not involve his eating it?

In matters of this sort a Christian's thinking and actions should reflect his Bible-based regard for the sacredness of blood.

Many persons who do not know of or care about God's thinking condone the use of human blood for blood transfusions. Also, in some places, persons eat animal blood in food, such as in blood sausage. Nor does misuse of blood stop there. Some businessmen try to profit from the blood of slaughtered animals by preparing plant fertilizers from it, adding it to dog or cat food or employing it in other commercial products.

Yet Christians know from the Bible that blood is not simply another biological product to be used in any way possible or profitable. The Bible shows that blood represents life. So God told mankind through Noah that humans should not eat blood. (Gen. 9:3, 4) Later, Jehovah God made this prohibition part of the Mosaic law. (Lev. 17:12; Deut. 12:23) After the Law was set aside, He instructed Christians that they must "abstain . . . from blood." Accordingly, Jehovah's Witnesses do not eat blood or accept blood transfusions. Nor do they endorse various commercial uses of blood.—Acts 15:19, 20, 28, 29.

We can better appreciate why this is the proper view if we consider this question: In ancient Israel, what was done with the blood of a slain animal?

God told the Israelites that blood could be used sacrificially on the altar. (Lev. 17:11) If it was not used in that way, an animal's blood was to be poured out on the ground. This, in a sense, returned the blood to God, for the earth is his footstool.—Lev. 17:13, 14; Isa. 66:1.

God's limitation on the use of blood was further impressed on the Israelites by what he told them about fat. Contrary to what was required of true worshipers before and after the Mosaic law, Israelites during the time the Mosaic law was in force were not to eat fat. The fat of a sacrificial animal was viewed as its richest or best part, and so it could be burned on the altar as a sacrifice to God. (Lev. 3:3-5, 16) In this respect there was a similarity in how *those under the Law* viewed and used blood and fat. But there was also a difference. At least regarding an animal that died of itself or was killed by another beast, God's law said that the fat could "be used for anything else conceivable, but you must not eat it at all." Do you see the point? Though they could eat neither blood nor fat, Jehovah said that they could put fat to uses other than in sacrifice. *But God did not* say that about blood. If blood was not put on the altar, it was to be poured out on the ground, thus returning the animal's life to the Life-Giver.—Lev. 7:22-27.

Christians are not under the Mosaic law. (Rom. 7:6; Col. 2:13-16) We are, though, specifically commanded to "abstain . . . from blood." And we surely ought to respect the sacredness of blood, realizing that our salvation has been made possible through the blood of Christ. (Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:13, 14, 20) A Christian who deeply appreciates this does not need endless rules about what he should do with regard to commercial uses of blood.

Consider, for instance, the use of blood as fertilizer. When an Israelite hunter poured an animal's blood out on the ground it was not in order to fertilize the soil. He was pouring it on the earth out of respect for blood's sacredness. So, would a Christian with a similar appreciation of the significance of blood deliberately collect it from slaughtered animals so that he could use it as fertilizer? Hardly, for such commercialization of blood would not be in accord with deep respect for the life-representing value of blood.

Of course, Christians cannot tell non-Christians that they must not use blood in making fertilizers or other commercial products. Hence, if most fertilizers on the market contained some blood, the Christian would have to decide for himself what to do. He could consider factors such as the Bible's counsel to

"abstain . . . from blood," the availability of alternative products, the proddings of his Bible-trained conscience and the feelings of others.—Compare 1 Corinthians 8:10-13.

Another situation that sometimes arises involves feeding blood to animals. It is true that *at present* many animals in the wild do not live on vegetation as the Bible says they did originally. (Gen. 1:30) Rather, they eat other creatures, blood and all. Nonetheless, would a Christian who knows God's law on blood intentionally feed blood to animals under his care? Would that harmonize with what he knows about how blood was handled under the Law?

Finally, questions have arisen about disposing of animal carcasses that have blood in them. In Israel a person who found a carcass of an animal that died of itself could sell it to a foreigner who was not interested in keeping God's law. (Deut. 14:21) It is noteworthy, however, that this provision was not made so that an Israelite might make a regular business of trafficking in blood or unbled meat. Nor was the Israelite deliberately killing an animal and leaving the blood in it because some persons liked the taste of unbled meat or so that the carcass would weigh more. Rather, he was simply disposing of a carcass that he could not use for food and that had to be removed.

Accordingly, a farmer today might have to get rid of an unbled carcass, such as a cow that he found dead so that it was no longer possible to drain the blood. Or a hunter might find a dead animal in a trap. What could he do with such an unbled animal? Sell the carcass to a rendering plant? Sell the dead animal to a non-Christian who had some personal or commercial use for the flesh? The individual Christian would have to decide for himself after considering what the law of the land requires and factors such as those discussed above, including the value of having a good conscience before God and men.—Acts 24:16.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

November 22: Pleasing Jehovah as a Family.
Page 16. Songs to Be Used: 65, 45.

November 29: Sacred Service as a Family.
Page 21. Songs to Be Used: 63, 78.

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Page 16. Songs to Be Used: 62, 45.
November 29: Sacred Service as a Family.
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