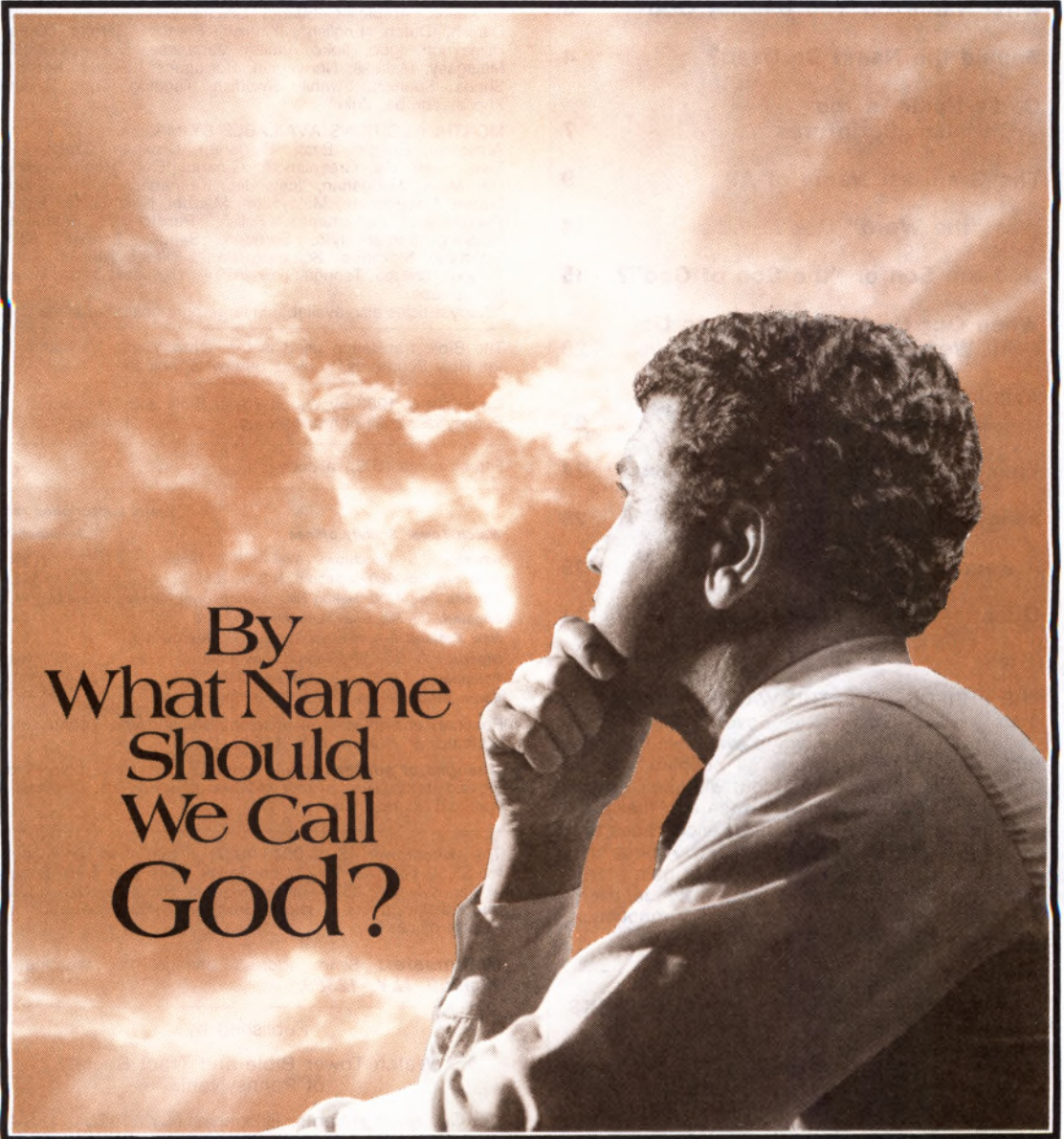


December 1, 1983

The Watchtower

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom

By
What Name
Should
We Call
God?



The Watchtower[®]

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom

December 1, 1983
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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 continuously since 1879, is nonpolitical. It adheres to the Bible as its authority.

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What Name Do You Use for God?

A RELIGIOUS publication points out that when you say you love someone you call that person by name. You would not say: "Man, I love you." Or: "Woman, I love you." Instead, you would say: "John, I love you." Or: "Margaret, I love you." Then it asks: "What name can you give God to make him more personal and intimate?"

It discusses this question for a full page, never once mentioning the name by which *God* calls himself. It concludes: "The name you choose in relating to God intimately should depend on you." But, would it not be better to use the name God chose for himself, which is used thousands of times in the Bible?

Does God Really Have a Name?

Yes, he does. In the Hebrew and Greek in which the Bible originally was written, the word "god" did not always refer to the true God. As is the case in English, it could be used for false gods and idols. So how would the true God and Creator be distinguished from man-made gods? By using a personal *name*. Yet many people do not know God's name, and far fewer use it today.

In fact, you may never have seen the name of God in your own Bible. Why not? Because the men who translated your copy of the Bible into English may have changed it. They may not have agreed with the Bible writers whom God inspired to use this name thousands of times in the Hebrew Scriptures.

The *Authorized Version*, long used by English-speaking readers, contains God's name, not the nearly 7,000 times it occurs in the Hebrew, but by itself only *four* times—at Exodus 6:3; Psalm 83:18 and Isaiah 12:2; 26:4. There are other translations that do not use God's name at all. They have dropped God's name from his own book!

Obviously this NAME was more important than the words translators substituted for it, so some translations print the substituted words in capitals, to let informed readers know where God's

name appears in the original text. A noted encyclopedia explains: "It should be remembered that the Hebrew name *Jehovah* is generally rendered, in the English version, by the word LORD (sometimes GOD), and printed in small cap-

Do you know what name the Bible uses more often than any other name? Would you say David? Abraham? or Jesus?

If any of those names came to mind, you should find this series very interesting, for the most important name in the Bible is used more often than all those names combined.

itals." So when you see the word "LORD" printed this way, the translator is telling you that God's own name, JEHOVAH, is used in the original language.—McClintock and Strong's *Cyclopedia*, 1981, Volume IV, page 811.

Whether you have seen this name in your Bible or not, it *was* in the original Hebrew text. German scholars Keil and Delitzsch point out that the expression "Jehovah Elohim" (Jehovah God) appears 20 times in fewer than 50 verses of Genesis chapters 2 and 3. They say that "it is used with peculiar emphasis, to give prominence to the fact that *Jehovah* is truly Elohim," or God.—*Commen-*

tary on the Old Testament, by Keil and Delitzsch, 1973, Volume I, pages 72, 73.

In fact, Jesus' own name means "Salvation of Jah [Jehovah]." And you say a shortened poetic form of Jehovah's name whenever you say "Hallelujah." You can look up Hallelujah in a dictionary and see for yourself that it means 'Praise Jah,' or 'Praise Jehovah.'

Remember, Jehovah is God's own name. It is the name by which HE chose to be identified. Would you like to know how the use of this name can expand your appreciation of God and his purposes? That is the subject of the following articles.



MANY people do not feel at ease using God's holy name. Devout Jews see this name in their Bibles, but they feel it should not be pronounced. Many other religious people hesitate to use it.

However, the entire nation of Israel once heard God speak his name. They heard it pronounced correctly. At Mount Sinai they heard it eight times in the Ten Words, or Ten Commandments, that they heard spoken from heaven.—Exodus 20:2-17.

If the translator of your copy of the Bible used God's name where it appears in the original Hebrew, you will see

that those commandments begin with the statement: "I am Jehovah your God, who have brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slaves. You must not have any other gods against my face." *The Living Bible* renders this: "I am Jehovah your God . . . You may worship no other god than me." (Exodus 20:2, 3) If the translators of your Bible did not use God's name, they may have put the word "LORD" in capitals to show that The Name appears in the original passage.

There is nothing in the Scriptures that says that this name should not be used.

How Is the Name Pronounced?

Due to religious disuse, the original pronunciation of the Hebrew word יהוה has been lost. Some scholars prefer to say "Yahweh," but there is no way of knowing what pronunciation is correct.

However, names are often pronounced differently in different languages. In English we call the first Christian to die for his faith *Stephen*, but the French call him *Étienne*. Jesus was called *Ye-shu'a'*, or *Y'hohshu'a'*, in Hebrew, *I-e-sous* in Greek.

The fact that we do not pronounce Jesus' name—or the name of any other person—exactly as it was pronounced in the original

language does not make us drop the name. We simply say it as it is pronounced in our language.

Thus, the book *Aid to Bible Understanding* says: "Since certainty of pronunciation is not now attainable, there seems to be no reason for abandoning in English the well-known form 'Jehovah' in favor of some other suggested pronunciation. . . . In English the name 'Jehovah' identifies the true God, transmitting this thought more satisfactorily today than any of the suggested substitutes."—Page 885.

God said not to take his name "in vain," or "in a worthless way." But that does not mean that we should not use the name. Rather, it means that servants of Jehovah should not do things that discredit his name.—Exodus 20:7.

Moses, who was used to record this command in the Bible, did not understand it to mean that God's name should not be used, for he wrote that name many hundreds of times in the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible. Rather than not using the name, Moses said: "Listen, O Israel: Jehovah our God is one Jehovah. And you must love Jehovah your God with all your heart and all your soul and all your vital force."—Deuteronomy 6:4, 5.

The Bible does not show that this name remained hidden or unpronounced. Instead, it shows that over a period of many centuries it was in common use. The Bible quotes Eve as using it. (Genesis 4:1) Moses says that righteous Abraham used it, that Abraham called "upon the name of Jehovah the indefinitely lasting God," though that fact is hidden in many modern Bible translations.—Genesis 21:33.

Abraham used Jehovah's name in talking with the king of Sodom. Sarah used

it in conversation with Abraham. Abraham's servant used it regularly. Jacob, his wife Rachel and her father, Laban, all used God's name.—Genesis 14:22; 16:2; 24:35, 42, 44; 28:16; 30:24, 27, 30.

Moses was commanded to use God's name. Moses and Aaron used it in speaking to unbelieving Pharaoh, and Pharaoh used it in replying. He said: "Who is Jehovah, so that I should obey his voice to send Israel away?"—Exodus 5:1-3; 3:15.

Centuries later the people still did not consider Jehovah's name unspeakable. They used it in talking to Samuel, and he used it in replying. (1 Samuel 12:19, 20) Righteous King David sang it publicly, saying: "I will declare your name to my brothers; in the middle of the congregation I shall praise you. You fearers of Jehovah, praise him!"—Psalm 22:22, 23.

The great prophet Isaiah did not think this name should be ignored. He used it *more than 400 times* in the Bible book that bears his name.

Isaiah did not tell his Jewish readers not to use God's name. Rather, he said: "Give thanks to Jehovah, you people! Call upon his name. Make known among the peoples his dealings. Make mention that his name is put on high. Make mel-



Abraham

Sarah

Rachel

David

THEY CALLED
GOD BY NAME

Samuel

ody to Jehovah, for he has done surpassingly. This is made known in all the earth.”—Isaiah 12:4, 5.

Does any of this sound as though this mighty name was to be hidden? not be used? be replaced by some other word? Translators who drop God’s name from his own book obviously do not have the appreciation of this name that God-fearing Abraham, Sarah, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, Samuel, David and Isaiah had.

The later prophets did not hide this name either, considering it too sacred

to use or feeling that earlier Bible writers were wrong and thinking this name should be replaced by some other word. Their messages were filled with such expressions as these: “Hear the word of Jehovah.” “This is what Jehovah of armies, the God of Israel, has said.” “This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah has said.”—Jeremiah 2:4; 19:15; Ezekiel 21:28.

Nor was the use of this name confined to religious matters. Not only was it used by teachers but ordinary people used God’s name in normal conversation. The Bible says that Boaz said to his field workers: “Jehovah be with you.” They would reply: “Jehovah bless you.”—Ruth 2:4.

Archaeologists have found confirmation of the Bible’s statements that the people used this name. In the 1930’s they discovered the Lachish Letters, pottery fragments believed to date from the Babylonian conquest in the seventh century B.C.E. These repeatedly use such expressions as: “May YHWH [Yahweh, or Jehovah] cause my lord to hear this very day tidings of good!”

Even non-Israelites knew and used God’s name. The Gibeonites told Joshua: “Your servants have come in regard to the name of Jehovah your God, because we have heard of his fame and of all that he did in Egypt.” (Joshua 9:9) In the tenth century before our Common Era, Israel’s enemy Mesha, king of Moab, had the name written on the Moabite Stone, rediscovered in 1868 and now displayed in the Louvre museum in Paris.

These facts should not be surprising. Rather than suggesting that this was a private, secret name that should not be used, Moses had told the people: “And *all the peoples of the earth* will have to see that Jehovah’s name has been called upon you.” (Deuteronomy 28:10) How could that be possible if even worshipers did not use his name?

Rather than being unspeakable, the name was honored, loved, respected. It was used in naming places, and even in naming people. Abraham called the place where he went to sacrifice Isaac "Jehovah-jireh." (Genesis 22:14) And the following are among well-known Bible names whose meanings involve Jehovah, or Jah, the shorter poetic form of Jehovah's name: Hezekiah, Isaiah, Josiah, Nehemiah, Obadiah, Zechariah and Zephaniah. People even use God's name in naming children today. In fact, God's marvelous name may be included in your own name! Do you know anyone named Joel? His name means, "Jehovah is God." What about Jonathan? It means, "Jehovah has given." Joshua means, "Jehovah is salvation." And anyone who has the

common name John has a name that means, "Jehovah has been gracious."

So despite the belief of some people that God's name is too sacred to be spoken, and of others that it should be ignored, there is no way it can be left out of the Bible. It is included in all these Biblical names that were used during the many centuries that people not only knew God's holy name JEHOVAH but used it in prayer, worship and normal conversation.

But what about the Christian Scriptures, often called the New Testament? The name Jehovah is included in the names of Jesus and John, and in the word "Hallelujah," but why does it not appear more often? The answer to that important question is discussed next.

God's Name in the Christian Scriptures

WHEN Jesus called God his Father, his Jewish hearers knew the One about whom he was talking. They saw God's name in the Hebrew Bible scrolls available in their synagogues. Such a scroll was handed to Jesus in the synagogue in his hometown, Nazareth. He read a passage from Isaiah that contained Jehovah's name twice.—Luke 4:16-21.

Jesus' early disciples also saw God's name in the *Septuagint*—the translation of the Bible into Greek, which the early Christians used in teaching and writing. True, at one time it was thought that God's name did not appear in the *Septuagint*, but it is now definitely known

that this name was so respected that the Tetragrammaton (the term scholars use for the four letters with which God's name is written in Hebrew) was copied in Hebrew letters, right into the Greek text.

Aquila wrote God's name in Hebrew letters in his Greek text as late as the second century. In the third century Origen wrote that "in the most faithful manuscripts THE NAME is written in Hebrew characters." In the fourth century the Bible translator Jerome wrote: "We find the four-lettered name of God (i.e., יהוה) in certain Greek volumes even to this day expressed in the ancient letters."

Dr. Paul E. Kahle writes: "We now know that the Greek Bible text [the *Septuagint*] as far as it was written by Jews for Jews did not translate the Divine name by *ky'rios* [Lord], but the Tetragrammaton written with Hebrew or Greek letters was retained in such MSS [manuscripts]."—*The Cairo Geniza*, pages 222, 224.

What does this mean? It means that, whether they spoke Hebrew or Greek, when Jesus' hearers read the Scriptures they saw God's name in them. Thus, it is only reasonable that when they quoted these texts they would follow the custom they had observed—putting the four Hebrew letters of Jehovah's name in the text of their Christian Greek Scripture writings.

In the *Journal of Biblical Literature*, George Howard, associate professor of religion at the University of Georgia, wrote: "Since the Tetragram was still written in the copies of the Greek Bible which made up the Scriptures of the early church, it is reasonable to believe that the N[ew] T[estament] writers, when quoting from Scripture, preserved the Tetragram within the biblical text."—1977, Volume 96, No. 1, page 77.

The Replacing of God's Name

It seems that the divine name was later dropped from both the *Septuagint* and the "New Testament" when non-Jewish Christians no longer understood the Hebrew letters. Thus Dr. Kahle writes: "It was the Christians who replaced the Tetragrammaton by *ky'rios* [Lord], when the divine name written in Hebrew letters was not understood any more."—*The Cairo Geniza*, page 224.

Of what importance was this loss? Professor Howard says: "This removal of the Tetragram, in our view, created a confusion in the minds of early Gentile Christians about the relationship between



The Divine Name, in Hebrew characters, appeared in the early Greek translations of the Hebrew Scriptures

the 'Lord God' and the 'Lord Christ.'"—Page 63 of the article quoted earlier.

For example, Psalm 110:1 says: "The utterance of Jehovah to my Lord is." This is quoted in Matthew 22:44 where, after the name Jehovah was dropped, most modern translations read: "The Lord said to my Lord." Thus, to members of Christendom's churches the definite distinction between Jehovah ("the Lord") and Jesus ("my Lord") was lost.

There are major advantages in following the Biblical example of using God's name: (1) It helps us to view God as a Person, not just a force. (2) It helps us to draw closer to him. (3) It eliminates confusion, sharpening our thinking about him, bringing our thoughts closer to what the Bible really teaches.

The Grandest Name of All

"You must tell the Israelites this, that it is JEHOVAH the God of their forefathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, who has sent you to them. This is my name for ever; this is my title in every generation."—EXODUS 3:15, *The New English Bible*.

EACH of us has a name. Our name identifies us as a person. Hearing the name of someone you strongly dislike produces negative feelings, while the name of someone you dearly love prompts pleasant, happy thoughts. In addition to your name, there are other words that describe narrower aspects of your life. The same person may be called Professor, Boss, Dad or Grandpa, depending on the circumstances. Each of these words can prompt different thoughts about the person, calling attention to a different facet of his life. But his *name* reminds us of the whole person—all his aspects, everything we know about him.

² Does the same principle apply to our thinking about God? Does what you call him have at least some effect on your view of the Creator?

³ The words "Creator" and "Almighty" call attention to certain aspects of his activity. "Lord" refers to his authority. "God" describes him as having more than human attributes and power. The

reader of the French translations by Segond and Darby, who sees God's name changed to *l'Éternel* (the Eternal) may have a somewhat different picture of God than the reader of English Bibles whose translators have changed God's name to "the LORD." Thus, one religious writer said: "The introduction of God's personal name into Christian worship and theology could have surprising and creative results."

⁴ The various words that describe God—Lord, Almighty, the Creator—are correct. They are used in the Bible. However, there is a word that the Bible uses more often than any of these. It is God's personal NAME, and that name should remind us of all the *things* we know about him. That name, which today is commonly pronounced *Jehovah*, or *Yahweh*, occurs in the original text of the Bible far more often than does any other word for God. The *Comprehensive Concordance of the New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* takes 43 columns to list each time the word

1. Of what value is a name, in comparison with other words that might be used to identify a person?
2, 3. How could the words we use to identify God affect our thinking about him?

4. (a) What can be said about the various words we use in speaking of God? (b) How extensively is his name used in the Scriptures?

"God" or "God's" is used in the Bible, but 77 columns to list each time "Jehovah" or "Jehovah's" appears.

⁵ This name was not chosen by humans. The Bible says that *God* chose it, and that he said it should be used. He said: "You must tell the Israelites this, that it is JEHOVAH the God of their forefathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, the God of Jacob, who has sent you to them. This is my name for ever; this is my title in every generation." (Exodus 3:15, *NE*) Why does this widely accepted modern translation use the name Jehovah in this text? Because this is the customary English pronunciation of God's name that appears thousands of times in the original Hebrew Bible.

⁶ When the Bible uses a *name* for God, this helps us to think of him not just as a force but as a personality. It helps us to draw closer to him. God seems distant to many people. Yet the apostle Paul wrote: "In fact, he is not far off from each one of us."—Acts 17:27.

Your Reaction to the Name

⁷ What is your reaction when you hear this name that the Bible uses for God? Does it prompt negative thoughts or pleasant, happy ones? Have you been taught to react negatively to the name by which God said he should be known, or does it produce a feeling of heart-felt appreciation, as the Bible shows it should?

⁸ Hearing the name Jehovah should make us think of the Creator of heaven and earth. In the original Hebrew, the Bible says: "Jehovah God [*Jehovah Elohim*] made earth and heaven." It also says: "And Jehovah God proceed-

ed to form the man out of dust from the ground and to blow into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man came to be a living soul." (Genesis 2:4, 7) Thus, we owe Him our life. His creating *made your own existence possible*. Does that fact affect the reaction you have when you hear God's name?

⁹ More than being the Creator, he is the Purposer. It is believed that the name Jehovah means "He causes to become." He causes himself to become whatever is required so that, without fail, his purposes and promises will be accomplished.

¹⁰ Jehovah told Moses: "I used to appear to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as God Almighty, but as respects my name Jehovah I did not make myself known to them." (Exodus 6:3) Did this mean that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob never heard this name? No, it could not mean that, for Jehovah had earlier told Moses that he was the God of these three men. (Exodus 3:15) Further, as the earlier article "Should the Name Be Used?" (page 4) shows, these faithful servants used that name continually. But the name was about to be revealed in a new way. What they had not known was the added *meaning* this name would take on once people had seen the extent to which Jehovah would go to see that his promises and purposes were fulfilled.

¹¹ What purposes? The people were about to witness the awe-inspiring Ten Plagues. They were about to be brought dryshod through the Red Sea. They would have the Law given under awesome circumstances at Mount Sinai. They would be protected through the "great and fear-inspiring wilderness" and be brought into the Promised Land.

5. (a) What does Exodus 3:15 tell us about God's name? (b) What can be said about the pronunciation "Jehovah"?

6. What is another advantage of using God's name?
7, 8. What reaction do *you* have to hearing the name Jehovah? Why?

9. Of what else should this name remind us?

10. What is the meaning of Exodus 6:3?

11. How were the Israelites about to know Jehovah in a more meaningful way than their forefathers had?



How did God's saving the Israelites through the Red Sea make his name known to them?

—Deuteronomy 1:19; Exodus 6:7, 8; 14:21-25; 19:16-19.

His Loving Acts

¹² The entire Bible narrative explains the Creator. It relates his faithfulness, uprightness and justice. The Bible says: "Good and upright is Jehovah." It says: "O how great his goodness is!" "The Rock, perfect is his activity, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness, with whom there is no injustice; righteous and upright is he."—Psalm 25:8; Zechariah 9:17; Deuteronomy 32:4.

¹³ The Bible presents Jehovah as King (Psalm 10:16; Daniel 4:34), Judge (Psalm 50:6; 98:9), Father (Isaiah 64:8; Matthew 6:6-9), Husband (Isaiah 54:5; Jeremiah 3:14), Teacher (Psalm 71:17; Isaiah 50:4; 54:13) and Helper (Psalm 30:2; 115:9-13; 121:2). His name should remind us of his loving acts, of the fact that he has established right principles and that he

has the right to require the obedience and devotion of his earthly children. The Scriptures say: "Jehovah is known by the judgment that he has executed." "Jehovah is guarding all those loving him, but all the wicked ones he will annihilate."—Psalm 9:16; 145:20.

¹⁴ This name appears 749 times in the complete Bible book of Psalms. The psalms, or songs of praise, were sung by joyful worshipers who gave "thanks to the name of Jehovah" at the temple in Jerusalem. (Psalm 122:1-4) The writers and singers of the psalms knew Jehovah's name (Psalm 9:10), trusted in his name (33:21), called on his name (80:18; 105:1), gave thanks to his holy name (106:47), sought help in his name (124:8) and continually praised his name (68:4; 135:3). His was not a hidden name but a beloved name. (Psalm 89:1; 92:1-5) Not only did Jehovah perform the loving acts

12, 13. What are some of the things the Bible tells us about Jehovah's loving acts?

14. (a) How did the writers and singers of the Psalms show their confidence in Jehovah? (b) What do the Proverbs show about him?

praised in the Psalms but he inspired the wisdom recorded in the Bible book of Proverbs. It says: "For Jehovah himself gives wisdom; out of his mouth there are knowledge and discernment." (Proverbs 2:6) If your translation of the Bible uses "LORD" in these passages, be assured that in the original Hebrew, God's name appears in each of them.

¹⁵ The name should remind us of the entire ensemble of history, prophecy, laws and wisdom that are outlined in the

The person whose name we do not know always remains more or less a stranger. When God invites us to use his name, it is an act of divine friendship

Bible. It should remind us of astounding prophecies that dealt with the major course of world history. Jehovah caused historic events to occur in such a way that his prophecies would be fulfilled on Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome, and on down through our turbulent 20th century and beyond.—Daniel, chapters 2, 7, 8.*

Jesus and the Father's Name

¹⁶ The warm feeling of appreciation that the divine name *Jehovah* should bring to our hearts should include an even more important fact—that he mi-

* For a discussion of many of these prophecies, see the book *"Your Will Be Done on Earth,"* published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society.

15. (a) Of what momentous events should Jehovah's name remind us? (b) According to Daniel 2: 20, 21 and 4:17, what provides us with a basis for blessing the name of Jehovah?

16. (a) How should Jesus' earthly sojourn affect our appreciation of his Father, Jehovah God? (b) How, in particular, did Jesus make his Father's name known?

raculously sent to earth his "Firstborn," "the Word," who became Jesus Christ. (Hebrews 1:6; John 1:1-3; Romans 5:6-8) In prayer to his heavenly Father, Jesus said: "I have made your name manifest to the men you gave me out of the world. . . . And I have made your name known to them and will make it known." (John 17:6, 26) It was not that his followers did not already know God's name. As shown in the article "God's Name in the Christian Scriptures" (page 7), they saw this name both in their Hebrew Bible scrolls and in the Greek Bible translation they used. But as a result of Jesus' teaching, the name took on added meaning—just as it had done as a result of Jehovah's acts back in Moses' day. Jesus marvelously expanded our knowledge and appreciation of Jehovah, of his personality and of his purposes. We know Jehovah's name in a far grander way through Jesus, who said: "What I teach is not mine, but belongs to him that sent me." Jesus provided the ransom and the way of approach to the Father. Thus Jesus said: "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."—John 7:16; 14:6.

¹⁷ In the Bible book of Revelation, which records John's vision of events in our day, Jehovah's name is still being praised. When Babylon the Great, the world empire of false religion, is destroyed, a great crowd in heaven utters the exultant cry: "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God." Then "the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who is seated on the throne, saying, 'Amen. Hallelujah!'" (Revelation 19:1, 4, *Revised Standard Version*) What does "Hallelujah" mean? We have already seen, back on page 4, that "Jah"

17. What heavenly use of God's name was foretold in the book of Revelation?

is a shorter poetic form for "Jehovah." Thus, *The Random House Dictionary of the English Language* says that "Hallelujah" is from the Hebrew for "Praise (ye) Jehovah." So God is worshiped in heaven with the cry: "Praise Jehovah!"

Marvelous Works

¹⁸ God's name should be used. It should remind us of his works and his loving-kindness. The Bible tells us that he did these great things "for the sake of his name, so as to make his mightiness known." (Psalm 106:8) The marvelous works he performed "for the sake of his name" were not done out of egotism but to help us appreciate that he *is* God, that he has the right to tell us what to do, and that we can have *absolute confidence* in the accomplishment of his promises. (1 Samuel 12:22) Thus he said: "Remember the first things of a long time ago, that I am the Divine One and there is no other God, nor anyone like me; the One telling from the beginning the finale, and from long ago the things that have not been done; the One saying, 'My own counsel will stand, and everything that is my delight I shall do'; . . . I have even spoken it; I shall also bring it in. I have formed it, I shall also do it."—Isaiah 46:9-11.

¹⁹ Centuries earlier Joshua had reminded the Israelites: "You well know with all your hearts and with all your souls that not one word out of all the good words that Jehovah your God has spoken to you has failed. They have all come true for you. Not one word of them has failed."—Joshua 23:14.

²⁰ Are all these things involved in *your* impression of Jehovah? Does hearing his

18. What does knowing things Jehovah has done "for the sake of his name" help us to appreciate?

19. What assuring statement did Joshua make about the reliability of God's Word?

20. What are some of the things of which the name Jehovah reminds *you*?

name remind you of his works, his power, his almightiness, his trustworthiness and the truth of his promises? Do you associate his name with The God who causes himself to become whatever is required so that his purposes will be accomplished? Do you think of Jehovah's sending Jesus to earth to vindicate God's name, to teach us about his Father and to provide the ransom for all who will accept it? And do your feelings about Jehovah include your appreciation of his promises of a righteous future for a cleansed earth?—2 Peter 3:13.

²¹ Knowledge of the things Jehovah has done produces faith. Faith prompts us to action. We use his name, speak of his deeds, offer ourselves willingly as his servants, and we look forward to the fulfillment of his great and unfailing purpose to rid the earth of wickedness and to establish righteous new conditions for obedient mankind. Having such faith, and acting upon it, we can say as did righteous King David: "The praise of *Jehovah* my mouth will speak; and let all flesh bless his holy name to time indefinite, even forever."—Psalm 145:21.

21. How can our attitude be like that of righteous King David?

By way of review—

- ☐ What is the value of a *name*, in contrast with some other word that might identify a person?
- ☐ Of what should the name Jehovah remind us?
- ☐ How did Jesus' teaching increase our appreciation of the name Jehovah?
- ☐ How are works Jehovah performed "for the sake of his name" of great benefit to us?

Was "the Word" God?

PEOPLE who believe that God is a Trinity, and that Jesus is God, point to John 1:1 and John 20:28 as proof of this belief.

In many translations John 1:1 says: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and *the Word was God.*" However, conscientious translators have found it necessary to acknowledge that there is a difference between the two uses of the word "God" in this text.

The New English Bible says, "What God was, the Word was." *Today's English Version* says, "He was the same as God." *An American Translation* says, "The Word was divine."

Why do not these translations simply say that the Word "was God"? Because in Greek, in which this originally was written, the second use of the word "God" is not the same as the first. The definite article "*ho*" (the) appears before the first use of the word God but not before the second. So *The Anchor Bible* says: "To preserve in English the different nuance of *theos* [god] with and without the article, some (Moffatt) would translate 'The Word was divine.'"

We can better understand John's words here if we analyze precisely what he said. Note again that he wrote: "*In the beginning was the Word.*" This, of course, was not talking about God's beginning, for God had no beginning. (Psalm 90:1, 2) It was the beginning of the things John was here discussing, including the creation of all other things by "the Word." Then John said: "The Word was *with God.*" A person who is with someone obviously is not the same as the one he is with.

The important point, of course, is what John meant when he wrote this passage. Does that present a problem? It does if you want it to say Jesus is "GOD," for it is quite obvious from John's writings that he did *not* understand Jesus to be "God" in the sense the Father is God. For example, in that same chapter, John wrote: "No one has ever seen God; it is the only Son, who is nearest to the Father's heart, who has made him known." (John 1:18, *The Jerusalem Bible*) Has anyone seen God? No. Has anyone seen Jesus? Of course!

Christendom's Athanasian Creed, which defines the Trinity, says "none is greater or less than another." Yet John repeatedly records Jesus' own words showing his submission to the Father. He was "sent" by the Father, assigned works by the

Father, told what to do and say by the Father, and said he came not to do his own will "but the will of him that sent [him]."—John 6:38; 3:17; 5:36; 8:28; 12:49, 50.

John also recorded Jesus' own statement that the Father is "*the only true God,*" and that "*the Father is greater than I am.*" (John 17:3; 14:28) He recorded six instances in which Jesus called the Father "*my God.*" Five instances of Jesus' speaking of "my God" are long after Jesus' resurrection and ascension to heaven. (John 20:17; Revelation 3:2, 12) At least five more times, John carefully recorded the distinction not just between the Father and the Lamb but between *God* and the Lamb Jesus Christ. (Revelation 1:1; 7:10; 21:22; 22:1-3) John says he wrote, not to show that Jesus is God, or even "God the Son," but "that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ *the Son of God.*"—John 20:31.

These statements show what John knew to be the relationship between Jesus and the one John tells us Jesus called "God." John 1:1 does not contradict them. Its correct rendering is: "In the beginning the Word was, and the Word was with God, and the Word was a god." This is the same construction that you will find at Acts 28:6, where the people of Malta thought Paul was "a god."

Then, what about Thomas' amazed expression when he saw the resurrected Jesus: "My Lord and my God!" (John 20:24-29) Thomas was greatly moved by the outstanding realization that Jesus Christ really had been resurrected, and that he was face-to-face with him. However, nothing in the account indicates that Thomas thought Jesus was equal to the Father. John, who recorded Thomas' words, had quoted Jesus as saying that even men were called "gods." Certainly, the resurrected Lord Jesus Christ is greater than any man. (John 10:34, 35) And in the very same chapter in which we read Thomas' words, John recorded Jesus' statement that *the Father is Jesus' God.*—John 20:17.

Paul showed how first-century Christians correctly understood the relationship between Jesus and his heavenly Father when he wrote that "there is actually to us *one God the Father . . . and there is one Lord, Jesus Christ.*"—1 Corinthians 8:6.

God the Son or “the Son of God”?

“You are the Christ,
the Son of the living God.”

—MATTHEW 16:16.

WAS Jesus God? Many members of Christendom’s churches would answer yes. But did you know that there is someone Jesus called “God”? Open your own Bible to John 20:17 and read Jesus’ own words near the end of that verse: “I am ascending to my Father and your Father and to *my God* and your God.” If that surprises you, you may be amazed at some of the other things the Bible says about Jesus and God.

¹ Think, for a moment, about the angel who announced Jesus’ birth to Mary. He did not say her child would be God, but that he would be “God’s Son.” (Luke 1:35) And rather than saying, as do some, that “God Himself” came to earth to provide

1. (a) What view do many church members have about Jesus? (b) What interesting comment did Jesus make about this?

2. What other interesting comments does the Bible make about the relationship between Jesus and God?



the ransom, the Scriptures say “God sent forth his Son” to do this.—Galatians 4: 4, 5; 1 John 4:9, 10.

³ Jesus asked his disciples who they believed he was. Did Simon Peter reply: “You are God”? No. Peter said: “You are the Christ, the *Son* of the living God.” Did Jesus correct Peter? No, Jesus said:

3, 4. How do statements by Peter and John the Baptist disagree with Christendom’s teaching about the Trinity?

"Happy you are, Simon son of Jonah, because flesh and blood did not reveal it to you, but my Father who is in the heavens did."—Matthew 16:15-17.

⁴ Religious writers, believing God is a Trinity, speak of "God the Son." However, John the Baptist did not call Jesus "God the Son" but "the Son of God." Jesus' disciples did not say, "You are God the Son," but, "You are really God's Son." There is a great difference between these statements.—John 1:34; Matthew 14:33.

Is the Father Greater?

⁵ The Bible tells of Jesus' prehuman existence. He existed before Abraham did, he was with his heavenly Father "before the world was," he was "the firstborn of all creation" and by him "all other things were created." (John 17:5; 8:58; Colossians 1:15-17) Jesus "humbled himself and became obedient as far as death, yes, death on a torture stake. For this very reason also God exalted him to a superior position and kindly gave him the name that is above every other name." The Bible also says that "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . raised him up from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above every government and authority and power and lordship and every name named, not only in this system of things, but also in that to come."—Philippians 2:8, 9; Ephesians 1:17, 20, 21.

⁶ Yet Jesus repeatedly showed not equality but submission to the Father. He said he was sent by his Father, instructed by his Father, commanded what to say by his Father. (John 3:17; 5:36; 6:38; 12:49, 50) Jesus said that he "finished the work" his Father gave him to do, and that his followers "have come

to know that you [the Father] sent me forth."—John 17:4, 6, 18, 25.

⁷ Even Jesus' enemies did not accuse him of saying he was God. Instead, they said he was making himself "equal to God" by calling God his Father. They wanted to kill Jesus because, as a well-known Roman Catholic translation puts it: "He spoke of God as his own Father, and so made himself God's equal." Jesus said: "I tell you most solemnly, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees the Father doing; and whatever the Father does the Son does too."—John 5:18, 19, *The Jerusalem Bible*.

⁸ Despite his highly exalted position, Jesus told his apostles: "The Father is greater than I am." (John 14:28) Some people say that was true only because Jesus was still on earth and that it is no longer true now that he has ascended to heaven. But that is not what the Bible says.

After Jesus' Ascension

⁹ After Jesus ascended to heaven, his followers continued to teach that the Father is greater than the Son. More than 20 years later, Paul wrote about "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." (Romans 15:6) Look carefully at those words. Paul is speaking of Jesus' God. Consistently Paul makes this distinction not only between the Father and Jesus but between *God* and Jesus. He writes of God *and* Christ. Paul's standard greeting in his letters was: "May you have undeserved kindness and peace from God our Father *and* the Lord Jesus Christ." (Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:3; 2 Corinthians 1:2; Galatians 1:3; Ephesians 1:2; Philippians 1:2) Paul also wrote, not that Christ is God, but that he "is the *image* of God," thus perfectly representing him.

5. What can be said about Jesus' heavenly position?

6-8. What are some of the things Jesus said about his position in relation to the Father?

9. How did Paul show the difference between even the resurrected Jesus and God?

(2 Corinthians 4:4) However, the translator of *The Living Bible*, believing that God is a Trinity, changed this passage to read, "Christ, who is God." But since that is not what it really says, this footnote was added: "Literally, 'who is the image of God.'"

¹⁰ The Bible book of Revelation also distinguishes not only between Jesus and the Father but between Jesus and God. It opens, "A revelation by Jesus Christ, which *God* gave him." (Revelation 1:1) More than 60 years after Jesus' ascension, Revelation quotes the exalted heavenly Jesus as saying: "The one that conquers—I will make him a pillar in the temple of *my God* . . . I will write upon him the name of *my God* and the name of the city of *my God*, the new Jerusalem which descends out of heaven from *my God*, and that new name of mine." —Revelation 3:12.

¹¹ This distinction between God and the Lamb Jesus Christ is made right down to the Bible's last chapter, where the great heavenly throne of the magnificent New Jerusalem is not described as the throne of an imaginary Trinity, but as "the throne of God *and* of the Lamb." (Revelation 22:1, 3) These statements are not difficult to understand, unless you have been taught to try to make them say something they do not say.

"At the Right Hand of Power"

¹² Jesus' enemies, seeking a reason to put him to death, did not ask if he claimed to be God, but whether he was "the Christ the Son of God." He answered: "You yourself said it. Yet I say to you men, From henceforth you will

"God the Son" a Later Idea

The *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Volume 13, page 426, says: "To ask whether the N[ew] T[estament] presents Jesus as God the Son" is to "seek a frame of reference for Him that was developed only later."

Thus, Jesus and his apostles taught that he was "the Son of God," but it was later churchmen who developed the idea of "God the Son."

see the Son of man sitting at *the right hand of power* and coming on the clouds of heaven." (Matthew 26:63, 64) Earlier Jesus had quoted and applied to himself David's words: "The utterance of Jehovah to my Lord is: '*Sit at my right hand* until I place your enemies as a stool for your feet.'" Jesus did not say he was Jehovah, or part of some unscriptural Trinity, but that he would be at Jehovah's right hand, awaiting the outworking of God's time and purposes.—Psalm 110:1; Matthew 22:42-44.

¹³ Stephen, the first person to die for his faith in Christ, was given a vision of the resurrected Jesus in heaven. Did he see Jesus as being *God*, or part of some Trinity? No. As Jesus and David had foretold, he saw Jesus "*at God's right hand*." *The Living Bible* says that Stephen saw "Jesus the Messiah standing *beside* God, at his right hand!"—Acts 7:55, 56.

¹⁴ A larger view of this is found in Daniel's magnificent vision of the Ancient of Days. Daniel wrote: "I kept on behold-

10. How does Revelation show the distinction between Jesus and God?

11. How is the distinction between Jesus and God made in the Bible's last chapter?

12. (a) How did Jesus explain the position he would have after his resurrection? (b) How does Psalm 110:1 show that Jesus is not Jehovah?

13. What did Stephen see just before giving his life for his faith?

14. What does Daniel's vision show about "someone like a son of man"?

ing in the visions of the night, and, see there! with the clouds of the heavens someone like a son of man happened to be coming; and to the Ancient of Days he gained access, and they brought him up close even before that One. And to him there were given rulership and dignity and kingdom, that the peoples, national groups and languages should all serve even him. His rulership is an indefinitely lasting rulership that will not pass away, and his kingdom one that will not be brought to ruin." (Daniel 7: 13, 14) Jesus was not the Ancient of Days, Jehovah God, but he was the Son of man. And notice that this one was brought up close before his heavenly Father, to receive "rulership and dignity and kingdom, that the peoples, national groups and languages should all serve even him."—Compare Matthew 25:31.

¹⁵ The Bible book of Revelation clearly shows that the great crowd from all nations and languages who come under Christ's rulership would be persons who know the distinction between God and the Lamb Jesus Christ, for their cry of praise is: "Salvation we owe to our God, who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb." In addition, the 144,000 standing with the Lamb Jesus Christ on heavenly Mount Zion have "his name and the name of his Father written on their foreheads."—Revelation 7:9, 10; 14:1.

Whose Son?

¹⁶ The Jews knew about God's name. They knew who Jesus was talking about when he said: "It is my Father that glorifies me, he who you say is *your God*." (John 8:54) Who was this God? Whether they would still pronounce it or not, they saw his name in their copies

15. What does Revelation show that this great crowd would know?

16. What would the Jews understand when Jesus said that his Father is the one they called their God?

of the Scriptures, it was in the scrolls in their synagogues, and it was written in Hebrew characters in the Greek *Septuagint* Bible translation that they read and used. (See the article "God's Name in the Christian Scriptures," page 7.) Jehovah is not another name for Jesus. When Jesus called "God his own Father" and called himself "the Son of God," his Jewish hearers would understand that he was saying he was the Son of the one whose name was written with the four Hebrew letters YHWH. He was not saying that he was Jehovah, but that he was Jehovah's Son.—John 5:18; 11:4.

The New Covenant for Christians

¹⁷ Jeremiah's great prophecy of the new covenant shows that not just Jews but Christians, too, would be a people for Jehovah's name. If the translators of your Bible properly used God's name where it appears in the original Hebrew, you would read:

"'Look! There are days coming,' is the utterance of Jehovah, 'and I will conclude with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah a new covenant . . . For this is the covenant that I shall conclude with the house of Israel after those days,' is the utterance of Jehovah. 'I will put my law within them, and in their heart I shall write it. And I will become their God, and they themselves will become my people. And they will no more teach each one his companion and each one his brother, saying, "Know Jehovah!" for they will all of them know me, from the least one of them even to the greatest one of them,' is the utterance of Jehovah."—Jeremiah 31:31-34.

¹⁸ The Christian apostle Paul devotes four chapters of the book of Hebrews (chapters 7-10) to discussing this new

17, 18. (a) What key points do you see in Jeremiah's prophecy of the new covenant, and how important is this prophecy? (b) What did the mediator of this covenant do?

covenant, which God established with spiritual Israel. Paul does not suggest that Christ was the maker of this covenant (which was made valid through his blood), but says that Christ was its "mediator." Its maker was Jehovah God. Of its mediator, Paul wrote: "Christ entered . . . into heaven itself, now to appear before the person of God for us."—Hebrews 8:6; 9:15, 24.

¹⁹ Who does Jeremiah say would be the God of the Christians in the new covenant? Jehovah! It is Jehovah who said: "I will conclude . . . I will put . . . I will become their God." And this prophecy says of Christians in the new covenant: "'They will all of them know me, from the least one of them even to the greatest one of them,' is the utterance of Jehovah." So all those who really are in the Christian new covenant—as well as other faithful Christians associated with them—would be persons who know and serve Jehovah! More than 400 years ago, John Calvin wrote: "These words, 'Know ye Jehovah,' point out the first elements of faith."—*Commentaries on the Book of the Prophet Jeremiah and the Lamentations*, by John Calvin, translated by John Owen, page 136.

A Changed Situation

²⁰ In Jesus' day his hearers knew the God of Abraham, of Isaac and of Jacob. Their ancestors worshiped Jehovah, and they had Jehovah's temple in their midst. What they needed to see was the importance of honoring and following Jesus. Thus Jesus said that all should "honor the Son *just as they honor the Father*. He that does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him."—John 5:23.

19. Who does this prophecy say would be the God of those in the Christian new covenant?

20. What did Jesus' hearers need to realize?

²¹ Today the situation is reversed. Members of Christendom's churches say a great deal about the Son but overlook "the Father who sent him." It was *God* who exalted Jesus "to a superior position and kindly gave him the name that is above every other name, so that in the name of Jesus every knee should bend of those in heaven and those on earth and those under the ground, and every tongue should openly acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father."—Philippians 2:9-11.

²² We must not, as many have done, overlook that fact—that our confession of Jesus should be "*to the glory of God the Father*." Many of today's religious leaders, and therefore their flocks, have all but forgotten the Father. Yet, in prayer to his heavenly Father, Jesus said: "This means everlasting life, their *taking in knowledge of you, the only true God*." But that is not enough. We must also learn of and follow the one whom God sent forth. Thus, Jesus continued, "And of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ."—John 17:3.

21, 22. (a) How is this situation reversed today?
(b) What must we not overlook?

Questions for Review

- ☐ What Biblical statements show the difference between Jesus and God?
- ☐ Were Jesus' words "the Father is greater than I am" still true after Jesus returned to heaven?
- ☐ What did David and Daniel say that helps us to understand Jesus' position in heaven?
- ☐ What does Jeremiah's prophecy about the new covenant show that true Christians would know about God?

When Our Hearts Impel Us to Do All We Can

IT IS Nisan 12, 33 C.E. Jesus Christ is enjoying a meal with others in the home of Simon the leper at Bethany, near Jerusalem. Among those present is a faithful disciple named Mary. She breaks open an alabaster case and pours costly perfumed oil upon Jesus' head.

'Why such waste?' some protest. 'This oil could have been sold and the proceeds given to the poor!' But Jesus replies: 'Let her alone, for you always have the poor with you and can do them good. But me you will not have always. She did all she could, putting perfumed oil on my body in view of my burial.'—Matthew 26:6-13; Mark 14:3-9; John 12:1-8.

Mary of Bethany could do nothing to ease Jesus' suffering when he was impaled just two days later—on Nisan 14, 33 C.E. But now she could anoint him with costly oil. So, as Jesus said: "She has done all she could." (Mark 14:8, *An American Translation*) Indeed, Mary's heart impelled her to do all she could.

Impelled to Do What We Can

As Jehovah's Witnesses, or as individuals learning God's truth, we may be eager to spread the good news of the Kingdom in these "last days." (Matthew 24:14; 2 Timothy 3:1-5) In fact, we may be having a fine share in that work.

However, family responsibilities, health problems and other factors may not permit us to serve as a missionary in some distant land. We may not be able to be members of the Watch



Tower Society's headquarters or branch office staffs. It may not be possible for us to serve as traveling overseers, and the like. Nevertheless, we may not be prevented from using our resources in a way that will advance Kingdom interests. (Matthew 6:33) We may, indeed, be able to 'honor Jehovah with our valuable things.' In this there will be a blessing, for 'our stores of supply will be filled with plenty.'—Proverbs 3:9, 10.

They Did What They Could

Yes, our spirit can be like that of Mary of Bethany and other godly persons of times past. To illustrate: the Israelites of Moses' day were afforded the privilege of honoring Jehovah when the tabernacle for his worship was constructed. Not all could do the same things, but their hearts impelled them to do what they could. For instance, some women spun the goat's hair that was used. Certain men served as craftsmen performing

work of various kinds. And the people in general? Well, they honored Jehovah by giving gold, silver, copper, wool, linen and other things so that the tabernacle could be completed. The willing-hearted ones gladly made this "contribution for Jehovah," and it was "a voluntary offering." (Exodus 35:4-35) How much did they give? Why, the materials contributed "proved to be enough for all the work to be done, and more than enough!" (Exodus 36:4-7) Yes, they did what they could.

Many years later King David contributed very heavily toward the temple to be constructed by his son Solomon. David even gave his "special property" of gold and silver for that purpose. Then he asked the people of Israel: "Who is there volunteering to fill his hand today with a gift for Jehovah?" In response, princes and chiefs gave, and "what stones were found with *any persons* they gave to the treasure of the house of Jehovah." This was not done grudgingly, for we are told: "The people gave way to rejoicing over their making voluntary offerings, for it was with a complete heart that they made voluntary offerings to Jehovah; and even David the king himself rejoiced with great joy." (1 Chronicles 29:3-9) All of them did what they could.

As individuals, many early Christians contributed to the advancement of the Kingdom proclamation. For instance, the aged apostle John pointed out that members of the Christian congregation were under obligation to assist traveling representatives sent forth, "that we may become fellow workers in the truth." John also commended Gaius for the hospitality he extended to "strangers," that is, to those previously unknown to Gaius but whom he treated warmly because of the service they were rendering to the congregation. (3 John 5-8) Most witnesses of Jehovah in a particular area were not

able to travel great distances in behalf of the "good news," but they did what they could.

Entire congregations also used their material resources to promote the Kingdom work. For example, the apostle Paul could tell Philippian believers: "Even in Thessalonica, you sent something to me both once and a second time for my need. Not that I am earnestly seeking the gift, but that I am earnestly seeking the fruitage that brings more credit to your account." (Philippians 4:15-17) The entire congregation could not travel with the apostle, but they did what they could.

How Some Have Felt

Jesus Christ said: "There is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving." So it is not surprising that God's people rejoiced greatly upon making "voluntary offerings to Jehovah" in King David's day. (1 Chronicles 29:9; Acts 20:35) A similar spirit exists today.

One witness of Jehovah wrote the Watch Tower Society, saying: "I am 81 years old and can't get out much in the service [the field ministry] anymore on account of crippling arthritis, but I would like to do something in the carrying on of the service. I will send you a contribution every month as long as I am able and I would especially like to help those graduates [of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead] that go to foreign lands." This elderly woman could not serve as a missionary herself, but her heart impelled her to do what she could.

Entire families have cooperated so as to share in contributing something for printing needs and the Society's expansion program. One family wrote: "We felt moved as a family to have a share in this. . . . it made us very happy when our two young teenage sons approached us and expressed their desire to have a

share also in our family's contribution to the Society. Their share is from money they have saved from doing part-time jobs. We have been delighted with the many beautiful publications and bountiful spiritual food that is constantly being fed to us from Jehovah's table."

How It May Be Possible

Few among Jehovah's Witnesses are materially rich, and many have to cope with economic problems today. Yet when they give a modest amount for the advancement of Kingdom interests they should never feel that their contribution is insignificant. When Jesus saw a needy widow drop two small coins into the temple treasury chest, he did not look down on her. Rather, he said: "I tell you truthfully, This widow, although poor, dropped in more than they all did. For all these dropped in gifts out of their surplus, but this woman out of her want dropped in all the means of living she had." (Luke 21:1-4) Although her gift was small in literal value, she did what she could.

In order to have something to contribute, there usually has to be some planning, either on the part of individuals and families or by congregations. Accordingly, when a need arose among Christians in Judea, Corinthian fellow believers who wanted to aid them received a helpful suggestion from the apostle Paul. He wrote: "Now concerning the collection that is for the holy ones, just as I gave orders to the congregations of Galatia, do that way also yourselves. Every first day of the week let each of you at his own house set something aside in store as he may be prospering, so that when I arrive collections will not take place then."—1 Corinthians 16:1, 2.

Just as a person might save some funds for an emergency, so individual Witnesses, families or congregations might reg-

ularly set something aside for a contribution to advance true worship. In fact, entire congregations frequently contribute surplus funds to advance the Kingdom work. They do so by preparing and passing resolutions to that effect. Willing-hearted individuals also find it possible to share in supporting Christian preaching activities throughout the earth by making personal donations for that purpose. This proper giving increases their happiness and gives them the satisfaction of knowing that they are doing what they can.

Donations received by the Watch Tower Society are acknowledged by letter. Individuals, families or congregations desiring to make such contributions may send them to the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, New York 11201, or to the nearest branch office of the Society.

All donations received by the Society are greatly appreciated and are used to spread the good news of God's Kingdom. For instance, by such means missionary homes and activities are sustained in various countries. Also, printing facilities, vital to the dispensing of Bible literature, are thus kept in operation and expanded where necessary. Because of such contributions traveling circuit and district overseers are able to visit Christian congregations throughout the earth and give fellow believers spiritual assistance. (Romans 1:11, 12) Others in full-time ministerial work also are assisted in such a manner.

Early advocates of true worship received heaven's blessing because they honored Jehovah with their valuable things. And how happy they were! As we similarly support Kingdom interests today, we, too, are richly blessed. Therefore, may our response be positive when our hearts impel us to do all we can.

Articles on TV Serials

—Readers Respond



Straightforward Bible-based counsel was included in a discussion of TV serials in the December 1, 1982, issue of *The Watchtower*. Many readers wrote to say how they personally benefited from the counsel given.

"Everything you said and quoted from others' personal experiences was hitting the nail right on the head!" wrote one Witness in California. "For 13 years I was a soap-opera addict. I thought that I was safe simply by attending Christian meetings and being semiregular in the field service. But I adopted the worldly soap-opera attitude that if your husband mistreats you or you feel unloved, adultery is justifiable—he brought it on himself. And so when I felt 'justified' I took this bad course and sinned against Jehovah and my mate. Eventually there proved to be a need to disfellowship me from the Christian congregation." However, she came to her senses and was reinstated. The articles reinforced her resolve never again to watch these corrupting serials. "Now I can study and read the Bible and Christian literature in peace," she concluded.

One subtle danger exposed in the articles was the way the serials get the viewers involved emotionally with the characters in the show. "I had grown up watching this one soap opera and the character 'Julie' was just like my 'friend.' . . . One day 'Julie' had an accident that left her beautiful face badly scarred," wrote another Christian woman in the United States. "I was in front of the TV set every day to make sure she was going to pull through. That night as I was saying my prayers, before I even thought what I was saying, I prayed, 'And Jehovah, please bless Julie.' I was shocked! This plea to Jehovah for Julie had come from my heart!" Realizing how involved she had become, she stopped watching these programs. She wrote: "If all readers will take your article on TV serials to heart, they will feel a real sense of freedom, since our own everyday problems are enough to cope with."

After expressing appreciation for the articles, one Christian woman in Texas wrote of her past: "I realized that I was 'addicted' to soap operas, and that I had to do something about it. I wondered, too, if my relationship with Jehovah could be affected. How could I have 'them' as friends and also be a friend to Jehovah? I

had to quit all at once—it was the only way, and how hard it was!"

What did this Christian woman have to do to break free? She added: "I had to unplug the TV. I would go outdoors and find something to do in my garden, call somebody, anything just to stay busy so that I would not give in. After about six months of taking it one day at a time, I felt I could stay in the house; I started using that time for personal Bible study, preparation for meetings and other spiritual things. How much better I felt! It has been over two years now since I have seen those so-called friends. I must admit that at times I still wonder what is going on with them, but I fight it. . . . Perhaps many others who have not yet broken free will now. I thank Jehovah and you brothers for exposing this 'good-for-nothing thing.'" —Psalm 101:3.

Another whose life was touched by the articles was a Witness in Canada. "I cried when I read the articles, for I discovered that my heart was no longer complete toward Jehovah. I promised my God that I would no longer be a slave to these serials and asked him to help me to get out of my home on the day of the program."

This Christian woman, who would even take her telephone off the hook to avoid being interrupted during "her" program, continued: "Two days later, I was invited to attend a Bible study on the very day and time of 'my' serial. I happily accepted. . . . I now feel closer to Jehovah, and my relationship with him is more intimate. How good Jehovah is to discipline us through his Word!"

Jehovah says: "I will give advice with my eye upon you." (Psalm 32:8) He knows our treacherous heart and wants to protect us from spiritual ruin. How good when we heed such discerning advice!

THE time—December 8, 1854. The place—Saint Peter's basilica in Rome. In a voice trembling with emotion, Pope Pius IX reads the Latin text of the following decree: "We declare, pronounce, and define that the doctrine which holds that the most Blessed Virgin Mary, at the first instant of her conception was preserved immaculate from all stain of original sin, by the singular grace and privilege granted her by Almighty God, through the merits of Christ Jesus, Savior of mankind, is a doctrine revealed by God and therefore must be firmly and constantly believed by all the faithful."

Ever since then this dogma has been binding on all Catholics, and the Feast of the Immaculate Conception has been celebrated throughout the Catholic world each year on December 8.

This doctrine should not be confused with what is called the Virgin Birth. The so-called Immaculate Conception concerns the conception and birth of Mary, whereas the Virgin Birth relates to the miraculous birth of Jesus. That Mary was a virgin when she conceived and bore Jesus is clearly stated in the Holy Scriptures. (Matthew 1:18-23; Luke 1:34, 35) But do the Scriptures show that Mary herself was born perfect and free from inherited sin?

Unknown in Early Church History

Under the heading "Immaculate Conception," *The Catholic Encyclopedia* admits: "No direct or categorical and stringent proof of the dogma can be brought forward from Scripture." So how was it that the Roman Catholic Church added this idea to its dogma? Why did a church that claims to have existed for nearly 2,000 years wait until 1854 be-



Was Mary Immaculately Conceived?

fore making the Immaculate Conception a required belief for all Catholics?

The Catholic Encyclopedia states: "In regard to the sinlessness of Mary the older Fathers are very cautious. . . . The Greek Fathers never formally or explicitly discussed the question of the Immaculate Conception." The fact is that several of the earliest Greek church fathers, such as Origen (185-254 C.E.), Basil the Great (330-379 C.E.) and Chrysostom (345-407 C.E.), expressed views that were contrary to the belief that Mary was immaculately conceived, that is, was free from the stain of original sin. And Augustine (354-430 C.E.), said to be the greatest of the old Latin "Fathers," expressed similar views.

In his book *Christian Worship: Its Origin and Evolution*, French Catholic historian Louis Duchesne writes: "The Church of Rome seems to have celebrated no festival of the Virgin before the

seventh century." True, during the fifth century C.E., the Greek-speaking church began keeping a Feast of the Conception of John the Baptist, and, sometime later, a Feast of the Conception of Mary. But *The Catholic Encyclopedia* admits: "In celebrating the feast of Mary's Conception the ["Christian"] Greeks of old . . . did not think it absurd to celebrate a conception which was not immaculate, as we see from the Feast of the Conception of St. John . . . To the Orthodox Greeks of our days, however, the feast means very little; they continue to call it 'Conception of St. Anne' [Anna, traditionally held to be Mary's mother], indicating unintentionally, perhaps, the active [sexual] conception which was certainly not immaculate."

We note, then, that Mary festivals originated in the Eastern, or Greek, Church and that they were not adopted by the Roman, or Latin, Church before the seventh century C.E. And although celebrating a feast of Mary's conception, the Greek Orthodox Church does not consider her conception to have been immaculate.

"The Great Controversy"

The Catholic Encyclopedia concedes that the birth of the Immaculate Conception doctrine was long, and far from painless. It states: "Originally the Church only celebrated the Feast of the Conception of Mary, as she kept the Feast of St. John's conception, not discussing the sinlessness. This feast in the course of centuries became the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, as dogmatical argumentation brought about precise and correct ideas, and as the thesis of the theological schools regarding the preservation of Mary from all stain of original sin gained strength."

Yes, the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of Mary was formulated only

after centuries of "dogmatical argumentation." It took hundreds of years for the "thesis of the theological schools" to 'gain strength' and finally be adopted. In their articles on "Immaculate Conception," approved Catholic reference works contain columns of material under the subheading "The Controversy" or "The Great Controversy." They speak of "timid beginnings" of the "new feast" in England in the 11th century C.E. After their conquest of England in 1066, the Normans abolished it, considering it to be "a product of insular simplicity and ignorance." In France, Catholic "Saint" Bernard of Clairvaux (1091-1153) took a public stand against it. In the 13th century, "Saint" Thomas Aquinas, said to be the "foremost philosopher and theologian" of the Catholic Church, opposed the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of Mary on the grounds that Mary was redeemed by Jesus like the rest of sinful mankind.

However, another Catholic theologian and philosopher (John Duns Scotus 1265-1308) came out in favor of the dogma. Scotus was a Franciscan, whereas Aquinas was a Dominican. So throughout the centuries the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception was a bone of contention between these two orders of the Roman Catholic Church.

Summing up this controversy, *The Catholic Encyclopedia* states: "The attempts to introduce it [the feast of the Immaculate Conception] officially provoked contradiction and theoretical discussion, bearing upon its legitimacy and its meaning, which were continued for centuries and were not definitively settled before 1854." In that year Pope Pius IX solemnly proclaimed that the Immaculate Conception of Mary "is a doctrine revealed by God and therefore must be firmly and constantly believed by all the faithful."

However, according to the authoritative *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique*, over 50 Catholic bishops, including the archbishop of Paris, were against the dogma's being made a required belief for all Catholics. Johann Döllinger, Germany's foremost 19th-century Catholic theologian, stated bluntly: "We reject the new Roman doctrine of the

**"The Greek Fathers never formally or explicitly discussed the question of the Immaculate Conception."
— *The Catholic Encyclopedia*.**

Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary because it is contrary to the tradition of the first thirteen centuries, which states that Christ alone was conceived without sin." Döllinger was later excommunicated.

Offshoot of the Trinity Doctrine

Why did the Catholic hierarchy insist on imposing this controversial doctrine on all Catholics? The dogma of the Immaculate Conception is a typical example of the dilemmas a church creates for itself when it departs from the straightforward truths outlined in the Bible. One unbiblical doctrine leads to another.

Research reveals that Mary worship stems from the dogma of the Trinity. How so? It all goes back to the fourth century C.E. In 325 C.E., Emperor Constantine, who was not even a baptized "Christian" at the time, organized the Nicene Council to settle the theological debate over the Trinity. More for political than for religious reasons, Constantine sided with the trinitarians. The Nicene Creed declared Jesus to be God. That started the

theologians thinking about the position of Mary. If Jesus is God, that made Mary the mother of God. This idea shocked some, and theological discussions went on for a century. Eventually, in 431 C.E., the Council of Ephesus pronounced Mary "*Theotokos*," literally, "God-bearer," or "Mother of God."

Interestingly, this title was given to Mary in Ephesus, Asia Minor, a region that was the center of pagan Mother-Goddess worship. Since Constantine had made apostate Christianity a universal, or catholic, religion acceptable to the pagan masses, Mary worship took the place of devotion to various pagan mother-goddesses. As popular veneration of Mary spread, grafted onto the Trinity dogma, it seemed logical to many to pronounce Mary completely sinless.

Other Reasons for the Doctrine

The Immaculate Conception doctrine is also a consequence of the role that Catholic theology assigns to Mary in redemption. In Catholic parlance, Mary is variously called "Mediatrice," "Co-Redemptrix," "Coredemptrix" and even "Virgin-priest." Why?

From very early times, Catholic theologians have called Mary the "Second Eve." Quoting 1 Corinthians 15:22, 45, they draw a parallel not only between "the first man Adam" and "the last Adam [Christ]" but also between Eve and Mary. The *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1976) states that this parallel ascribes "to Mary and to her obedience an *active share in the redemption of the human race*."—Italics ours.

Admittedly, the Catholic Church recognizes Christ's primary role in redemption. In fact, it teaches that by a "singular grace and privilege granted her by Almighty God," Mary was the first to benefit from "the merits" of Christ's sac-

rifice, and that they were applied to her "at the first instant of her conception" in order to preserve her "from all stain of original sin."

How, then, do Catholic theologians explain Mary's supposedly "active share in the redemption of the human race"? They say she is "Coredemptrix" because, to quote *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, "the consent of Mary was essential to the redemption." They apply the word "Mediatatrix" to her because they claim she intercedes on behalf of fallen mankind. They also say that, as such, Mary "can legitimately be called *Virgo sacerdos* or Virgin-priest" because she cooperated with Christ in his sacrifice and she now shares with him in dispensing "all graces."

Furthermore, following the erroneous Latin version of Genesis 3:15, traditional Catholic theology makes Mary the "woman" who, as Catholics claim, will crush the head of the "serpent," Satan. (Genesis 3:14, 15) (See the footnotes on Genesis 3:15 in the *Douay* and *Jerusalem* Bibles.) The claim is made that to conquer Satan, Mary must be absolutely sinless. But what does the Bible say?

The Bible Viewpoint

Writing just three years after Pope Pius IX imposed this dogma on the Cath-

olic world, Monsignor Malou, the bishop of Brugge, Belgium, admitted: "It should be plainly stated that, of all the arguments put forward by the defenders of the privilege [of Immaculate Conception], those taken from Holy Scripture are the least rigorous and accurate. Too often a host of irrelevant texts are quoted injudiciously and almost haphazardly."

But Catholic theologians claim that both the Bible and tradition represent God's revelation to mankind. And yet the best Catholic authorities state that a tradition must not contradict the Scriptures and that it must, explicitly or implicitly, be proved "Apostolic." How does the dogma of the Immaculate Conception measure up to these requirements?

As we have seen, the doctrine is not supported by the oldest traditions of the Roman Catholic Church. Moreover, it contradicts the Scriptures. The claim that Mary was preserved from original sin from the first instant of her conception denies the universality of inherited sin. The apostle Paul states clearly: "Sin entered the world through one man, and through sin death, and thus death has spread through the whole human race because everyone has sinned." (Romans 5:12, *JB*) The Scriptures also state that redemption for "all mankind" came only through Christ's *death*. (Hebrews 2:9, *JB*) If the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of Mary were true, Mary would have been redeemed *before* Christ died, in fact, even years before he came to earth.

Thus, as measured by the Catholic Church's own yardstick, this dogma is neither "Apostolic" nor Scriptural, and is therefore not an acceptable "tradition." Should this not move sincere Catholics to examine in the light of the Bible other "articles of faith" they are required to believe?

In Our Next Issue

- **What Does Christmas Music Really Teach?**
- **Do You Fear What Others Think?**
- **When a Mate Is Unfaithful**

Insight on the News

Resurrection View Changed

Protestant and Roman Catholic scholars now agree in principle that 'the idea of an immortal soul is not Biblical, but is a Hellenistic idea that crept into Christian thought by mistake,' according to New Testament professor Gene Wehrli of Eden Seminary in Missouri. A report in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* notes that Wehrli also affirms that 'the Christian view of the afterlife did not rest on belief in an immortal soul but in a body transformed through resurrection.' He explained: "The Hellenistic understanding is that persons are immortal by nature—that they have a soul that is trapped in flesh and returns to God . . . The resurrection of the Bible stresses that in one sense death is death, but that God raises the person in his uniqueness back to life." Hence, an 'afterlife' was said to be not something intrinsic to humans but, rather, "a free gift of God."

It is of interest that some modern scholars are coming around to the Bible viewpoint. God's Word clearly holds out the marvelous hope of a resurrection for those who have died. Note Jesus' faith-strengthening promise: "I am the resurrection and the life. He that exercises faith in me, even though he dies, will come to life." He also said: "Do not marvel at this, because the hour is coming in which all those in the memorial tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who did good things to a resurrection

of life, those who practiced vile things to a resurrection of judgment."—John 11:25; 5:28, 29.

Life and Law

"To regard the destruction of the fetus as just another surgical procedure is to disregard centuries of criminology, theology and moral philosophy." So writes Tulane University law professor Billups Percy in a letter to *The New York Times* regarding a recent U.S. Supreme Court decision on abortion.

Rather than debating the pros and cons of the decisions, the professor suggests that "the Court should not have decided them at all." Why not? "Clearly, the abortion question is a classic example of a situation where the only judicial standards available are artificial, informed by a legal formalism that is simply not up to the task," he argues. As an example, he mentions that "the Court neatly calibrates the value of the fetus by dividing its time in the womb into roughly three equal periods. Then . . . it decrees that only during the final trimester can the mother have any restrictions placed upon her as regards the fetus."

Indeed, any "judicial standards" imposed by humans on the sanctity of life would be "artificial" because life originates not with man but with God. "For with you [God] is the source of life," says the psalmist in Psalm 36:9. God alone has the legal right to decree how life, including that of the unborn, is to be treated. We,

his creatures, are accountable to him, our Maker.—Psalm 100:3.

A Divided Religious House

"Divergence in attitudes [among church members] from official church standards has long been assumed, but recently gathered statistics bear it out," observed Associated Press religion writer, George W. Cornell. For example, a Lutheran study showed that while most of the clergy believe that "a child is sinful at birth," less than two thirds of the laity agree. And, though nearly half of the laity believe that of the world's many religions, "most lead to God," less than 5 percent of the clergy polled agreed.

Cornell goes on to cite Baptist clergyman Dale Moody as objecting to his religion's emphasis on "once saved, always saved," the teaching that a person who accepts Christ cannot fall from grace and has eternal salvation assured. Commenting further on religion's divided house, the noted Catholic scholar Michael Novak remarked: "A new generation is gathering steam in the Catholic Church, is hopping mad at the Catholic establishment, and is going to make waves that will affect all Americans."

How different the Bible's unifying exhortation to Christians at 1 Corinthians 1:10, "that you should all speak in agreement, and that there should not be divisions among you, but that you may be fitly united in the same mind and in the same line of thought."

A Recommended Book

LAST January 23, the *Sunday Sun*, a newspaper from the Caribbean island of Jamaica, carried the headline: "Witnesses Forge Ahead." After describing recent increases in their numbers, the paper noted:

"The Witnesses have now released a new, attractively-illustrated, cogently and simply written 255-page book which should help them considerably to expand their numbers. Titled **YOU CAN LIVE FOREVER IN PARADISE ON EARTH**, the hard-bound book is sold for the reasonable price of J\$4.50 [\$2.50, U.S.]. . .

"The Witnesses have disturbed many a person's Sunday afternoon and have knocked up many out of the bed, practices which are not particularly endearing.

"But the Witnesses deserve a hearing. If one can't allow them to put a foot in the door, then by all means acquire **YOU CAN LIVE FOREVER IN PARADISE ON EARTH**, which systematically and comprehensively outlines the theology and practices of the Jehovah's Witnesses. . .

"The Witnesses have always had the knack of identifying religion with the pulse of everyday living. Witness publications do not largely deal with picky and petty religious issues and debates which seem to fascinate many Fundamentalists. The everyday struggles people encounter—such as depression, loneliness, sexual problems, financial distress, fear—are dealt with powerfully in Witness theology.

"While many Christians speak of the Gospel in terms that seem unrelated to what's happening in the real world and while many separate their spiritual lives

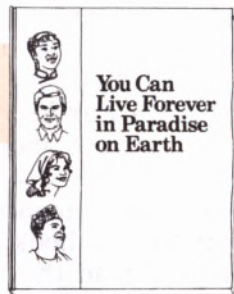
from their social and intellectual life, the Witnesses' religion dominates everything they do.

YOU CAN LIVE FOREVER IN PARADISE ON EARTH amply demonstrates this. . .

"There is one theme that dominates the book and, indeed, Witness theology: the superiority of the Kingdom of God. The book marshalls strong evidence that the Kingdom of God was central to Jesus' ministry. Even the healings of Jesus, which were dominant in His ministry, the Witnesses tie this in with the Kingdom of God. The Witnesses show that prolonging human life in itself was not Jesus' primary concern. Rather, the miracles 'proved that, with God's power, all human problems can be solved. Yes, they showed on a small scale what will take place on earth under the Kingdom of God.'"

Although this newspaper writer takes issue with certain teachings of Jehovah's Witnesses, yet, as noted above, he encourages his readers to obtain the book *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth*. Many of you also have had opportunity to read this fine publication. Are you eager to share its valuable contents with others?

Many persons are, as is evidenced by the *Live Forever* book's distribution into the many millions of copies within its first year of publication. One such person from North Carolina wrote the Watchtower Society late last spring. Beginning his letter with, "Dear Sir and Brother," the man said: "I hope you don't mind me



addressing you that way. However, I'm writing you about a book you printed entitled *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth*.

"Sometime about the first of March a Witness came by my house with a little boy that remembered me. After showing me the book he placed it with me. Well, I read the book and liked it very much. I'm a truck driver by profession; so the next week I went to Long Island, New York. I saw some people I knew with foster children with problems. So I gave them the book. I didn't find another book until I got to Hayti, Missouri.

"After that I went to Houston, Texas. En route to Houston I stopped by the Kingdom Hall in Lufkin, Texas, and picked up 10 books. While in Houston I placed all 11 books I had. So when I came back through Lufkin I picked up 8 more (the night of the Passover). When I got to Conway, Arkansas, the 8 were gone. So I picked up 10. By the time I got to Durham, North Carolina, they were gone. So I picked up 2 more from Brother J—. Then that Sunday I picked up 15 from the Hall in Durham. They, too, went, so when I got over to Wilmington, Delaware, I picked up 16 more. I picked up 3 in Rockton, Illinois. I ran out in North Dakota and didn't get any more books until Memphis, Tennessee, where I got 10 more. Then in Brooklyn, New York (at the Watchtower headquarters), I picked up 27 more. My last pickup was in Springfield, Illinois, where I picked up 10 on May 1, 1983.

"All in all from the 27th of March until the 27th of April, I placed 96 of those books. Well, this is another month and I'm getting off to a slow start. But every time I get books and between times I ask the brothers to have a study with me because at this time I'm not a Wit-

ness. But between the Kingdom recordings in my truck, the studies I get here and there (and the little red book) and the undeserved kindness of Jehovah our Father and Jesus Christ the Son, plus continued prayers, maybe I too can have everlasting life."

After asking that prayers be said in his behalf and closing his letter with an expression of love, this truck driver concluded his letter: "P.S. On this date, 5/17, I picked up 25 more from the Watchtower."

How does this man place so many copies of the *Live Forever* book? Bob Rodish, a member of the Brooklyn headquarters staff who had a Bible study with him when he stopped for more literature, explains: "He told me that he just shows people the book, tells them that he has learned many wonderful things from it and that what he has learned has actually changed his life. Then he opens up to certain pages to illustrate what the book contains—for example, pages 140 and 141, which provide chronological evidence that God's Kingdom has already been established in the heavens and is now ruling."

Actually, one's enthusiasm and personal appreciation for the publication is the key to getting others to obtain it. By the way, Bob Rodish says he later heard that his truck-driver friend was continuing to place the books with people wherever he meets them—over 200 of them by last June.

This coming January and February Jehovah's Witnesses will again have a special campaign to get this fine Bible study aid into the hands of the public. You also are encouraged to have a full share in spreading the good news of God's Kingdom by offering *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth* at every appropriate opportunity.

Questions From Readers

■ Do the *restoration* prophecies of Isaiah and other ancient prophets have their final fulfillment in the spiritual paradise of God's people today, or do they also have a literal application to the Paradise of the future "new earth"?

The book *Man's Salvation out of World Distress at Hand*, published in 1975 by the Watch Tower Society, had this to say with reference to Isaiah chapter 35: "It was after the exiled Jews returned from Babylon in 537 B.C.E. that the prophecy of the beautification of the Judean 'wilderness,' 'waterless region' and 'desert' had a miniature fulfillment. The larger and final fulfillment, the spiritual fulfillment, began to take place upon the remnant of spiritual Israelites after they returned from their exile from God's favor in Babylon the Great in the year 1919 C.E." Does this mean that none of the features of these restoration prophecies will be fulfilled in the literal Paradise on earth during Christ's Millennial Reign? Far from it!

The statement in the *Man's Salvation* book must be viewed properly in its context. Isaiah's prophecy had a miniature fulfillment when Israel was brought back from captivity in Babylon, but the major fulfillment began to take place from 1919 C.E. with the release of spiritual Israel from captivity to Babylon the Great. Restoration to their "land," their spiritual paradise, was then final and complete, for *never again* would they fall into bondage to any part of Satan's world empire of false religion.

However, this and other restoration prophecies include features

that will also find a physical fulfillment in the Paradise earth. There are features, for example, in Isaiah 35:1-7, such as the healing of the blind, the deaf and the lame, that did not have a literal fulfillment in the restoration from ancient Babylon; nor are they so fulfilled in the restored spiritual paradise today. But Jehovah's Witnesses look forward with keen anticipation to the realization of these promises in the Paradise earth. No doubt that is why Song 119 in our 1966 songbook is such a favorite with all of us!

Referring to other restoration prophecies, the Society's book *God's Kingdom of a Thousand Years Has Approached* (1973) stated: "It would be inconsistent for God to inspire such a prophecy as that of Isaiah 11:6-9, and Ezekiel 34:25 and Hosea 2:18 to have only a figurative or spiritual meaning and not have a true copy of these things in actual life, as though the literal fulfillment were an impossible ideal."

It is of interest that inspired writers of the Christian Greek Scriptures have applied features of these restoration prophecies to the "new earth," even though their major fulfillment today is in the spiritual paradise. For example, the prophet Isaiah spoke of blessings to come in "new heavens and a new earth." (Isaiah 65:17-25) Later, the apos-

tle Peter described the coming of Jehovah's day, in which the present "heavens" and "earth" are to be dissolved, and added: "But there are new heavens and a new earth that we are awaiting according to his promise [by Isaiah], and in these righteousness is to dwell." (2 Peter 3:10-13) Thus Peter indicated that features in Isaiah's prophecy will become a reality in the "new earth." True happiness, long life, secure homes, abundant food, satisfying work, peace between man and animals—all these blessings are assured 'according to God's promise.'

Further, in speaking of 'the banquet for all peoples,' Isaiah 25:6-8 includes the statement: "The Sovereign Lord Jehovah will certainly wipe the tears from all faces." Though the major fulfillment is in the spiritual paradise (with the "great crowd" sharing therein), the apostle John shows that this feature of Isaiah's prophecy has also a definite fulfillment toward mankind in the "new earth." (Revelation 7:9, 16, 17; 21:1-4) Then, a global Paradise will be recreated after the pattern of the Paradise of Eden.—Genesis 2:8; Matthew 19:28.

Jehovah's people now exult in the complete restoration of their spiritual paradise. And there will be no end to rejoicing in the physical Paradise, "because the earth will certainly be filled with the knowledge of Jehovah as the waters are covering the very sea."—Isaiah 11:9; 51:3.

