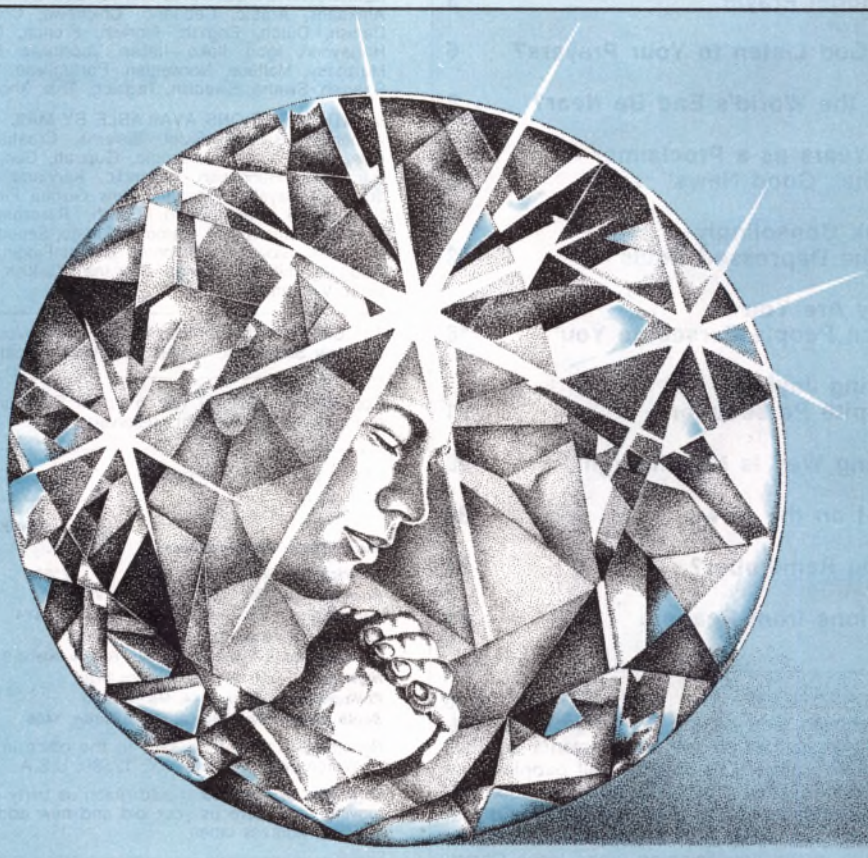
April 15, 1982

The Watchtower

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom



That Precious Gem ~

The Model Prayer

April 15, 1982
Vol. 103, No. 8

The Watchtower®

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom

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THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER" is to exalt Jehovah God as the Sovereign of the universe. It keeps watch on world events as they fulfill Bible prophecy. It comforts all peoples with the good news that God's kingdom will soon destroy those who oppress their fellowmen and that it will turn the earth into a paradise. It encourages faith in the now-reigning king, Jesus Christ, whose shed blood opens the way for mankind to gain eternal life. "The Watchtower," published by Jehovah's Witnesses since 1879, is nonpolitical. It adheres to the Bible as its authority.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

May 23: 'Happy Are You When People Persecute You.' Page 16. Enduring Joyfully Despite Persecution, pars. 1-4. Page 21. Songs to Be Used: 17, 11.

May 30: Enduring Joyfully Despite Persecution, pars. 5-29. Page 22. Songs to Be Used: 51, 7.

Average Printing Each Issue: 9,300,000

Now Published in 106 Languages

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The Bible translation used is the "New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures," unless otherwise indicated.

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Fifteen cents (U.S.) a copy

Watch Tower Society offices	***Yearly subscription rates Semimonthly***
America, U.S., Watchtower, Wallkill, N.Y. 12589	$3.50
Australia, Box 280, Ingleburn, N.S.W. 2565	$3.50
Canada, Box 4100, Georgetown, Ontario L7G 4Y4	$4.00
England, The Ridgeway, London NW7 1RN	£4.00
New Zealand, 6-A Western Springs Rd., Auckland 3	$4.50
Nigeria, P.O. Box 194, Yaba, Lagos State	₦2.50
Philippines, P.O. Box 2044, Manila 2800	₱25.00
South Africa, Private Bag 2, Elandsfontein, 1406	R3,60

Remittances should be sent to the office in your country or to Watchtower, Wallkill, N.Y. 12589, U.S.A.

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).

The Watchtower (ISSN 0043-1087) is published semimonthly for $3.50 per year by Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201. Second-class postage paid at Brooklyn, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices.

Postmaster: Send address changes to Watchtower, ***Wallkill, N.Y. 12589.***

Published by

Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania

25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201, U.S.A.

Frederick W. Franz, President Grant Suiter, Secretary

The Model Prayer

"You must pray, then, this way: 'Our Father in the heavens, let your name be sanctified. Let your kingdom come. Let your will take place, as in heaven, also upon earth. Give us today our bread for this day; and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the wicked one.' "

YOU might call this the Prayer of prayers. It is widely known as the "Our Father" prayer and as "The Lord's Prayer" because the Lord Jesus Christ provided it as a model for his disciples. (Matthew 6:9-13) It can appropriately be compared to a precious gem.

VALUE

Precious thoughts of great significance are embodied in the few words of this prayer. Just like a precious stone, its value is very high. Diamonds, for example, are 120 times rarer than gold. The value of a diamond is enhanced by its various facets.

FACETS

These are obtained by careful cutting. The angles must be exact to give maximum brilliance. Similarly, each facet of the Model Prayer shines with its own splendor.

DURABLE

'Diamonds are forever.' Did you realize that almost 2,000 years have passed since the Model Prayer came into existence? Its worth has not faded. So let us take a closer look at this precious gem. What does it mean?

Things having to do with God come first

Our Father in the heavens, let your name be sanctified.

The personal name of God is Jehovah. Jesus 'made his Father's name manifest' to his disciples by using God's personal name and acquainting them with God's qualities. They, in turn, would sanctify that name by treating it as something holy, telling others about it and making known God's purpose to sanctify his own name before all creation. As 'a people for God's name,' Christians should always strive to conduct themselves in a manner worthy of the Name.—Psalm 83:18; John 17:6; Acts 15:14.

Let your kingdom come.

The Kingdom is God's heavenly government, the agency through which real security and full enjoyment of life will be made possible for mankind. It is already established in heaven, and its King, Christ Jesus, anointed by Jehovah God himself, will soon rule over all the earth. Being a powerful government, the Kingdom will act against the imperfect and oppressive systems that now exist. "It will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms [the present political powers], and it itself will stand to times indefinite."—Daniel 2:44; 7:13, 14.

Let your will take place, as in heaven, also upon earth.

God's will is that all wickedness be cleaned out of the universe. "Just a little while longer, and the wicked one will be no more," the Bible says. God has a special purpose for this planet. "You will be with me in Paradise," Jesus told a person impaled with him, thus giving the man hope of life on a paradise earth. God's purpose includes a resurrection of the dead, "of both the righteous and the unrighteous." His will is that "all sorts of men should be saved."—Psalm 37:10; Luke 23:43; Acts 24:15; 1 Timothy 2:3, 4.

Things having to do with our needs come next

Our request for the necessities of life should be modest. Ask just for food *"for this day."* As Jesus truthfully said, "even when a person has an abundance his life does not result from the things he possesses." If we believe him, our lives will not be devoted primarily to acquiring material possessions. "Having sustenance and covering, we shall be content with these things." When saying, "Give *us,"* Jesus was also teaching us to keep in mind the needs of others.—Luke 12:15; 1 Timothy 6:8.

Give us today our bread for this day;

We need God's forgiveness. "If we make the statement: 'We have no sin,' we are misleading ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, [God] is faithful and righteous so as to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." "We have a helper with the Father, Jesus Christ, a righteous one"—provided, of course, that we have genuine faith in the provision that God made for forgiveness through Jesus Christ. Also, we ourselves must be forgiving.—1 John 1:8, 9; 2:1, 2.

and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

"The whole world is lying in the power of the wicked one," Satan the Devil. God does not tempt anyone to do bad, but our desires may entice us. God provides sound Bible principles and upbuilding Christian association to help us to turn away from temptation and to protect us from wickedness. So we need to work in harmony with our prayer. "O you lovers of Jehovah, hate what is bad. . . . Out of the hand of the wicked ones he delivers" his loyal ones.—1 John 5:19; Psalm 97:10.

And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the wicked one.

Does God Listen to Your Prayers?

MILLIONS upon millions of prayers have been offered up to God since Jesus gave his disciples the Model Prayer. Many repeat this prayer word for word. Yet it is widely felt that a lot of prayers are going unanswered. Does God still listen to our prayers? What makes a prayer acceptable to him?

First, we have to *believe* that God will answer our prayers. "He that approaches God must believe that he is and that he becomes the rewarder of those earnestly seeking him."—Hebrews 11:6.

Then our prayers must really be directed to God in sincerity. Does that sound strange? Yet Jesus warned: "When you pray, you must not be as the hypocrites; because they like to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the broad ways to be visible to men. Truly I say to you, They are having their reward in full." (Matthew 6:5) So, long, resonant prayers offered in public in order to impress listeners do not impress God. He does not hear such prayers.

Again, we should not approach God demanding recognition. God hears the prayers of humble people who want to do what is right and who acknowledge their sinfulness.—Luke 18:9-14; 1 Peter 3:12.

Is any special posture necessary when we pray? In the Bible record, God's servants adopted different positions when praying; yet their prayers were heard. Some kneeled; others stood. Nehemiah prayed while he was standing before the king of Persia. Jonah cried out from the belly of a huge fish, and it would be difficult to say what position he was in at that time. (Daniel 6:10; 1 Kings 8:22; Nehemiah 2:1-5; Jonah 2:1, 2) So while we may wish to adopt a position that will help us to concentrate, the important thing is to have a sincere desire to approach God in prayer. We can do this at any time, in any place and under any circumstances.—Ephesians 6:18.

The Right Channel

Jehovah God has established a channel through which we are to approach him. Jesus explained: "I am the way . . . No one comes to the Father except *through me.*"—John 14:6.

Many sincerely believe that if they pray in the name of a "saint," or even in the name of Jesus' earthly mother, Mary, this will be effective. But if we really want "Our Father" to answer our prayers, surely we should go through the channel that *he* has appointed. It is our only means of approach to God. As Jesus said: "If you ask the Father for anything he will give it to you in *my name.*"—John 16:23.

Not Repetitious

When Jesus spoke the Model Prayer, did he intend to have his followers recite his exact words every time they prayed to God? Well, he introduced the prayer by saying: "You must pray, then, this *way,*" not 'with these *words.*' (Matthew 6:9) On another occasion Jesus' followers said to him: "Lord, teach us how to pray." In answer, Jesus offered a prayer containing thoughts similar to those in the Model Prayer, but he used *different words.* He said: "Father, let your name be sanctified. Let your kingdom come. Give us our bread for the day according to the day's requirement. And forgive us our sins, for we ourselves also forgive everyone that is in debt to us; and do not bring us into temptation." Hence, the Model Prayer was a pattern of the way in which we should pray. It shows us the kind of things for which to pray and the relative importance of these things.—Luke 11:1-4.

In view of this, would God hear prayers that were read out of a prayer book? If you have a child, would you like it if he spoke to you only with words that he read out of a book prepared by someone else? Or would you prefer that he speak from his own heart? Jehovah God certainly prefers that we speak to him from our heart, not from a prayer book. King David said: "Before [God] pour out your heart." (Psalm 62:8) Moreover, Jesus warned us: "When praying, do not say the same things over and over again." —Matthew 6:7.

In Harmony with God's Will

The apostle John told us: "This is the confidence that we have toward [God], that, no matter what it is that we ask according to his will, he hears us." (1 John 5:14) Here is another requirement for having our prayers heard by God. Our prayers should be in harmony with God's will. Furthermore, once we pray we should be sure to act in harmony with our prayers.

Cornelius, a first-century Italian army officer "made supplication to God continually." Jehovah heard his prayers and provided help for him to learn more about the divine will. Do you want God to hear your prayers? Then read the Bible and find out what God's will is so that your prayers can be in harmony with it. Under God's direction, Jehovah's Witnesses will be delighted to give you the same kind of help in this that the apostle Peter gave to Cornelius.—Acts 10:2-5.

"In everything by prayer . . . let your petitions be made known to God." (Philippians 4:6, 7) Keep on asking—first for the things having to do with God: his name, his kingdom and his will. Then ask for the things having to do with your personal needs and those of your fellowman. Do so in harmony with what Jesus said in the Model Prayer. Conform to God's requirements for prayer, and may Jehovah listen favorably to *your* prayers.

Could the World's End Be Near?

SHORTLY before Jesus' death, four of his apostles asked him: "Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" (Matthew 24:3, *Authorized Version*) Ever since, Christians have been interested in this subject. Of course, the expression "end of the world" does not mean the end of the earth. Rather, it refers to "the conclusion of the system of things," as modern Bible translations show.

In answer to their request for a sign, Jesus gave them one. He did not give just one event, such as wars, as "the sign." He told of many different happenings and situations. All these things that were foretold would take place during the time that Bible writers called the "last days." (2 Timothy 3:1; 2 Peter 3:3, 4) As you examine these things that Jesus foretold, note how they have been undergoing fulfillment in the lifetime of persons now living.

"NATION WILL RISE AGAINST NATION AND KINGDOM AGAINST KINGDOM."—Matthew 24:7.

World War I, fought from 1914 to 1918, was much greater than all the major wars put together during the 2,400 years before 1914. Yet only 21 years after that war ended, World War II began. And it was four times as destructive as World War I. Since World War II ended in 1945, more than 25 million persons have been killed in some 150 other wars fought around the globe.

"THERE WILL BE FOOD SHORTAGES . . . IN ONE PLACE AFTER ANOTHER."—Matthew 24:7.

Following World War I came the greatest famine in all history. But the shortage of food was even greater after World War II. A fourth of the world was then starving. Millions still die of starvation—some 50 million a year! Even in places where food is plentiful, many are too poor to buy it.

"IN ONE PLACE AFTER ANOTHER PESTILENCES." —Luke 21:11.

Right after World War I more people died of the Spanish flu than had died of any disease epidemic in the history of mankind. The death toll was some 21 million people! Yet pestilence and disease continue to rage. Millions die each year from heart trouble and cancer. Venereal disease is spreading rapidly. Other terrible diseases occur in country after country.

"THERE WILL BE . . . EARTHQUAKES IN ONE PLACE AFTER ANOTHER."—Matthew 24:7.

From 1914 until now, there have been many more major earthquakes than in any other like period in recorded history. For over 1,000 years, from the year 856 C.E. to 1914, there were only 24 major earthquakes, causing some 1,973,000 deaths. But in the 63 years from 1915 to 1978, a total of some 1,600,000 persons have died in 43 great earthquakes.

"INCREASING OF LAWLESSNESS."—Matthew 24:12.

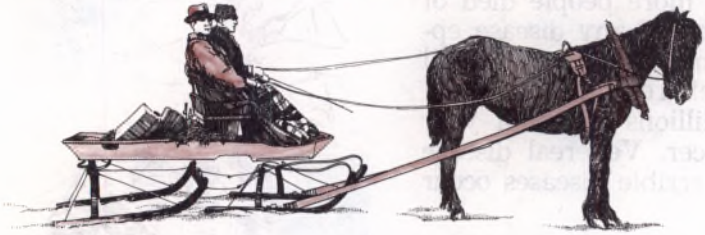
From all over the world come reports of increasing lawlessness and crime. Crimes of violence, such as murder, rape and muggings, are now running out of control.

"MEN BECOME FAINT OUT OF FEAR."—Luke 21:26.

Fear is probably the biggest single emotion in people's lives today. Not long after the exploding of the first nuclear bombs, atomic scientist Harold C. Urey said: "We will eat fear, sleep fear, live in fear and die in fear." People fear crime, pollution, disease, inflation and many other things that threaten their security and their very lives.

Although there are many other features of this sign, those listed here should be enough to prove that we really are living in the time the Bible foretold as the "last days." This means that shortly now God will bring an end to this wicked system of things. But those who serve God will survive to enjoy life on the cleansed earth.

Sixty Years as a Proclaimer of the "Good News"



As told by
Martin Wenderqvist

IT WAS an unforgettable moment. It took place during a violent snowstorm. About a dozen of us stood around the open grave and sang a song. Then I said a few words about meeting again when the time of trouble has passed over the earth.

The young father fell to his knees, took the little white coffin in his hands and carefully laid it in the earth. There were tears in almost all eyes as we walked back through the forest to the home. During the evening's association and discussion, all were comforted by the thoughts that I was able to present from God's Word. —John 5:28, 29; Romans 15:4.

Comforting the bereaved while conducting funeral services is something I have done more than 600 times at different places in Sweden and Finland during my 60 years as a proclaimer of the good news of God's kingdom. But before I tell you more about the experiences I have had, let me first explain how I became a minister.

Early Influences

One day in 1908, when my father was returning home from work in Stockholm, he found a four-page tract on the train. That tract entitled "Where Are the Dead?" was published by the International Bible Students Association. Both my parents were Bible believers, and their reading of this tract moved them to a deeper study of God's Word.

My parents soon contacted the Bible Students, as Jehovah's Witnesses were then known. The two of them began attending meetings that were held every Sunday at a little hall in Stockholm, along with about 50 other persons. In August 1912 Charles Taze Russell, the president of the Watch Tower Society, was the main speaker at a convention in Stockholm that was attended by more than 100 Bible Students from all over Sweden. Although as a 10-year-old I did not understand much of what was said, seeing what took place made a big impression on me.

After finishing secondary school, and while working with a tailoring company in Västerås, I began seriously considering the problems of life and, in the evenings, I would often read the Bible. The following year, 1920, for the first time I shared with the little Bible study group in town in declaring the "good news of the kingdom" to others.—Matthew 24:14.

Later that year A. H. Macmillan of the Society's headquarters staff in Brooklyn,

The young father fell to his knees, took the little white coffin in hand and carefully laid it in the earth

New York, visited Sweden, delivering the talk "Millions Now Living Will Never Die." Ten of us worked hard advertising the subject, and the hall holding 350 persons was packed out. Many were unable to get in; so, taking a bundle of booklets on the same subject, I went outside and gave several hundred persons a copy of the talk to read at home!

Determining My Life Course

I spoke to A. H. Macmillan about sharing in the full-time ministry, but he appeared uncertain about an 18-year-old's intentions. In effect, he said: "You have a lot to learn." Nevertheless, the next year I was appointed as a full-time preacher. Together with another brother, I left for my assignment on Gotland. At that time there were no Kingdom publishers on that island.

My first witnessing day in Visby began with a visit to a funeral parlor. Dare I go in and offer the booklet *Millions Now Living Will Never Die?* The owner could be afraid of becoming unemployed! However, he took the publication immediately. In fact, the book was so much in demand that we sometimes had to telegraph for more. We abbreviated the title to "Millions," and telegraph operators were amazed when they had to transmit the message, "Send 500 Millions immediately"!

When one of the Society's speakers became ill in January 1922, I was asked to give his talk at a number of places. I protested that I had very little public-speaking ability, but was given the speaking assignments anyway, beginning in Flen. There a sister had managed to get a couple of hundred listeners together for the evening's talk. Those present —mostly older men and women with much experience in life—looked strained and doubtful during the talk. They had expected a completely different speaker from a 20-year-old! However, after my talk in another town, a number of elderly men came forward and shook hands with me, thanking me for what they had heard. This certainly encouraged me.

For several years I continued as a traveling speaker, my itinerary appearing in *The Watch Tower,* along with the regular traveling representatives of the Society. Especially were we travelers welcomed by the settlers in Lapland. Many Witnesses of today have their roots in that mountainous area, and at assemblies some of them greet me and say that they heard their first public talk when I visited the home of their parents years ago.

Experiences on the Public Platform

Normally during the 1920's many persons attended our Bible talks and listened attentively. Once, however, a well-known individual stood up and shouted: "Lies. Faults. Come on. Let's go!" But he was disappointed when only three or four persons followed him out.

On another occasion a group of young people marched into the hall singing "The Internationale" (a song used by the Communists). They sat down in the front row with the apparent intention of irritating me and disrupting the meeting. After I spoke about problems especially acute in that area, I continued with the talk "Who Will Bring Peace to the World?" Shortly the youths, one by one,

removed their caps and began listening intently. Afterward they left peaceably, and some even stopped at the book table to ask about our literature.

When returning from a visit to the island of Seskarö in the Gulf of Bothnia, I once found a policeman waiting for me at the jetty. He took me to the police station, where the commissioner said that I had been accused of giving a political talk with probable Communist connections. He added: "You said that the whole of society is to be overthrown and a new leader by the name of Jehovah will take over." Of course, matters were cleared up when it was explained that Jehovah is God's name and that his kingdom had been discussed during the talk.

Changes of Assignment

My "substituting" as a traveling speaker continued until 1925, when I began working in the Society's branch office. Then, in 1934, I got married. How much I have appreciated the loyal support of my wife, Elna! For some years she too had worked at the Society's office.

Once in the 1930's I walked many miles to visit people living in the lonely cottages along Sweden's most northerly railway, above the Arctic Circle. These railway people did not have many visitors and therefore wanted us to stay for a long time and discuss life's problems with them.

When the World Again Went to War

Sweden avoided involvement in World War II, but the frenzy of that conflict gave the church leaders an opportunity to try to hinder our work. One Swedish bishop falsely asserted that the Witnesses were prepared "to go out in the coming battle against Satan on a command from Jehovah" and bring down all of God's enemies with armed force. After the war, our opponents preferred not to be reminded of the agitation for which they had been responsible during those years.

I was one of those called up for military service a number of times. After being sentenced, we were allowed to go free until orders were sent to the police to take us to prison. Once I was about to conduct a funeral service for a relative when two policemen made their way into the hall where about a hundred people had gathered.

The officers came up to me and said that I was under arrest and was to accompany them immediately. But the son of the deceased waved them discreetly aside and whispered: "You must understand that you cannot interrupt this meeting in this way. The officiator must complete his work here before he can leave. Otherwise, what would the relatives and friends think?"

At that, the policemen withdrew, parked the prison truck behind the cowshed and waited for me. They explained, somewhat embarrassed, that they had their orders and had to get me to Linköping prison before evening.

Freedom to Declare the "Good News"

A person who has lost his freedom for a time appreciates the benefits of being able to meet people and talk to them about the "good news," either from the platform or from door to door.

After more than 60 years as a proclaimer of the "good news," I am grateful for the many benefits of being in the ranks of Jehovah's devoted worshipers, even if it is not with the same bodily strength as in my earlier years. Also, together with my wife and in thankfulness to the Almighty, I often remind myself of the valuable fellowship we have with humble and right-minded people who expectantly look forward to the long-awaited world government wherein the Prince of Peace wields the staff.—Isaiah 9:6, 7.

"Speak Consolingly to the Depressed Souls"

"IN THE beginning I felt low, and this mood lingered. I didn't feel like going anywhere or doing anything, nor could I concentrate. I became despondent, confused, and began to think that my entire life and my good record of service to God was not worth anything. I grew panicky and frightened." Thus a 48-year-old Witness who had spent many years as a missionary described her feelings. "I had always been healthy physically and spiritually, but then I suddenly felt that I would never feel good again."

A mature brother also reports: "I became very depressed because of my job. I would come home from work so despondent that I could not eat. I would leave the table and go into a private room and cry—I just could not stop the tears. I was easily angered by others. I kept thinking, 'Where am I headed? Why is this happening to me?' It continued for six months."

These persons suffered from major depression. Other reports tell that there are still "depressed souls" among God's people. (1 Thessalonians 5:14) Statistics for the world indicate a striking increase in depressed persons. Though persons with a relationship with God are often less affected by the situations inducing depression, they are by no means immune to this disorder. But should such *faithful* servants be so plagued?

"I Am Depressed Exceedingly"

Loyal King David of Jerusalem was a victim of depression. As a result of some errors or foolishness on his part, he wrote: "I am depressed exceedingly; I go mourning all day long." (Psalm 38:6, *DeWitt*) The box on the next page shows how a number of faithful servants have felt at times, and why. However, all those listed in the box overcame their distress. According to the Bible record, they all continued serving God faithfully.

There are many reasons why persons get depressed. Over some of these the sufferer has little control. Recent medical research has indicated that *some types* of severe depression are caused by a chemical imbalance in the brain that may be the result of a number of physical causes.* At the same time our thoughts alone can bring on depression. One Bible example is revealing.

Epaphroditus, a zealous helper of the imprisoned apostle Paul, suffered depression. Paul sent this servant back from Rome to his former congregation in Philippi, and perhaps by means of him dispatched a letter stating among other things, "[Epaphroditus] is depressed because you heard he had fallen sick." True, he had been sick, but now was well—yet depressed. What caused the depression? He realized that the congregation "heard he had fallen sick." Why would this depress him?—Philippians 2:25-30.

This devoted servant was evidently very sensitive to others' feelings. He was very concerned about the worry of his dear brothers and sisters in his home

* See the article "Is It All in the Mind?" in our companion magazine *Awake!* of September 8, 1981.

congregation over the report of his ill health. It seems that the anxiety of wanting to set their minds at ease—but hopelessly separated by hundreds of miles—brought on the depression. The same could happen today, even to those who, like Epaphroditus, wholly exert themselves in the Lord's work. Intense worry and concern over others' feelings, or perhaps a feeling of letting others down, can produce depression.

But how can others help those who are depressed?

"Speak Consolingly"

One depressed Christian tearfully pleaded with her husband: "What am I going to do? I just can't go on like this!" The husband who was an unbeliever retorted: "You're just going to have to stand it!" So crushed was this woman that the next day she almost committed suicide! How important that all heed the Bible's command: "Speak consolingly to the depressed souls." Sometimes irreparable damage can result if one does not. Yet often a person may want to cheer up a depressed soul but not know what to say.—1 Thessalonians 5:14.

In his second letter to the Corinthian Christians, Paul indicates that he 'felt low,' for he had "fears within." A good report comforted him. Titus brought word of the Corinthian congregation's improved spiritual condition and of their "zeal" or concern for Paul, their "longing" for him. Hearing of their love for him cheered Paul up. (2 Corinthians 7:5-7) The same is true today. One Christian woman who suffered a crippling depression stated: "Most of all you need to know that others care about you as a person. You need to hear someone say, 'I understand; you'll be all right soon. I appreciate your experience and I like talking with you.' "

"I Learned Empathy"

"One lesson I'll never forget," admitted one Christian mother who suffered with

	HOW THEY FELT	WHY
JOB	'God has abandoned me,' 'I feel a hatred toward my life.'—Job 29:2, 4, 5; 10:1.	Sickness and personal misfortunes. It appeared that God had forsaken him.
JACOB	Refused to be comforted. "Continued weeping." 'I want to go into the grave.'—Genesis 37:35.	Grief over apparent death of son
HANNAH	'Wept and did not eat.' 'Bitter of soul and wept greatly.'—1 Samuel 1:7, 10.	Bitter disappointment over having no son
JONAH	"My dying off is better than my being alive." In a "calamitous state."—Jonah 4:6, 8.	Bottled-up anger
DAVID	"All day long I have walked about sad." "I have grown numb." "My power has left me." —Psalm 38:6, 8, 10.	Guilt over serious error
NEHEMIAH	"Began to weep and mourn for days," had "gloominess of heart."—Nehemiah 1:4; 2:2.	Disturbed over condition of some of God's people
PAUL	Had "fears within" and felt "laid low." —2 Corinthians 7:5, 6.	Opposition and lack of rest

depression. "I learned empathy. Before, I used to think that all you had to do was to pump yourself up and get going, so I never had much fellow feeling for others who were sick. Now I know. When some of the friends told me to 'snap out of it,' there wasn't anything that I wanted to do more, but at that point I had no control. Their comments really hurt." Depressed persons need "fellow feeling" extended to them from others.—1 Peter 3:8.

How can family and friends help? A 40-year-old previously depressed mother reflected: "You not only feel terrible physically and emotionally, but also feel guilty because you're not doing for your family what you normally would." So she advised: "Let the depressed person know you realize he's doing his best. Encourage him to keep on."

While upbuilding words are needed and are appreciated, those desiring to help may be able to offer more assistance.

Support the Weak

Paul urged the Thessalonian congregation not only to "speak consolingly to the depressed souls," but also to "support the weak, be long-suffering toward all." The term "support" involves deeds, for the original Greek word* has the primary sense of keeping oneself directly opposite to another so as to sustain him. —1 Thessalonians 5:14.

The report of a study of over 500 persons concluded: "More than heart, strong will, and a cheerful disposition, people may need close, supportive friends and families to ward off depression." Dr. L. Cammer, a well-known psychiatrist, stated in agreement: "It is vital that the depressed person have someone around who won't start lecturing, who will stay patient." Yes, a positive effort to help, such as by a telephone call or a short visit, may be deeply appreciated.

One Christian woman was asked what form of treatment helped her the most. She responded: "The greatest one was being around my spiritual brothers and sisters. Otherwise, I would not have recovered. In our congregation of Witnesses there was love, concern and understanding. It was like a wall of protection."

Of course, there is a need at times to be affectionately firm in helping a depressed person, since his thinking may be confused. He may need some gentle urgings to take a walk with you, to engage in some other form of exercise, to take his medication, or to continue in his spiritual activities.

When a person is hospitalized because of a physical illness, often he is fed a number of small meals rather than a few large ones. The same may be necessary when helping a depressed one with spiritual food. It may take real patience on the part of a mate or a concerned friend to discuss spiritual 'good things' briefly on various occasions, rather than to try to have a long Bible discussion, which may overtax the depressed one. Even when the ailing one does not respond to the instruction, the love shown him makes an impact.

Until the disorder runs its course or responds to medical treatment, continued patience and understanding are necessary on the part of others. At times there are situations where no form of medical treatment seems to work. So long-suffering along with self-sacrificing love is needed to aid these ailing ones until Jehovah heals all sicknesses—mental and physical—in the upcoming new order.—Revelation 21:3, 4.

Elders in a congregation have a special responsibility. The article "An Educated Tongue—'To Encourage the Weary,'" which deals with this aspect, will be published in a forthcoming issue.

* *Antekhesthe*—"be you holding yourselves against."

'Happy Are You When People Persecute You'

"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."—Matthew 5:11, 12.

CAN you really be happy when people tell lies about you and try to do all sorts of injurious things to you? Consider the case of a young woman in Finland who began to study the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses a few years ago. Soon she was rejoicing in the good things she was learning about Jehovah's purpose for mankind, and she came to have a deep appreciation for his goodness and love.

2 But then her husband started to oppose her studying the Bible, and when she refused to stop doing so, he began behaving violently toward her. Eventually he applied to the court for a separation order. The young woman soon found herself expelled from her home and forced to leave her three young children, including a baby just over a year old, as the court awarded custody to the father. Why? Had she neglected her duties toward them? No, for her study of the Bible was, in fact, teaching her to be a better wife and mother.

3 A few weeks later her husband had her taken forcibly from her place of work to the health center so that she could be certified as insane and be committed to a mental institution. At first the examining doctor refused to give such an order, but, later, under pressure from the husband, he did issue an order committing her to a mental home. By then the young woman, who was now baptized and one of Jehovah's Witnesses, had left for another city, where she consulted another doctor. After examining her, this doctor readily gave her a certificate testifying to her sanity.

4 But this did not nullify the first doctor's order. So she had to stay in hiding for several weeks until the validity of the order expired. After this, the doctor refused to issue a new one; so the sister was able to return to her hometown. In time her husband obtained a divorce on the basis of the separation order, the court giving custody of the children to the father.

5 Would you consider such an experience reason to rejoice? Certainly no wife or mother would be happy to be forced out of her home and have her young children taken away from her. Nor would she rejoice if loved ones tried to get her put away in a mental home merely because she wanted to study the Bible and apply its fine principles. But note the reason Jesus gives for rejoicing under such circumstances: "Rejoice and

1-4. What experience might raise questions in our mind about rejoicing under persecution?

5, 6. (a) Would this or a similar experience be reason to rejoice? Why? (Mark 10:29, 30) (b) As shown in the scriptures cited, what reasons did Job have for rejoicing after his persecution?

leap for joy, since your reward is great in the heavens."—Matthew 5:12.

6 Yes, if the reason for the persecution is truly, as Jesus said in the previous verse, "for my sake," we can rejoice in having opportunity to demonstrate our integrity to Jehovah and to share in the vindication of his name, as Jesus did. Thus we prove the Devil to be a liar when he claims to be able to turn all men away from God. Such a stand on the side of Jehovah God is pleasing to him, and, as illustrated in the case of Job, will not go unrewarded.—Job 1:9, 10; 42:10-16; 1 Peter 2:19, 20.

Persecution to Be Expected

7 But why should anyone be persecuted just because he wants to study God's Word, the Bible, and be a Christian? Jesus answered the question this way: "If the world hates you, you know that it has hated me before it hated you. If you were part of the world, the world would be fond of what is its own. Now because you are no part of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, on this account the world hates you. Bear in mind the word I said to you, A slave is not greater than his master. If they have persecuted me, they will persecute you also; if they have observed my word, they will observe yours also. But they will do all these things against you on account of my name, because they do not know him that sent me." (John 15:18-21) As the apostle Paul pointed out in his second inspired letter to Timothy, persecution is something Christians have to expect. He wrote: "All those desiring to live with godly devotion in association with Christ Jesus will also be persecuted."—2 Timothy 3:12.

7. (a) Why can Christians expect to be persecuted? (b) Does this apply to all Christians, or only to some of them?

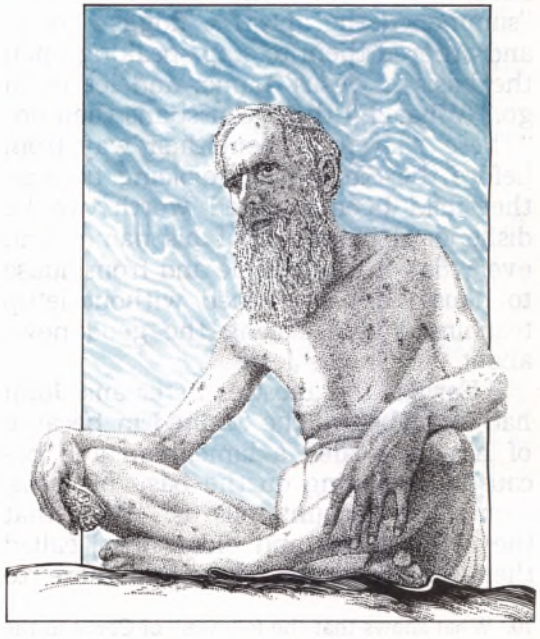
8 Let us not forget that the one behind the persecution is none other than the great opposer, Satan the Devil. Your firm stand as a Christian and your love for Jehovah God are proving the Devil to be a liar, since he claims that no one really loves God, and that if anyone does serve Him, it is only because of what he is getting out of it for himself. Satan boasted that if he had a free hand, he could turn Job, and by implication all other humans, too, away from God. (Job 1:8-11; 2:3-5) Though he failed to break Job's integrity, the Devil has never given up.—2 Corinthians 4:4.

Early Christians Persecuted

9 In harmony with Jesus' warning, ear-

8. Who is really behind the persecution of Christians, and what is his aim?

9. Give examples from the Scriptures showing what kinds of persecution the early Christians had to endure.



Those proving the Devil a liar, as Job did, will not go unrewarded

ly Christians did experience persecution, which at times was very severe. Many were driven from their homes and forced to flee to other areas, as in the case of the congregation in Jerusalem. (Acts 8:1) Others, like the apostle John, were exiled. (Revelation 1:9) The apostle Paul and those working with him in the public ministry were stoned and flogged. (Acts 14:19; 16:22) Many of the early Christians experienced imprisonment, some had their belongings plundered and some were even killed. (Colossians 4:3; Philemon 9, 10; Hebrews 10:34; 13:3; Acts 12:1, 2) But they were able to rejoice, because they fully understood why they were being persecuted.

10 Did such persecution have the effect of stopping or even slowing down the work of 'speaking about God and bearing witness to Jesus'? No, for the early Christians refused to be intimidated. The account in Acts 5:40-42 tells us that the officials of the Jewish Sanhedrin court "summoned the apostles, flogged them, and ordered them to stop speaking upon the basis of Jesus' name, and let them go." What did these Christians then do? "These, therefore, went their way from before the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy to be dishonored in behalf of his name. And every day in the temple and from house to house they continued without letup teaching and declaring the good news about the Christ, Jesus."

11 Earlier, the apostles Peter and John had been before the Sanhedrin because of having healed a lame man and because of teaching on the basis of Jesus' name. The account tells us: "With that they [the rulers and older men] called them and charged them, nowhere to make any utterance or to teach upon the basis of the name of Jesus. But in reply Peter and John said to them: 'Whether it is righteous in the sight of God to listen to you rather than to God, judge for yourselves. But as for us, we cannot stop speaking about the things we have seen and heard.' So, when they had further threatened them, they released them, since they did not find any ground on which to punish them and on account of the people."—Acts 4:18-21.

12 They were not frightened by the threats. The record shows that the apostles and the disciples fittingly prayed not for Jehovah to remove the persecution but that he would give them strength through his spirit to continue speaking his word with boldness. And that he did. —Acts 4:29, 31.

13 Paul's imprisonment in Rome had beneficial results, as he explained in his letter to the Philippians: "Now I desire you to know, brothers, that my affairs have turned out for the advancement of the good news rather than otherwise, so that my bonds have become public knowledge in association with Christ among all the Praetorian Guard and all the rest; and most of the brothers in the Lord, feeling confidence by reason of my prison bonds, are showing all the more courage to speak the word of God fearlessly." (Philippians 1:12-14) Yes, the persecution of Paul led to a greater witness being given, not only because of the publicity and opportunities that he had to witness to court officials, but also because other Christians were thereby encouraged to increase their activity.

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10. What shows that the followers of Christ in the first century were not intimidated by persecution?
11. How did Peter and John react to threats made against them?
12. What help from Jehovah did the apostles and disciples pray for while under persecution?
13. According to what Paul wrote to the Philippians, what benefits resulted from his imprisonment in Rome?

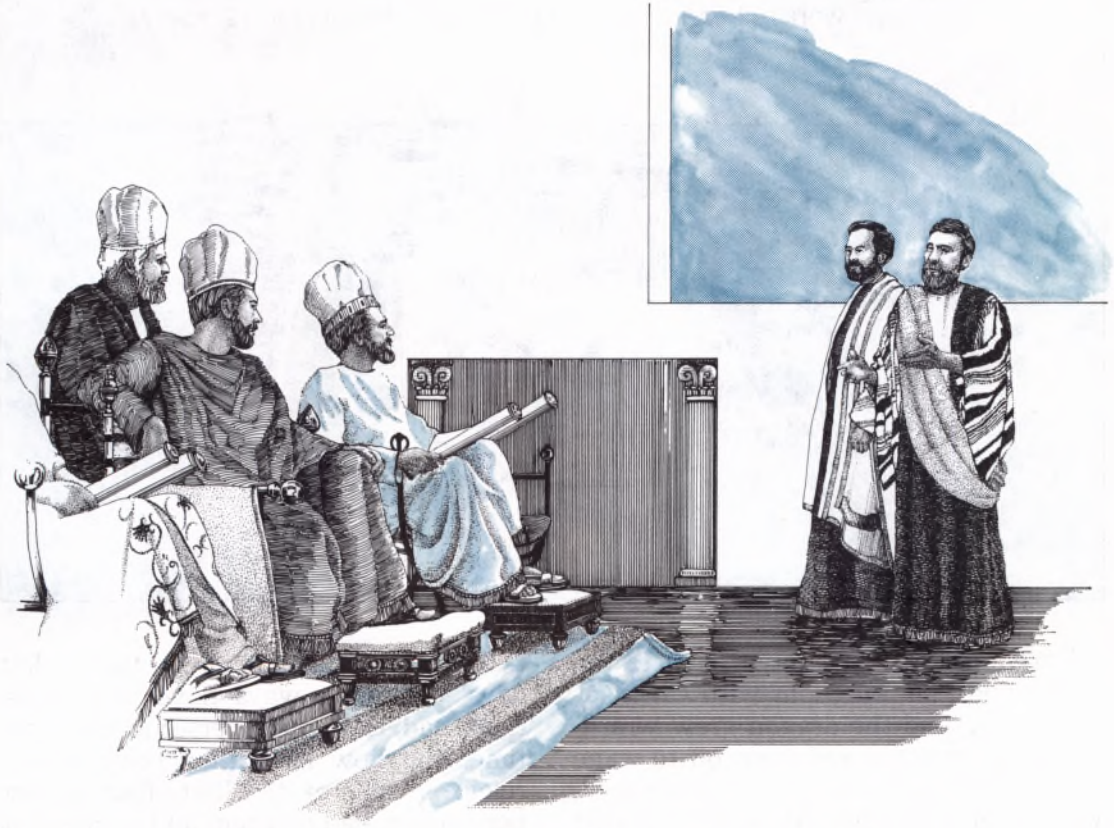
Persecution in the "Last Days"

14 Just as God's prophets of ancient times and just as Jesus Christ and his apostles and disciples in the first century experienced persecution, so Christians in these "last days" of this system of *things* can expect to have to endure persecution. Jesus foretold that as a part of the composite "sign" of the end of this system of things. He said: "Then people will deliver you up to tribulation and will kill you, and you will be objects of hatred by all the nations on account of my name."—Matthew 24:9.

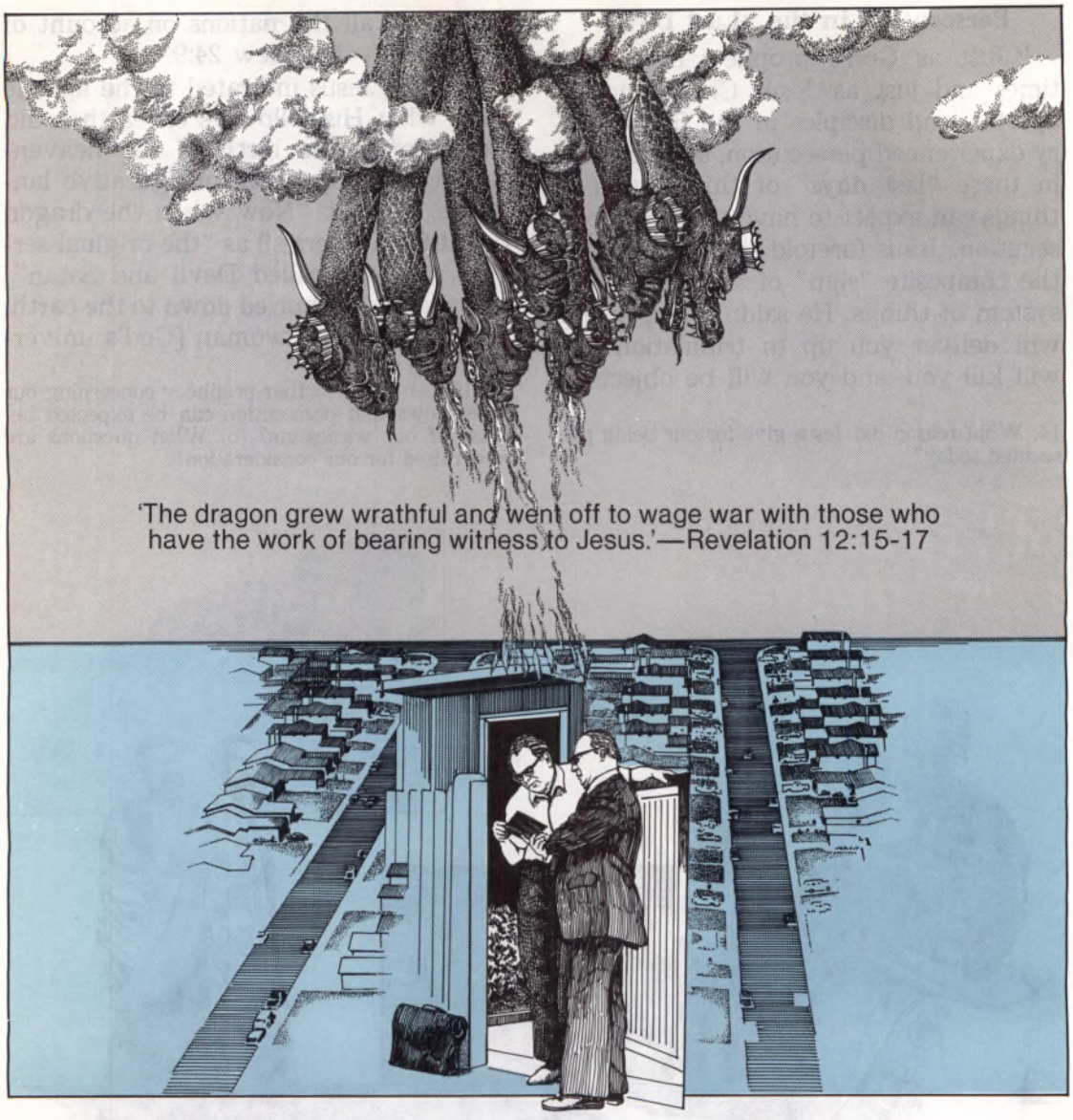
14. What reason did Jesus give for our being persecuted today?

15 Later, Jesus indicated to the apostle John what His followers on earth could expect after the birth of the heavenly kingdom. Speaking in figurative language, he said: "Now when the dragon [identified in verse 9 as "the original serpent, the one called Devil and Satan"] saw that it was hurled down to the earth, it persecuted the woman [God's univer-

15, 16. (a) What further prophecy concerning our time shows that persecution can be expected because of our witnessing? (b) What questions are now raised for our consideration?



Peter, John and other early Christians refused to be intimidated by officials who opposed their God-given work



'The dragon grew wrathful and went off to wage war with those who have the work of bearing witness to Jesus.'—Revelation 12:15-17

sal organization] that gave birth to the male child [the kingdom with Christ as King]. . . . And the dragon grew wrathful at the woman, and went off to wage war with the remaining ones of her seed, who observe the commandments of God and have the work of bearing witness to Jesus."—Revelation 12:13, 15-17.

16 Has this come true in these "last days"? In what ways have true Christians had to endure persecution in our time, and how have they been able to rejoice in spite of it? What effect has the persecution had on them and on many of those observing it? These questions will be considered in the following article.

Enduring Joyfully Despite Persecution

"Let us exult while in tribulations, since we know that tribulation produces endurance; endurance, in turn, an approved condition; the approved condition, in turn, hope, and the hope does not lead to disappointment."—Romans 5:3-5.

THE experiences of Jehovah's people in these "last days" have certainly proved Jesus' words to be true: "Happy are you whenever men hate you, and whenever they exclude you and reproach you and cast out your name as wicked for the sake of the Son of man. Rejoice in that day and leap, for, look! your reward is great in heaven, for those are the same things their forefathers used to do to the prophets." (Luke 6:22, 23; 2 Timothy 3:1) Yes, God's servants can faithfully endure all manner of persecution, and do so joyfully.

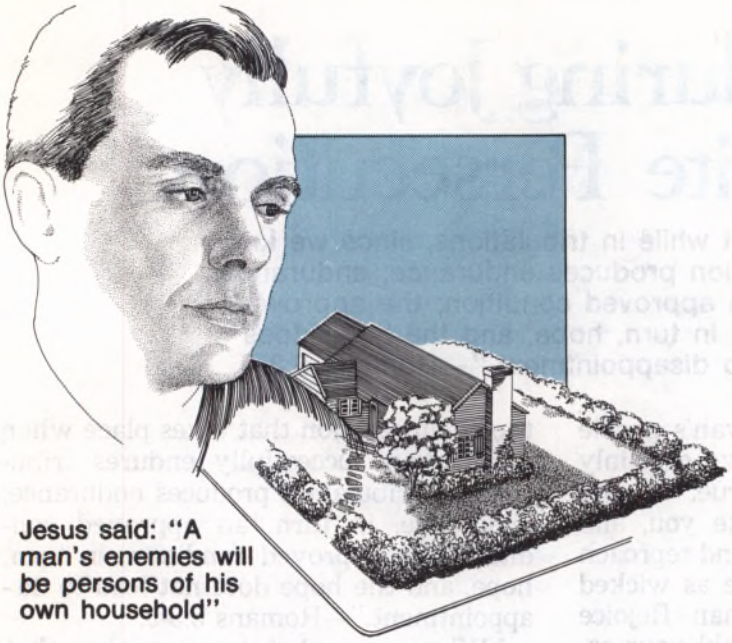
2 It is not that we enjoy being persecuted, for persecution is unpleasant and usually painful. It is not the persecution itself, but the outcome of it that gives us reason to be joyful. (James 1:2, 3) Christians do not want to be persecuted. They are not trying to be martyrs, thinking that the more persecution they endure the more merit they will have in the eyes of their heavenly Father. Those experiencing more persecution do not receive a greater reward, nor are they necessarily more faithful than those who have received less persecution. But note the chain reaction that takes place when a Christian successfully endures tribulation: "Tribulation produces endurance; endurance, in turn, an approved condition; the approved condition, in turn, hope, and the hope does not lead to disappointment."—Romans 5:3-5.

3 When we read of the persecution that our fellow Christians are undergoing in some places, we may wonder, "Would I be able to endure that?" But then, when opposition or trials suddenly come our way, and, instead of giving in or drawing back from serving God, we turn to him for help, we find that he answers our prayers, and we experience how tribulation produces endurance. Then we no longer wonder whether we could endure it; we *know* we can, in Jehovah's strength. The first trial may not have been so very severe, but our faith has nevertheless been tested, and it is stronger for it. The next test may be harder, but our faith is that much stronger because we did not shrink back from the former one. So in Jehovah's strength we can actually meet any test of our faith, knowing that he will not let us be tempted beyond what we can bear; nor will

1. What is evident as a result of the persecution of Christians in these "last days"?

2. (a) Do those experiencing more persecution receive a greater reward? (b) What are some of the beneficial results of successfully enduring persecution?

3. (a) As indicated at Romans 5:3, how does tribulation produce endurance? (b) How does this result in the strengthening of our faith? (Hebrews 10:38, 39)



Jesus said: "A man's enemies will be persons of his own household"

he leave us "in the lurch."—1 Corinthians 10:13; 2 Corinthians 4:8-10.

[4] Endurance of tribulation is truly a reason for exultation. We can be glad that we did not submit to temptation but held fast to what is right. We know this is what God approves, so our successful endurance has brought us closer to him, which is a further reason for joy, as so clearly stated at James 1:12.

Persecution in Many Forms

[5] Today the work of Jehovah's Witnesses is restricted in more than 40 lands, and in many of these places God's people have had to endure severe trials and persecutions simply because they are determined to serve their God, Jehovah, faithfully. In many cases bans have been instigated by the religious clergy, who have misrepresented our noninvolvement in politics in order to stop our preaching work. Informed officials know that Jehovah's Witnesses are not subversive or dangerous to the State in any way. Enlightened government officials know the Witnesses to be conscientious, law-abiding citizens who do their best to uphold and obey the laws of the land. However, in the case of Jehovah's Witnesses, their allegiance to God comes first. Hence, they do not take part in politics in any country. So if there is a conflict with God's laws, they, like the apostles, "obey God as ruler rather than men."—Acts 5:29.

[6] Lawless mobs, sometimes led by religious clergymen or political fanatics, have ill-treated Jehovah's people in many places. Many of our spiritual brothers have been forced to abandon their homes and possessions and flee for their lives, as has happened in recent years in Malawi and Ethiopia. Some have been fired from their jobs or driven away from their places of work, while others have had their businesses closed solely because they were Jehovah's Witnesses. (Reve-

4. After successfully enduring temptation or persecution, what real reasons do we have for being joyful?

5. What is the situation in many countries today as regards persecution and harassment of our brothers? Why is this so? (Amos 7:10-17)

6. (a) What are some examples of persecution that Jehovah's Witnesses have had to endure? (b) Can you tell of similar situations at the present time?

lation 13:16, 17) Their Christian meetings for Bible study have been interfered with and broken up; their homes have been searched and Bibles and Bible literature confiscated. Intimidation and threats have been used to try to frighten them, and many have been arrested and imprisoned, some even being killed. Persecution was particularly severe during the world wars, but it is going on right now in many lands.

7 Throughout the earth, too, thousands of our brothers and sisters must daily face opposition and persecution from their families and relatives because of wanting to serve Jehovah as disciples of Jesus Christ. As Jesus foretold: "A man's enemies will be persons of his own household."—Matthew 10:35, 36.

The Aim of Persecution

8 What do the persecutors of God's people hope to achieve? Do they persecute his witnesses because they are evildoers or criminals? No. Jehovah's Witnesses are universally recognized as law-abiding people of good moral stature. They are good workers, pleasant, friendly, kind and reasonable and do not behave like religious fanatics. In fact, they are fine people to have as neighbors. (Titus 2:6-10; Galatians 6:9, 10) Their message is a peaceful one, bringing comfort to those who are afflicted and mourning. They preach the "good news" that God's kingdom will soon remove oppressors and usher in a righteous new order.—Matthew 6:10; Psalm 37:10, 11.

9 However, the preaching of this "good news" shows up the religious leaders of Christendom as having no message of hope for the people. So they try to silence those who preach it! Some government leaders, too, while being willing to permit Jehovah's people to believe what they wish, object to their preaching to others. Like the Jewish religious leaders who were confronted with the zealous activity of the early Christians, they say, in effect: "Let us tell them with threats not to speak anymore upon the basis of [Jesus'] name to any man at all." (Acts 4:17, 18) Yes, it is our preaching that they want to stop.—See also Acts 5:28, 40.

10 Remember, too, that the real instigator of the persecution is Satan the Devil. (1 Peter 5:8) Not only does he want to stop our preaching, but also he wants to weaken our faith and cause us to break our integrity to God, thus making us lose out on everlasting life. So another aim of the persecution is to cut us off from the spiritual food and from association with our brothers at our meetings. Hence, when our activity is banned, it is generally our preaching and our meetings that are prohibited. "You can be Jehovah's Witnesses," we are often told, "but you may not preach or hold any meetings." Yet if we did not preach or

7. Even in lands where there is no active persecution by the authorities, what situations have to be endured by many of God's people?

8. Are Jehovah's Witnesses persecuted because they are evildoers or lawbreakers?

9. What activity of ours do opposers want to stop, and why?

10. (a) Besides trying to stop our preaching work, what else does Satan want to accomplish? (b) How is this shown by the type of ban that is often placed upon our activity?

In Coming Issues

- **"Good Health" and Christian Reasonableness**
- **What Will Judgment Day Be Like?**
- **"Let Your Kingdom Come" —Why? When? How?**

hold meetings, we would not be witnesses of Jehovah God or Christ Jesus, since a witness who does not say anything is really not a witness at all. (Isaiah 43:10, 12; Acts 1:8) And what would happen to our faith if we no longer obeyed God's command to meet together?—Hebrews 10:24, 25.

Bearing Up Under Persecution

11 How have God's servants in modern times reacted to the persecution heaped upon them? Like the early Christians, they have not become fearful but have boldly pressed on with the preaching work despite bans and threats. They, like Paul, have reason to "be glad and rejoice." Their firm stand on Jehovah's side of the issue is proving the Devil a liar. What a privilege to be able to share in magnifying Jehovah's name!—Philippians 2:17, 18; 2 Thessalonians 1:4.

11. What has been the reaction of faithful Christians to the persecution heaped upon them?

12 There really is no reason to be afraid of those who persecute us. Paul wrote the Philippians: "Only behave in a manner worthy of the good news . . . in no respect being frightened by your opponents. This very thing [that you are not afraid of them] is a proof of destruction for them, but of salvation for you; and this indication is from God." —Philippians 1:27, 28.

13 Recently, in one European country where the work of Jehovah's Witnesses is not legally recognized, a brother was arrested for giving a short, comforting Bible talk at a funeral. The brother who gave the prayer was also arrested. The local officials said that only persons authorized by the State may speak at funerals, and that prayer is forbidden

12. Is there reason to be afraid of what persecutors may threaten to do to us?

13, 14. (a) What did opposing officials in one country recently do in an effort to cause Jehovah's Witnesses to become frightened? (b) What do these experiences really indicate?

Even under ban Jehovah's Witnesses do not stop preaching

"because prayer can be used for teaching." Another brother in the same area was arrested because he was reading the Bible to his own family. No charges were laid against these brothers. They were held for a short time and then released. The obvious aim was to cause them to become fearful and desist.

14 But who really are the fearful ones? If the local officials feel threatened by a man reading the Bible to his family or by a brother giving a talk or saying a prayer at a funeral, they must really be very much afraid of the Bible message and those who preach it! So why should we be afraid of them? As Paul indicated, our unity and courage "is a proof of destruction for them, but of salvation for you."—Philippians 1:28.

15 In some places publishers of the "good news" are called to the police station every few weeks to be lectured, and they are often threatened with severe punishment if they do not stop talking about God's kingdom. But usually when the brothers and sisters ignore the threats and fearlessly carry on with the work, the officials give up and leave them alone. If they see any evidence of weakening on the part of the Kingdom publishers, however, they will continue their efforts to intimidate them.

Carrying On Under Ban

16 Witnesses in countries where the work is banned and the circulation of their literature is prohibited appreciate the importance of getting the spiritual food regularly. Since *The Watchtower* and other publications of Jehovah's Witnesses cannot legally be published and sent through the mail in certain lands, other arrangements are made to see that the spiritual food reaches everyone. In Germany, during the persecution under Hitler, study articles were mimeographed, typed and, in some cases, even copied by hand. This also has to be done in many places today. If not enough copies can be made for each one to have his own, they are passed around so that each one will have a chance to read the material. The important thing is to take in spiritual food regularly.—Matthew 4:4.

17 Experience has shown that Jehovah has always directed matters so that the spiritual food gets through, even in very difficult circumstances. Various means have been used to smuggle it into prisons and concentration camps. And how strengthening it has proved to be to those incarcerated there!

18 If at all possible, faithful servants of God regularly partake of spiritual food together—even though meetings are banned, even though they are imprisoned. Consideration of a Bible text each day, together with others if this can be done, serves to focus the mind on spiritual matters. Even a short discussion every day gives much spiritual strength.—Psalm 1:2; Acts 17:11.

Importance of Meetings

19 In March 1963, at Gbarnga, Liberia, about 400 persons attending a district assembly of Jehovah's Witnesses were rounded up and held for four days without food at a military compound. In an effort to force them to compromise their religious beliefs and salute the Liberian flag, the Witnesses were ill-treated and their

15. How can our reaction to threats actually have an effect on the continuation of the persecution?

16, 17. (a) What efforts have been made to get spiritual food to brothers in places where the work is banned, and to those in prisons? (b) Why is this important?

18. Why is it important to consider spiritual food together with others on a regular basis, and how might this be done even under difficult circumstances?

19. (a) What unexpected experience did many of our brothers in Liberia have? (b) According to the 1977 *Yearbook* report, what was it that helped the faithful ones to endure?

belongings were plundered. While a few did give way and compromise because of fear, the great majority maintained integrity. Note the comment made in the *1977 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses,* page 176: "They were from all classes, illiterate and well-educated. Those who were in the group of the loyal ones had been faithful meeting attenders."

[20] God's inspired Word counsels us not to forsake the gathering of ourselves together. (Hebrews 10:24, 25) The importance of this is not diminished in times of persecution. Meetings may have to be held in small groups in private homes; places and times may have to be varied and may not always be convenient, some meetings being held late at night. Yet, in spite of the dangers, our faithful brothers and sisters make every effort to be present at every meeting. And brothers are willing to let their homes be used for such meetings, even though discovery may lead to loss of freedom for them.

[21] Meetings in smaller groups may not perhaps allow all to get the benefit of the best teachers in the congregation, but there is greater opportunity for each one to participate and thus get much out of the meetings. At times, larger groups can get together in connection with picnics, outings, or, on occasion, by private invitation. Regular attendance at all the meetings is an important factor in their 'making fast their hold on the confidence they had at the beginning firm to the end,' so as to maintain their integrity and get the fulfillment of the promises by 'not giving up.'—Hebrews 3:14; 10:36; Galatians 6:9.

20. How do many make strenuous efforts so as not to 'forsake the gathering of themselves together,' and in spite of what dangers?

21. (a) What opportunities are there to benefit fully from the spiritual food under such circumstances? (b) What scriptures show the importance of regularly attending and participating in such meetings?

Preaching Under Ban

[22] Like the apostles, Jehovah's people today 'cannot stop speaking about the things they have seen and heard.' (Acts 4:20) Jesus said that "in all the nations the good news has to be preached," and no human or demon agency can prevent this. (Mark 13:10) In some places, even though the activity of Jehovah's Witnesses is banned, it is possible to go from house to house as a private person, using just the Bible.

[23] Where it is not advisable to go from house to house, the "good news" can be preached in other ways. Possibly isolated calls can be made in different parts of the territory, so as not to cover any buildings in a consecutive manner. But we do not need to wait until people are behind doors. Our brothers in many lands are having marvelous success in talking to people wherever they are to be found—on the streets, in cemeteries and parks, or when traveling. Some have even gone as tourists into areas where there are no Witnesses, and there they start conversations with people wherever this is possible. There is absolutely no way the enemy can prevent our talking in these different ways, so long as we have breath and there are people to whom we can talk.

[24] With practice, Jehovah's people have become adept at starting friendly conversations on many different topics, suitably leading the discussion to the Bible. A Witness in one country approached a young couple in a park as they were getting a drink of water from a stream. The Witness asked whether they would not like to know where there was some

22. (a) Why can God's people today not stop speaking about the things they have seen and heard? (b) How is this carried on in some places?

23, 24. (a) How is the preaching work done in places where house-to-house work is not advisable? (b) Can you relate any experiences showing that good results have been obtained in this way?

better water. With that, he began to tell them about life-giving water in the coming Paradise, and they had a discussion that lasted three hours. This led to a Bible study, and after three months the couple began to share in the field ministry. A year later, both were baptized, the man later serving as a ministerial servant in the congregation.—Compare John 4:7-15.

25 In all this activity it is wise to avoid direct confrontation with opposers. Also, we need to be cautious about giving information to the enemy in response to their trying to win us over by friendly talk and flattery. We want to keep in mind Jesus' counsel: "Look! I am sending you forth as sheep amidst wolves; therefore prove yourselves cautious as serpents and yet innocent as doves." (Matthew 10:16) Paul also counsels: "If possible, as far as it depends upon you, be peaceable with all men."—Romans 12:18.

The Fine Results of Maintaining Integrity

26 What a marvelous witness has been given down through the ages by all those who have held fast their integrity in spite of intense persecution! All the efforts of the Devil and his agents to prevent the giving of a witness only result in a greater witness to the honor of Jehovah's name. And what a marvelous share all the thousands, yes, millions, have had who have maintained (and are continuing to maintain) their integrity under persecution, thus showing the Devil up to be a liar and proving their unbreakable faith in Jehovah God and love for him!

27 When we faithfully endure, we have a good conscience, knowing that we have done what is right and that we have Jehovah's approval. This fortifies our hope, which, in turn, increases our joy. Our faith was put to the test, and, since we did not shrink back or run away from the persecution, Jehovah helped us to endure. As a result, our faith is now stronger than ever. This 'tested quality of our faith' makes us better able to meet future trials.—1 Peter 1:6, 7.

28 The sister mentioned at the beginning of the preceding article found this to be true. She is once again living in her hometown, where she has been serving as a regular pioneer (a full-time Kingdom proclaimer) for some time now. Though she does not have custody of her three young children, she is permitted to see them three times a month, and she has been able to share the "good news" with them, with some encouraging response. And who knows what the final outcome may be? There have been many, many cases where violent opposers and persecutors have been so impressed by the faithful stand our brothers and sisters have taken that they have been moved to look into the Bible for themselves, and some eventually have become worshipers of Jehovah.

29 James wrote: "Brothers, take as a pattern of the suffering of evil and the exercising of patience the prophets, who spoke in the name of Jehovah. Look! We pronounce happy those who have endured." (James 5:10, 11) And, with the additional fine examples of Christians of the first century and those of modern times, all of us are greatly encouraged to be joyful despite persecution.

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25. What should we try to avoid, especially where our preaching is banned?
26. What are some of the fine results of maintaining integrity in spite of intense persecution?
27. What personal benefits do we experience from faithfully enduring trials and persecution?
28. (a) What reasons for joy does the aforementioned Finnish sister now have? (b) What may she continue to hope?
29. What further encouragement do all of us have to remain faithful and be joyful in spite of persecution?

Meaning Well Is Not Enough!

THE doctors really meant well. After all, their patient was the most notable citizen of their newly born country. Conscientiously, the physicians followed the medical procedure of the time—bloodletting. But instead of effecting a cure, they actually hastened the death of their distinguished American patient, George Washington.

Doctors in those days were as prone to resort to bloodletting as many today are to ordering a blood transfusion, not a few of which actually result in harm to patients. How this all underscores the truthfulness of the saying: 'Meaning well is not enough'!

But suppose we turn from secular to sacred history. In his Gospel account the apostle Matthew recorded an incident that can be said to make the same point.

Jesus Christ had asked his apostles whom they held him to be. Peter came out boldly with the statement: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus commended Peter for this statement. But when Christ told his disciples that he would suffer many things and be put to death in Jerusalem, this was so unexpected that Peter took Jesus aside and, rebuking him, said: "Be kind to yourself, Lord; you will not have this destiny at all." Jesus answered him with the words: "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me, because you think, not God's thoughts, but those of men." (Matthew 16:13-23) Obviously, Peter was lacking in knowledge, in understanding. He meant well, but that was not enough.

Understanding and Balance Essential

It is not enough to be well meaning. We must also have knowledge, enlightenment, understanding. Accordingly, the apostle Paul told his beloved fellow Christians at Philippi: "This is what I continue praying, that your love may abound yet more and more with *accurate knowledge and full discernment;* that you may make sure of the more important things, so that you may be flawless and not be stumbling others."—Philippians 1:9-11.

Yes, if we would really do good to others, and especially to those whom we love, not only must we be well meaning but also we need to balance sentiment with wisdom and good judgment. This is especially important for fathers and mothers.

Parents often are prone to let sentiment and kindness alone govern the way they treat their children, without giving enough thought to how this will affect these young ones. Sentiment causes many parents to pamper their children, to be permissive, actually spoiling them. Parents may allow their offspring to have their own way or may grant them far more freedom than is wise. True, such parents may think that this will make their youngsters happy. But all too often, this results in their children becoming frustrated, while also leading them into trouble as they get older and become more self-willed.

Yet, if parents really want to show their children love, they will wisely balance that love with firmness, with discipline. Since "foolishness is tied up with the heart of a boy," there are times when showing love means disciplining him. As God's Word says: "The one holding back his

rod is hating his son, but the one loving him is he that does look for him with discipline." (Proverbs 22:15; 13:24) And be assured that this principle applies to sons and daughters alike.

In fact, is this not the way God deals with his imperfect earthly children? "Whom Jehovah loves he disciplines; in fact, he scourges every one whom he receives as a son." (Hebrews 12:5, 6) Jehovah gives us discipline because he knows we need it, and it is for our greatest welfare. Of course, discipline is not enjoyable in itself. "True, no discipline seems for the present to be joyous, but grievous; yet afterward *to those who have been trained by it* it yields peaceable fruit, namely, righteousness."—Hebrews 12:11.

That our being well meaning is not enough is a principle that also applies to the relationship of husbands and wives. A nutritionist once observed that the man who marries a good cook is in mortal danger. Why? Because a host of physical ills can be caused by eating too much, or by consuming food that is too rich. So encouraging a husband who already has a good appetite to eat even more might be well meaning. But is it wise?

In the case of husbands, their being mistakenly well meaning may take a different turn. Some men are so conscientious at their place of work that they have little time and energy left for their families. Or a Christian husband may be so eager to help others in the congregation that he neglects his own family, not giving them as much attention as he bestows on others in need. Being well meaning is not enough. A husband must balance his obligations toward others with those involving his family.

What do these examples underscore? The need for balance. Our Creator, Jehovah God, is balanced. At all times his actions harmonize perfectly with his four cardinal qualities of wisdom, justice, power and love. For instance, this can be seen by the description God gave of himself when his servant Moses asked to see His glory. After having been told that no one could see Him and yet live, Moses heard a voice describing God as follows: "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 did Jehovah let matters go at that? No, lest some should presume on Jehovah's mercy and loving-kindness. Fittingly, Moses heard these balancing words: "But by no means will he [Jehovah] give exemption from punishment." —Exodus 34:6, 7.

The same principle applies to all our activities as Christians. For us to do the most good, we must not only be well meaning, expressing love and kindness unselfishly, but also let such qualities be guided by wisdom and justice. This is essential, for merely being well meaning is not enough.

Insight on the News

Church and Totalitarianism

The New York *Times Book Review* recently published its review of the new book *The Papacy in the Modern World,* by J. Derek Holmes, a teacher of Church history at a Catholic seminary in England. When discussing Vatican dealings around the time of World War II, the Church historian naturally takes a sympathetic view of papal policies. Hence, it is interesting to read the following admissions: "When Fascists were on the march in Italy," said the review, "the Vatican's main concern was to retain the allegiance of the young to the church-controlled Catholic Action movement. Father Holmes puts the case simply: 'Pius XI was willing to treat with any government or regime of any political color or ideology in the interests of the Church' "!

Defending the Church against charges of having warmer feelings toward the Axis powers than the Allies, the Church historian pointed out that the neutral tone adopted by the Vatican in 1940 "would seem to suggest that the ecclesiastical authorities no longer had any confidence that the Allies would be able to defeat or even resist the Nazi forces and that the Holy See must therefore learn to live in a Europe dominated by Nazism and Fascism."

In conclusion, the *Times* reviewer observed: "The Papacy has managed over the years to be tougher on Communism than on Fascism, but the church that attempts to make a deal with any brand of totalitarianism places its fundamental claim in jeopardy. For the one thing that cannot be surrendered to the state by the church is control over men's beliefs, precisely what totalitarianism demands. The sympathetic approach of this reverend historian explains much about Vatican activities before and after World War II but offers little to soften the memory of that cruel time."

Light on "Afterlife" Experiences

The German medical journal *Fortschritte der Medizin* (Progress in Medicine) has reported on the results of a study of reanimated patients who had been "clinically dead." The study did not include persons whose cardiac arrest and resultant unconsciousness had been caused by drugs, medicines, poisons or severe metabolic disturbances. The investigation revealed that "reports about a withdrawal of the soul from the bodies of persons who had almost died . . . could not be confirmed." The medical authorities believe that the "experiences" that news reports tell about probably result from an impairment of brain functions, not by an interruption. The evidence points to the strong probability "that impaired brain functions lead to hallucinations such as those caused by drugs." Thus the German study confirms those made by others that the so-called afterlife experiences are hallucinations.

With regard to persons who have experienced cellular death from which there is no possibility of revival, the Bible makes clear that there is no consciousness at all. Says Psalm 146:4: "His spirit goes out, he goes back to his ground; in that day his thoughts do perish." (See also Ecclesiastes 9:5, 10.) Not all such "afterlife" experiences may be *hallucinations,* however, since demonic influence may play a role in some cases.—2 Corinthians 4:4; 11:14; see also *The Watchtower,* June 1, 1981, p. 26.

"Showy Display"

"Slipping into a pair of designer jeans or designer anythings," says University of Southern California psychologist Chaytor D. Mason, "can raise the insecure from the doldrums of nothingness to the fantasy level of 'I'm somebody, and if you don't believe me, just look at my label!' "

Mason goes on to warn: "But I see emotional danger in paying extra for clothing or a car or a cravat primarily because you want to show off the brand name. First of all, you're reinforcing your insecurity by getting hooked on artificial status." The Bible also warns against this tendency toward such artificial "showy display," saying at 1 John 2:16, 17: "Everything in the world—*the desire* of the flesh and the desire of the eyes and the showy display of one's means of life—does not originate with the Father, but originates with the world. Furthermore, the world is passing away."

Do You Remember?

How have you enjoyed reading the last several issues of *The Watchtower?* Probably you will remember some of the following points that came under discussion:

□ What is the present distribution of the Bible?

At least 2,458,000,000 copies. —12/15, p. 15.

□ Why is it so important to use God's name, Jehovah?

Knowing and using God's name is the only way for one to come near to God so as to have a personal relationship with him. (John 17:26) Bearing God's name, then, brings one under his influence and protection. (Psalm 91:14)—1/1, p. 9.

□ Why must a Christian be honest?

Because he thereby shows love for God and neighbor. This brings Jehovah's approval, good relations with one's neighbors and a resulting good conscience. It is a basic requirement for life in God's new order. (Colossians 3:9; Revelation 21:8)—1/15, pp. 4, 5.

□ What flavor does Mark's Gospel introduce in describing the life and personality of Jesus?

Mark's account of Jesus' activity transmits a sense of immediacy and urgency. And yet, coupled with the description of fast-moving events in preaching and miracle-healing, Jesus is shown to be very understanding and compassionate. (Mark 10:13-16)—1/15, pp. 28-30.

□ How can the Psalms be of great comfort to all of God's servants?

Regardless of what his situation might be during a time of test, the servant of Jehovah can use the inspired thoughts in certain Psalms while making his prayerful appeal for help and guidance. This can bring him much comfort and encouragement.—2/1, p. 30.

□ What unique features stand out in the book of Luke?

Luke describes Jesus' miracles and other events from a doctor's viewpoint, using medical expressions and descriptions. He shows a sympathetic interest in women and also gives special attention to Jesus' prayers. The "good news" that he writes about is for all peoples; so his Gospel has a universal appeal. —2/15, pp. 12-15.

□ What is involved in being a good neighbor?

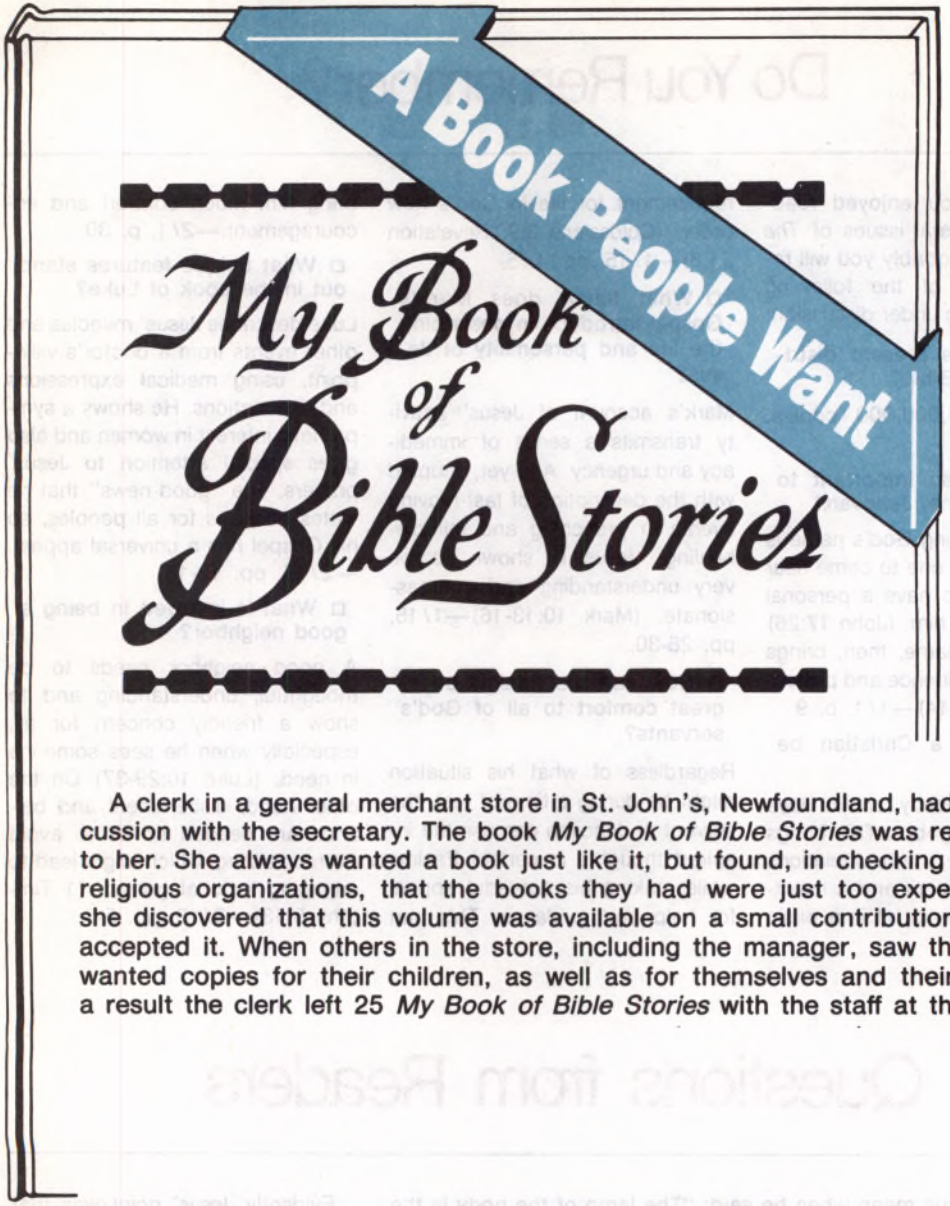
A good neighbor needs to be thoughtful, understanding and to show a friendly concern for all, especially when he sees someone in need. (Luke 10:29-37) On the other hand, discernment and balance are needed so as to avoid oversocializing, which might lead to engaging in local gossip. (1 Timothy 5:13)—3/15, pp. 5-7.

Questions from Readers

■ What did Jesus mean when he said: "The lamp of the body is the eye. If, then, your eye is simple, your whole body will be bright"?

Some have held that these words at Matthew 6:22 have a health or medical meaning, as if the eye were the primary way of detecting diseases or bodily weaknesses. However, that does not accord with the context. Jesus had just warned against 'storing up treasures on earth.' And after these words about the "eye," he urged slaving for God rather than for riches.—Matthew 6:19-24.

Evidently Jesus' point was that his disciples should keep a "simple" eye, that is, one that is sincerely focused on one thing rather than its being distracted, as by wealth. A Christian who concentrates on doing God's will is "bright," for he reflects enlightenment to others, which is to God's glory.



A clerk in a general merchant store in St. John's, Newfoundland, had a Bible discussion with the secretary. The book *My Book of Bible Stories* was recommended to her. She always wanted a book just like it, but found, in checking with various religious organizations, that the books they had were just too expensive. When she discovered that this volume was available on a small contribution she readily accepted it. When others in the store, including the manager, saw the book they wanted copies for their children, as well as for themselves and their friends. As a result the clerk left 25 *My Book of Bible Stories* with the staff at the store.