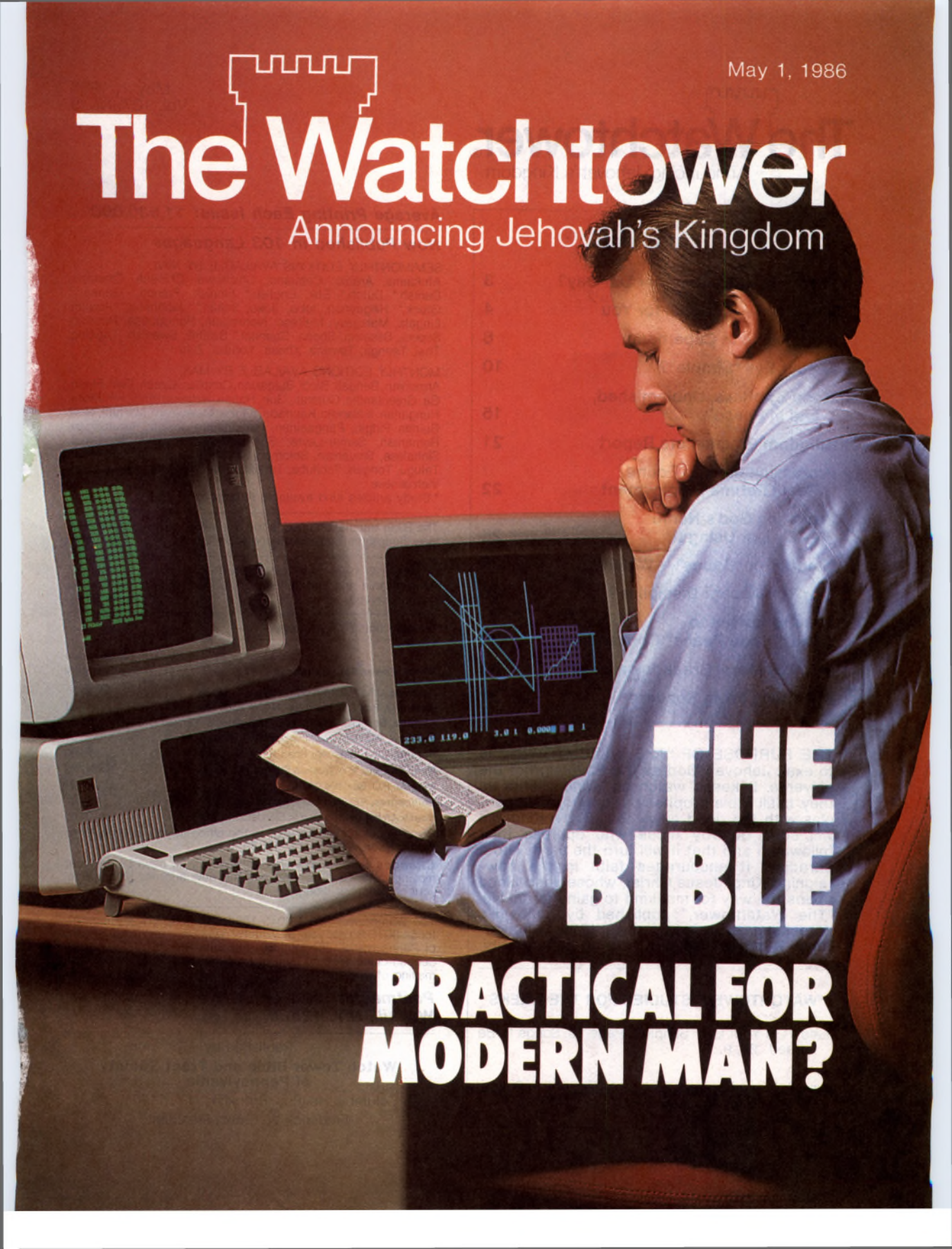


May 1, 1986

The Watchtower

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom



**THE
BIBLE**

**PRACTICAL FOR
MODERN MAN?**

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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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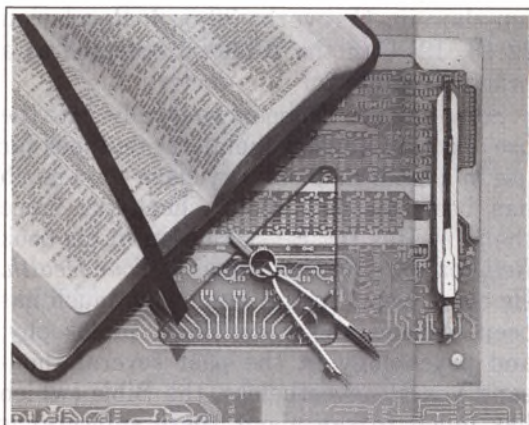
THE BIBLE

—Practical for Our Day?

THIS world has changed dramatically within the past century. The transformation from the horse-and-buggy days to the modern space age has advanced so quickly that technical books are often outdated shortly after they are printed. At the forefront has been a surge in the fields of science and technology. Though digital concepts were first employed some 150 years ago, it is only in recent years that computers have come into universal use, controlling everything from the launching of satellites and spacecraft to the balancing of household budgets. It has truly been amazing! One can hardly keep abreast of all of it!

Many of the changes have been beneficial. Among these have been advances in the field of communications, transportation, labor-saving devices, and medicine. For instance, by microsurgery a severed hand or finger, once considered hopelessly lost, can often be restored to use. We can fly to the other side of our globe in just a portion of a day, saving months of travel time. Compared to a hundred years ago—when there were no automobiles, radios, TVs, motion pictures, refrigerators, washing machines, vitamins, antibiotics, vaccines, and hundreds of other items that are commonly accepted today—we are truly living in a new era.

But not all has worked in our best interests. The harnessing of nuclear energy, for instance, has posed a serious threat to humanity through warfare or by radia-



tion. Widespread chemical pollution, a by-product of our industrial technology, adds to that threat. Illicit drugs and the modern drug culture wreak havoc in many lives.

Most noticeable has been the change in people's lives. Industrialization and the switch from rural to urban living have fragmented the family. More than ever before—and especially among women and children—people feel liberated and independent. Freedom from the restrictions of previously held mores has resulted in new life-styles and changed social values, so that these are now far different from what the world had known for thousands of years.

Bible Unchanged

Where, then, does one turn for guidance? What advice is applicable today? Modern educators constantly revise their methods and textbooks to keep pace with our changing world. Clergymen and other professionals restructure their advice around what is popular and generally accepted.

The Bible, on the other hand, has remained unchanged for thousands of years. Indeed, it contains firm warnings not to add to or take away from the words writ-

ten therein. (Proverbs 30:5, 6; Revelation 22:18, 19) Can the Bible be accepted as a practical guide for our modern day?

Some say no. "Nobody would advocate the use of a 1924 edition chemistry textbook for use in a modern chemistry class—too much has been learned about chemistry since then," writes Dr. Eli S. Chesen in his book *Religion May Be Hazardous to Your Health*. He continues: "In the same way, much has been learned about sociology, philosophy, and psychology in the past several thousand years; nevertheless, the Bible (which has much to say about these subjects) is

used as an authority and seldom revised."

He adds: "I am always amazed when I hear someone discuss the 'miracle' of how timeless the Bible is and how it is as meaningful today as it was when it was written. This is somewhat akin to one's amazement over the 'accuracy' of astrology. The Bible has wielded such strong authority that few ever give consideration to updating or discarding it."

However, is the Bible really outdated in our modern world? Or is the advice it gives still practical and meaningful for our time?

THE BIBLE

—Practical for You

"HE HAS told you, O earthling man, what is good," a man of God wrote over 2,700 years ago. (Micah 6:8) But is it "good" or practical for us in our modern day?

"The Bible was written long before anyone knew anything about modern psychology and the psychosexual developmental process," states Dr. Chesen. "Even if its writers' intentions were of the best, they could not have taken these important factors into consideration. Yet when it comes to the issue of morals and/or commandments, the Bible and its interpreters have much to say."

That point might have been valid if the Bible were the product of man's thinking. But as shown in our issue of April 1, 1986, the Bible is not man's word but God's. This important fact cannot be overlooked. Why? Because God's knowledge is not restricted by time and circumstances, as is

man's, nor is it subject to change. As the Creator of humankind, God thoroughly knows our makeup and what is best for us. So the apostle aptly states: "All Scripture is inspired of God and beneficial for teaching, for reproving, for setting things straight, for disciplining in righteousness, that the man of God may be fully competent, completely equipped for every good work."—2 Timothy 3:16, 17.

What, then, about the monumental changes that have taken place in our modern times? Is it not felt that we are living in a freer and more enlightened age? Have not many of the traditional shackles been discarded by society in general? True, but despite the increased knowledge and newly assumed "freedom," man's basic needs and makeup have not changed. Inwardly, we are still the same. We still have drives to eat, drink, sleep, procreate, and worship, as did our forefathers. We still have

need of love and affection, and we want to be happy. We still need to lead meaningful lives.

Bible principles address these needs. Moreover, the Bible's teachings work to our good, even in these modern days. And what is more, the results derived from following the Bible's counsel are superior to any obtained by other means. Let us briefly examine how that is true in the areas of morality, economics, and health.

The Bible and Morality



One of the biggest changes in our modern times has been in regard to views on morality. Practices formerly considered abhorrent have become acceptable. Women bearing children out of wedlock are no longer shunned by society. Homosexuals openly campaign for their "rights." A widely held view is that no one has the right to complain about or interfere with any practices that take place between consenting adults. And the Bible's standards are rejected as Victorian.

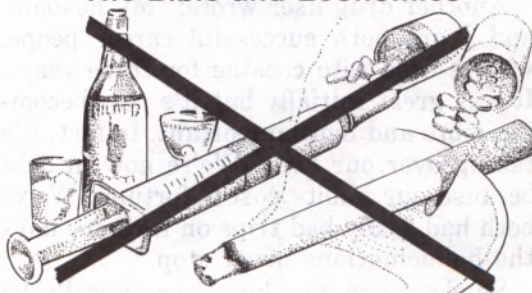
But the Bible's standards were set by God long before the 19th century, the age of Queen Victoria of England. And they continue to prove good for mankind. Certainly this can be seen when one considers that, hand in hand with the "new morality," there have come skyrocketing divorce rates, multitudinous abortions, an epidemic of teenage pregnancies, and a vast array of sexually transmitted diseases.

es. These are costly, debilitating, and even death-dealing problems. Would it not be more practical to follow the Bible's counsel regarding sex, chastity, and marital faithfulness?—Proverbs 5:3-11, 15-20; Malachi 2:13-16; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Corinthians 6:9, 10.

Note particularly how this is true in the matter of just one disease, as shown in this report from *The New York Times*: "AIDS continues to spread rampantly among those in the risk groups, but not outside them," said Dr. David J. Sencer, the New York City Health Commissioner. . . . Those at risk include homosexual and bisexual males; intravenous drug users; . . . those receiving transfusions from infected donors, and the sex partners or children of those who have AIDS."

Really, which makes more sense—a few minutes of illicit pleasure, often accompanied by fear and anxiety, or a clear conscience and self-respect? Which brings lasting happiness and satisfaction—a brief affair with the possibility of tragic consequences, or the solidly based commitment of a clean marriage that the Bible advocates?

The Bible and Economics



Few people consider the Bible to have a solution to economic problems. Yet, following its standards can actually put more bread on your table. How is this so?

Often, much of what a person earns is

needlessly squandered. Adhering to the Bible's counsel will preserve these funds for useful purposes. For example, a practice that often leads to poverty is that of excessive drinking. Millions of people, with wages in hand, head for bars or liquor stores. In many cases, they leave without sufficient funds to pay bills or provide adequate food for their families. Sometimes money must be borrowed to obtain life's necessities. Wisely, the Bible condemns excessive drinking; it advocates moderation.—Proverbs 23:20, 21, 29, 30; 1 Timothy 3:2, 3, 8.

The same is true of those who take up the habit of smoking or the abuse of drugs. How costly these habits are! And how difficult to stop! Typical is this letter to psychologist Joyce Brothers, as printed in the *New York Post*: "I started using cocaine because it was fun and most of my friends were snorting it on weekends. Well, it's really getting in the way of everything good in my life and I'm having terrible difficulty stopping. I'm the mother of two children and I'm terrified that if I can't quit soon, they're going to suffer. I'm free-basing twice a day. I'm in debt up to my eyebrows, I'm miserable."

Another drug user wrote: "My husband and I are both successful career people who've been into cocaine for three years. It was great initially but it's now becoming more and more important. In fact, it's taking over our lives. We're now in debt because our habits cost a fortune. We've both had really bad trips on it. Some days the hallucinations never stop."

Smokers are also hurt economically by their habit, though perhaps not to the same extent. A current report in the magazine *Modern Office Technology* states: "Non-smokers who are looking for a job are much more likely to get hired than equally-qualified job candidates who

smoke, according to a recently released nationwide survey. The study, based on interviews with vice presidents and personnel directors of America's largest companies . . . revealed that today's employers overwhelmingly prefer job candidates who do not smoke." Why? Because, as shown in a congressional study, smoking raises the nation's health-care costs, including medical bills and lost productivity, some \$65 billion a year—equal to \$2.17 for each pack of cigarettes sold!

Yes, a person is helped economically simply by following the Bible's counsel: "Let us cleanse ourselves of every defilement of flesh and spirit." (2 Corinthians 7:1) And the same holds true for those who, by following Bible principles, keep free from all forms of gambling. (Isaiah 65:11, 12; Luke 12:15) Besides, those who adhere to Bible principles are greatly prized by employers for their honesty, integrity, and industriousness, and are likely to be the first ones hired and the last ones fired.—Colossians 3:22, 23; Ephesians 4:28.

The Bible and Health



Since we are so advanced medically today, has the Bible's counsel been superseded? Well, a fact that has astounded researchers is how accurate and up-to-date the Bible is on matters relative to medicine and health, although it was written at a time when superstition abounded and little or nothing was known about



modern medical practices, or even germs and viruses.

Despite modern medical science, of course, health problems abound. Yet, the Bible's counsel promotes the very best of health. As already noted, following Bible principles protects us from practices that are very damaging to our health. They also work toward improving our mental health. The Bible recognizes the effect that attitudes and emotions have on the body. (Proverbs 14:30) So it directs us away from damaging attitudes and emotions, and it helps us replace them with positive, upbuilding qualities.

Note the counsel given at Ephesians 4: 31, 32: "Let all malicious bitterness and anger and wrath and screaming and abusive speech be taken away from you along with all badness. But become kind to one another, tenderly compassionate, freely forgiving one another." Yes, the Bible stresses a change from a destructive, hurtful personality to the new, healthful Christian personality. (Ephesians 4:

20-24; Colossians 3:5-14) It helps us to manifest the fruitage of God's spirit: "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, mildness, self-control." (Galatians 5:22, 23) The Bible provides healthful food on which the mind and the heart can feed and be at peace.—Proverbs 3:7, 8; 4:20-22; Philippians 4:6-8.

Additionally, those who abide by Bible regulations do not become involved in crimes, riots, uprisings, or other things that result in bodily injury. They have a good conscience, which greatly contributes toward maintaining a happy disposition and good physical health. (1 Peter 3: 16-18) Moreover, those who apply the Bible's counsel enjoy a warm, rewarding, happy homelife, together with peaceful relations with others.

Yes, the Bible *is* practical for our day. This is evident in the lives of millions who truly apply its principles. And it can help you. You are invited to put its teachings to the test in your life. Jehovah's Witnesses will be happy to show you how.



Back Home in Capernaum

BY NOW Jesus' fame has spread far and wide, and many people travel to where he is staying in out-of-the-way places. After some days, however, he returns to Capernaum by the Sea of Galilee. Quickly the news spreads through the city that he is back home, and many come to the house where he is. Pharisees and Law teachers come from as far away as Jerusalem.

The crowd is so great that they jam the doorway, and there is no room for anyone else to get inside. The stage is set for a truly remarkable event. What occurs on this occasion is of vital importance, for it helps us to appreciate that Jesus has the power to remove the cause of human suffering and restore health to all whom he chooses.

While Jesus is teaching the crowd, four men bring to the house a paralyzed man on a cot. They want Jesus to heal their friend, but because of the crowd

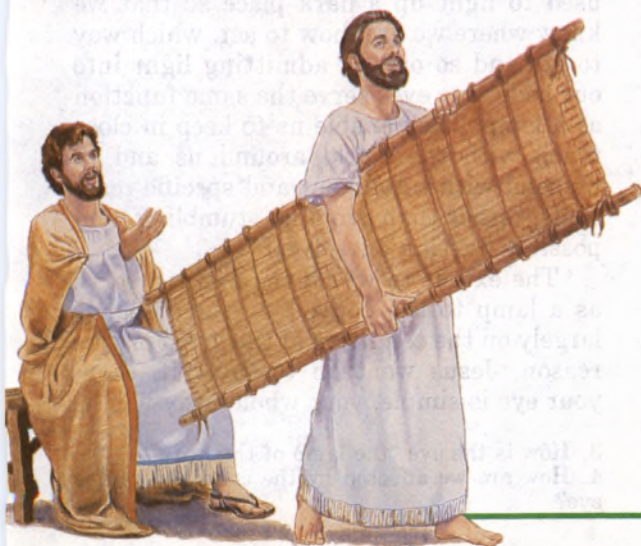
they cannot get inside. How disappointing! Yet they do not give up. They climb up on the flat roof, make a hole in it by removing the tiles, and lower the cot with the paralyzed man on it right next to Jesus.

Is Jesus angry because of the interruption? Not at all! Rather, he is deeply impressed by their faith. He says to the paralytic: "Your sins are forgiven." But can Jesus actually forgive sins? The scribes and the Pharisees do not think so. They reason in their hearts: "Who can forgive sins except God alone?"

Knowing their thoughts, Jesus says to them: "Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up and pick up your cot and walk?'" Without waiting for an answer, Jesus turns to the paralytic and says: "Get up, pick up your cot, and go to your home." And he immediately does, walking out with his cot in front of them all! In amazement the people exclaim: "We never saw the like of it!"

Did you notice that Jesus mentions sins in connection with sickness and that forgiveness of sins is related to the gaining of health? The Bible explains that our first parent Adam sinned and that all of us have inherited the consequences of that sin, namely, sickness and death. But under the rule of God's Kingdom, Jesus will forgive the sins of all who love and serve God, and then all sickness will be removed. How fine that will be! **Mark 2:1-12; Luke 5:17-26; Matthew 9:1-8; Romans 5:12, 17-19.**

- ♦ What was the setting for a truly remarkable event?
- ♦ How did the paralytic reach Jesus?
- ♦ Why are all of us sinful, but how did Jesus provide hope that forgiveness of our sins and restored perfect health are possible?



Is Your Eye “Simple”?

“If, then, your eye is simple, your whole body will be bright.”

—MATTHEW 6:22.

VISION is generally considered the most precious and important of the senses—especially by those who no longer have it. Scientists tell us that every second ten trillion particles of light pass through the pupils of our eyes. As they reach the retina, they are received by a hundred million rod and cone cells. Stimulated by the light, these nerve cells begin sending electrical signals to the brain. There, a large portion of the hundred billion neurons go to work to decipher what has just been received and to decide what response needs to be made. All of this takes just a fraction of a second. Indeed, the eye is an awesome example of the marvel of intelligent creation.—Psalm 139:14.

² Though scientists know a good deal about the biological workings of the eye and the brain, they know little about how and why we respond as we do to what we see. For example, it is not fully understood why one person prefers red to blue while another may prefer blue to red, or why different colors affect us in different ways. The relationship between vision and reac-

1. Why can it be said that the eye is a marvel of intelligent creation?

2. What aspect of vision still remains a puzzle to scientists?



tion remains a puzzle. But Jehovah, the Maker of the eye, and his Son and co-worker, Jesus Christ, are well aware of the intricacies of the physical eye, and they know how the eye influences our actions and our lives.

“The Lamp of the Body”

³ Jesus remarked that “the lamp of the body is the eye.” (Matthew 6:22) A lamp is used to light up a dark place so that we know where we are, how to act, which way to go, and so on. By admitting light into our body, our eyes serve the same function as a lamp. They enable us to keep in close touch with the world around us and to respond with intelligent and specific reactions, rather than groping, stumbling, and possibly hurting ourselves.

⁴ The extent to which the eye can serve as a lamp to the body, however, depends largely on the condition of the eye. For this reason, Jesus went on to say: “If, then, your eye is simple, your whole body will be

3. How is the eye “the lamp of the body”?

4. How are we affected by the condition of the eye?

bright; but if your eye is wicked, your whole body will be dark. If in reality the light that is in you is darkness, how great that darkness is!" (Matthew 6:22, 23) From this we can see the tremendous influence that the eye exerts on our entire life course, for good or for bad.

Influence of the Eye

⁵ Consider the case of the first woman, Eve. The extent to which the eye influenced her actions can be seen from the Bible's account of her encounter with the Deceiver, Satan the Devil. (2 Corinthians 11:3; 1 Timothy 2:14) Satan suggested that 'her eyes were bound to be opened' if she would just ignore God's command and take and eat the fruit from "the tree of the knowledge of good and bad." How did she respond? The Bible tells us: "Consequently the woman saw that the tree was good for food and that it was something to be longed for to the eyes, yes, the tree was desirable to look upon." She allowed her eyes to dwell upon something forbidden to her. That was a deliberate misuse of the eye. What was the result? "So she began taking of its fruit and eating it."—Genesis 2:17; 3:4-6.

⁶ No doubt this was not the first time Eve saw "the tree of the knowledge of good and bad" or its fruit. But something different was happening. This time it appeared to be "something to be longed for to the eyes" and "desirable to look upon." Longing and desire normally are qualities not of the eye but of the heart. But what the eye sees intensifies the longing and desire of the heart, so much so that action may result. In Eve's case, such action led to disastrous consequences for herself and her husband Adam, as well as for all their

future offspring, including us today.—Romans 5:12; James 1:14, 15.

⁷ To show, however, that it is possible to resist any influence for bad that may come through the eye, we might consider the example of Jesus Christ. Again, the same Tempter, Satan, was involved. In his third effort to draw Jesus away from doing God's will, "the Devil took him along to an unusually high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory." Notice that Satan did not just verbally offer Jesus all the power and glory of the world in exchange for an act of worship. He "showed him" these things, exploiting the powerful influence of the eye. Yet, because Jesus' eye was not distracted by the tempting offer but was closely focused on his relationship with his heavenly Father, Jehovah, he was successful in thwarting Satan's cunning scheme.—Matthew 4:8-10.

⁸ What can we learn from the foregoing examples? First, that what we focus our eyes on can reinforce the good or the bad desires of our heart. This may lead to action that will bring either blessing or disaster for ourselves and others. Second, it is clear that the eye is a favorite means by which Satan moves to deceive his victims. Of all the "designs" that Satan uses to mislead mankind, this appeal to the eye appears to be one of the most powerful.—2 Corinthians 2:11.

⁹ Today, Satan still uses the same tactic in his schemes to draw all people away from doing God's will. Through the glitter and glamour of the world, Satan promotes "the desire of the flesh and the desire of the eyes and the showy display of one's

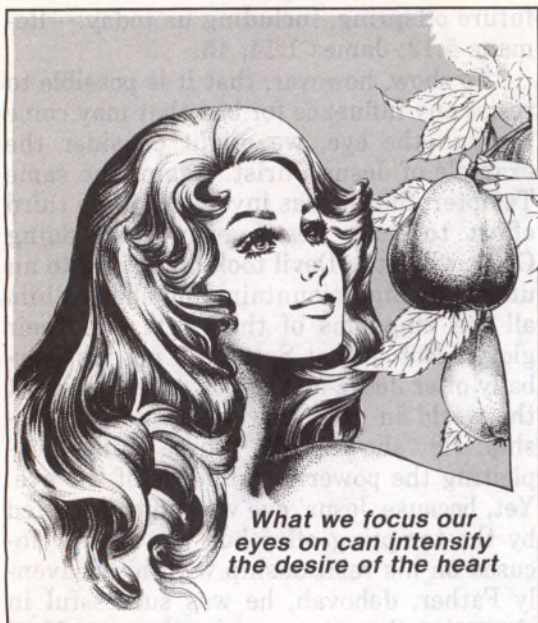
7. How was the eye involved in Satan's third effort to mislead Jesus, and what was the outcome?

8. What lessons can we learn from the examples of Eve and Jesus?

9. How does Satan promote "the desire of the eyes" today?

5. To what extent was the eye involved in Eve's temptation by Satan?

6. How does the eye influence our actions?



means of life.” (1 John 2:16) This is clearly seen in the advertising schemes used by the commercial world. Is it not true that the most successful advertisements are those that capitalize on their visual impact? The thousands of colorful billboards and flashing signs, the glossy pictures in magazines and newspapers, the clever TV spots—and the billions of dollars spent to produce them—all testify to the fact that the whole idea of advertising is to stimulate the consumer’s “desire of the eyes.”

¹⁰ While many of these advertisements may leave little to the imagination, what is more subtle is the fact that these ads are really promoting not just consumer products but also life-styles. Very often the products are displayed as being used by the most privileged, influential, happy, and beautiful people. The message is that if the consumer uses that product, his “means of life” will automatically fit into

10. What is really being promoted by the commercial world?

one of those categories. Advertisers know that once a person accepts a certain manner of life, it takes little to persuade him or her to accept the goods and commodities that go along with it. In this light, how wise it is for dedicated Christians to heed the counsel found at Hebrews 13:5! There we read: “Let your manner of life be free of the love of money, while you are content with the present things.”

Keeping the Eye “Simple,” Not “Wicked”

¹¹ Confronted daily with such an array of eye-appealing distractions, we can appreciate all the more why Jesus Christ admonished us to keep our eye “simple” and not “wicked.” (Matthew 6:22, 23) What does that mean? “Simple” here is translated from the Greek word *ha-plous*, which basically means singleness of mind or devotion to one purpose. On the other hand, “wicked” in the original Greek is *po-ne-ros* and has the meaning of bad, worthless, evil. Thus, the ‘simple eye,’ rather than being distracted or sidetracked by everything that is going on, focuses its attention on only one thing. By contrast, the ‘wicked eye’ is shifty, crafty, and covetous, and is drawn to things shady and dark.

¹² But what should the eye focus on so that the “whole body will be bright”? A consideration of the context will help us to find the answer. In the preceding verses, Jesus was talking about “treasures upon the earth” and “treasures in heaven.” He said that “where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.” Then, after discussing the eye, he again emphasized the need to show singleness of purpose, saying: “No one can slave for two masters,” God and Riches. In the following verses, he

11. Explain the terms “simple” and “wicked” in Jesus’ statement about the eye.

12. Review and explain the context of Jesus’ discussion.

offered counsel on one's view of the daily necessities and concluded with the admonition: "Keep on, then, seeking first the kingdom and his righteousness, and all these other things will be added to you." —Matthew 6:19-34.

¹³ What can we glean from all of this? Jesus is here talking about goals in life, pointing out the futility of the pursuit of material things and the blessing of cultivating interest in spiritual matters. Clearly, he is telling us that by focusing our eyes singly on Kingdom interests, our "whole body will be bright." Why? Because if we make the doing of God's will our goal in life, we will seek to reflect the glorious good news in every aspect of our lives. Not only can we look forward to a bright future but we can also be freed from the dark and underhanded things produced by a life devoted to selfish pursuits.—2 Corinthians 4:1-6.

¹⁴ The apostle Paul reinforced Jesus' words when he explained: "Those who are determined to be rich fall into temptation and a snare and many senseless and hurtful desires, which plunge men into destruction and ruin." (1 Timothy 6:9) There surely is substance to these words! The news is full of stories about senators, mayors, judges, bankers, corporate executives, and others who have been caught in white-collar crimes that, according to one report, "rake in a minimum of 200 billion dollars annually" in the United States alone. The 'temptation and snare' of becoming rich have turned many once respectable individuals into felons and criminals. Surely, we want to avoid being 'plunged into destruction and ruin,' experiencing the "darkness" about which Jesus warned. —See Proverbs 23:4, 5.

13. On what should we focus our eye so that our "whole body will be bright"? Why?

14. How does focusing one's eye on material riches result in "darkness"?

¹⁵ However, is it only those who set their eye on becoming rich that face the danger of walking in darkness? No, for "the desire of the eyes" also includes many other things. Recall Jesus' words at Matthew 5:28: "Everyone that keeps on looking at a woman so as to have a passion for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart." Surely, that warning can also be applied to allowing one's eyes to dwell on material that is designed to excite or arouse illicit passions and desires.

¹⁶ Then there is the anxiety over food, drink, and clothing that Jesus spoke about. (Matthew 6:25-32) While these things are necessary, an inordinate desire always to have the latest, the richest, the most sought after, can enslave our mind and heart. (Romans 16:18; Philippians 3:19) Even in recreation, hobbies, sports, exercise, and so on, we must maintain proper balance and guard against being caught up in the fads and fancies of the world. In all these areas, it would be good for us to bear in mind the wise words found at Proverbs 27:20: "Sheol and the place of destruction themselves do not get satisfied; neither do the eyes of a man get satisfied." Indeed, we need to exercise self-control so that in trying to satisfy our eyes we do not endanger ourselves spiritually.

Blessings for Keeping the Eye "Simple"

¹⁷ Those who have kept their eye "simple" and have focused it intently on God's Kingdom promises have received many blessings from Jehovah. This is well illustrated by the experiences of people from around the world and from many walks of life. Consider these examples:

15, 16. (a) What other "desire of the eyes" must we shun? (b) How would you apply the counsel at Proverbs 27:20 to our discussion?

17. How has keeping the eye "simple" helped some pursue Kingdom interests?

"When I was serving where the need is great in Colombia, South America, I had to live on an income of approximately \$100 a month. I had started pioneering, but at the start of the month, I fell and broke my ankle. The resulting medical expenses drained my resources, and I would not get any more money until the end of the month. My Kingdom Hall contribution was due, but if I contributed the money, I would have nothing to buy groceries with the next week. After considering the matter for a few days, I decided that the hall rent must be paid, so I put the money in the contribution box. The very next morning, I received a letter from a sister in the United States who had visited me in Colombia. In her letter she enclosed some Colombian money left over from her visit. It was the exact amount I had dropped in the box."

On a hot Tuesday afternoon, Ki, who operates a clinic in Taechun, Korea, was invited by three co-workers to spend the afternoon at the beach. Though the idea was tempting, Ki knew that if he went, he would not be back in time to be at the Congregation Book Study that evening. So he declined the invitation. Moments later, the three were brought back to the clinic—dead! They had a fatal traffic accident right after leaving the clinic. Ki grieved over the incident but was glad his life had been spared on account of his sticking to the good habit he had formed over the years.—Hebrews 10:24, 25.

¹⁸ Even young ones can be taught to keep their eyes focused on Kingdom interests, as is illustrated by the following experience:

"When we heard from two visitors that brothers in three congregations in the Philippines had to come up with \$1,000 per congregation—a substantial sum for them—to rebuild their burned-down Kingdom Hall, my husband and I decided that we wanted to make a contribution. What about our four children, from four months to six years of age? Every week when my husband got paid, he would buy a silver dollar for each child. My husband divided the coins so that each child

18. How can young ones be taught to keep their eye "simple"?

could see how much he had. We also mentioned some of the things they had set their hearts on buying with the money. But the answer was always the same—they wanted to give the money to the brothers." With their \$99, the children also sent along a simple letter. The brothers in the Philippines were so moved by the love and generosity that many of them were in tears when the letter was read.

¹⁹ "As for your eyes, straight ahead they should look, yes, your own beaming eyes should gaze straight in front of you." (Proverbs 4:25) How wise it is for us to heed that counsel and not allow our eyes to wander, so that we get sidetracked! "Keep strict watch that how you walk is not as unwise but as wise persons," Paul advised, "buying out the opportune time for yourselves, because the days are wicked." He also urged: "Go on perceiving what the will of Jehovah is." (Ephesians 5:15-17) By doing so, we can rest assured that we will be successful in keeping our eye "simple," and we can confidently look forward to a bright future—everlasting life in God's promised new system of things.—Compare 2 Corinthians 4:17, 18.

19. We can be assured of a bright future if we keep our eyes on what?

Can You Explain

- ☐ How is the eye "the lamp of the body"?
- ☐ How does the eye influence our actions, as exemplified by Eve and by Jesus?
- ☐ In what ways does Satan appeal to "the desire of the eyes" today?
- ☐ What must we do to keep our eye "simple"?
- ☐ What should we focus our eyes on now?

'Keep Spotless, Unblemished, and in Peace'

"Do your utmost
to be found finally
by him spotless
and unblemished
and in peace."
—2 PETER 3:14.

JEHOVAH GOD is holy. His Son, Jesus Christ, prayerfully addressed him as "Holy Father." (John 17:1, 11) And spirit creatures in heaven are described declaring: "Holy, holy, holy is Jehovah of armies." (Isaiah 6:3) But what is holiness?

² The terms "holy" and "holiness" are translated from Hebrew words having the possible root meaning "to be bright," "to be new or fresh, untarnished or clean" physically. In the Scriptures, however, these words are used primarily in a moral or spiritual sense. The original Hebrew also conveys the thought of separateness, exclusiveness, or sanctification to the holy God, Jehovah. In the Christian Greek Scriptures, too, the words rendered "holy" and "holiness" denote separation to God. They are also used to refer to holiness as a quality of Jehovah, as well as to purity or perfection in an individual's personal conduct. So holiness means cleanness, purity, and sacredness.

Holiness Required of Jehovah's People

³ What, then, is meant by the heavenly declaration: "Holy, holy, holy is Jehovah God, the Almighty"? (Revelation 4:8) Why, this ascribes to God holiness, cleanness in the superlative degree! Therefore, Jehovah, "the Most Holy One," deserves

clean worship. (Proverbs 9:10) Accordingly, Jehovah God instructed the prophet Moses to tell the Israelites: "You should prove yourselves holy, because I Jehovah your God am holy."—Leviticus 19:1, 2.

⁴ Anyone claiming to render acceptable service to Jehovah while practicing uncleanness is disgusting in his sight, for only with godly wisdom and in holiness is it possible to worship him acceptably. (Proverbs 20:25; 21:27) Thus, when God foretold that he would make the way clear for his exiled people to return to Jerusalem from Babylon, he said: "The Way of Holiness it will be called. The unclean one will not pass over it." (Isaiah 35:8) The remnant that returned in 537 B.C.E. did so with holy motives, to restore true worship of "the Most Holy One." And the Israelites could have proved holy by obeying God. But they failed to keep holy, spotless from his standpoint.—Compare James 1:27.

⁵ Spiritual Israelites, or anointed Christians, must also worship Jehovah in holiness. (Galatians 6:16) In this regard, the apostle Paul entreated fellow believers 'to present their bodies a living, holy, acceptable sacrifice to God.' To do this, these believers would have to make sure that

4. How only is it possible to worship Jehovah acceptably?

5. How did Paul show that spiritual Israelites must worship God in holiness?

- 1, 2. What is holiness?
3. Why does Jehovah deserve clean worship?

Aspects of keeping 'spotless,



***Serving God in
wholehearted dedication***



Cultivating the Christian personality

they were doing the divine will, for Paul added: "Quit being fashioned after this system of things, but be transformed by making your mind over, that you may prove to yourselves the good and acceptable and perfect will of God."—Romans 12:1, 2.

⁶ In this time of increase, many new ones are flocking into Jehovah's organization. They, too, worship Jehovah in holiness. How they rejoice in the prospect of surviving the "great tribulation" and of enjoying eternal life on a paradise earth in God's righteous new system! (Matthew 24:21; Luke 23:43) But if those with heavenly hopes and the "great crowd" having earthly prospects are to enjoy unending life,

6. Against what must all Christians be on guard?

they must be on guard against defiling habits or anything else that goes contrary to Scriptural morals and teaching.—Revelation 7:9, 14.

⁷ Pointing to our time, the apostle Peter wrote: "Jehovah's day will come as a thief, in which the heavens [worldly governments] will pass away with a hissing noise, but the elements [worldly attitudes and ways] being intensely hot will be dissolved, and earth [human society alienated from God] and the works in it will be discovered" to be as combustible as "the heavens" and "the elements" in the destructive "fire" of Jehovah's day. So Peter added: "Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of persons ought

7. What did Peter say that highlights the need to be exemplary "in holy acts of conduct"?

unblemished, and in peace'



Having spiritually upbuilding association



Seeking peace with God through prayer

you to be *in holy acts of conduct* and deeds of godly devotion, awaiting and keeping close in mind the presence of the day of Jehovah, through which the heavens being on fire will be dissolved and the elements being intensely hot will melt!" Yes, all witnesses of Jehovah should be exemplary "in holy acts of conduct." And those maintaining holiness can look forward to a secure place within God's righteous 'new heavens and new earth.' (2 Peter 3:7, 10-13) What blessed prospects!

⁸ However, what if a Christian has done well in Jehovah's service for some time but later develops defiling habits or goes contrary to Bible doctrine or morals? Then he has deviated from the course of

8. What does a Christian need to do if he has deviated from the course of holiness?

holiness and needs to demonstrate true repentance and take proper remedial steps. As Paul told fellow anointed ones: "Since we have these promises, beloved ones, let us cleanse ourselves of every defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in God's fear." (2 Corinthians 7:1) Any Christian needing to correct his wayward course will find the Scriptural counsel of loving overseers to be a blessing indeed.—Proverbs 28:13; James 5:13-20.

⁹ After pointing to the righteous new system, Peter added: "Beloved ones, since you are awaiting these things, do your utmost to be found finally by [Jehovah God] spotless and unblemished and in peace." (2 Peter 3:14) Those words were directed to anointed Christians, but in—

9. In view of 2 Peter 3:14, what question arises?

deed all witnesses of Jehovah must be found 'spotless, unblemished, and in peace.' So, what must we do?

"Spotless and Unblemished"

¹⁰ We need to do our utmost to be found "spotless and unblemished." Those of the "great crowd" have 'washed their robes and made them white in the Lamb's blood.' At one time, they were part of this sinful world and their robes of identification were spotted with it, soiled in Jehovah's sight. How did they make their robes spotlessly white in "the blood of the Lamb," Jesus Christ? By demonstrating their belief that 'no forgiveness takes place unless blood is poured out' and that Jesus is "the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world." (Revelation 7:9, 14; Hebrews 9:22; John 1:29, 36) This they did by making an unconditional dedication to God and symbolizing it by baptism, total immersion in water. Such a dedication had to be made through Jesus Christ and with the conviction that his shed blood makes it possible for God to forgive their sins and make them acceptable in His sight.

¹¹ The "great crowd" must keep their "robes" white by not getting spotted with worldliness and thus losing their Christian personality and identification as Jehovah's approved witnesses. Indeed, all genuine Christians need to refrain from becoming blemished by worldly ways, actions, and attitudes. Since sin disrupts our peace with Jehovah, only by remaining in a condition wherein our sins can be atoned for can we be found "in peace" at the coming of the great "day of Jehovah." We must have no spots due to false religious practices or this world's immorality.

10. How have those of the "great crowd" made their "robes" clean in Jesus' blood?

11. Since sin disrupts our peace with Jehovah, in what condition do we need to remain?

¹² Remaining spotless and unblemished calls for conduct and attitudes opposite to those of "false teachers" concerning whom Peter wrote: "They consider luxurious living in the daytime a pleasure. They are spots and blemishes, indulging with unrestrained delight in their deceptive teachings while feasting together with you." (2 Peter 2:1, 13) Yes, even within the congregation, we must beware of false teachers who "consider luxurious living in the daytime a pleasure." During daylight hours, when so much could be done for the spiritual benefit of others, unspiritual persons may engage in wrongdoing, including revelries and excesses in food and drink. They may try to convert such social events as wedding receptions into occasions for passion-arousing music, sensuous dancing, gluttony, and overindulgence in alcoholic beverages. None of this should be allowed to happen among Jehovah's people.—Isaiah 5:11, 12; see *The Watchtower*, April 15, 1984, pages 16-22.

¹³ The host at a social gathering is responsible for what occurs there. So that the event will be spiritually upbuilding, it is wise to keep it manageable in size and

12. How can 2 Peter 2:13 be applied even within the Christian congregation?

13. What can the host do so that a social gathering will be spiritually upbuilding?

In Our Next Issue

■ **Your Future**
—Who Can Predict It?

■ **"The Things Revealed**
Belong to Us"

■ **Are Religious Councils**
Approved by God?

not to invite anyone likely to bring in an unwholesome influence. As Paul's words at 2 Timothy 2:20-22 indicate, not all who associate with a congregation are necessarily desirable companions. Hence, a Christian host is under no obligation to invite individuals known to be unbridled in speech or given to excesses in food or drink. He remembers that 'whether we are eating or drinking or doing anything else, we should do all things for God's glory.' —1 Corinthians 10:31.

¹⁴ Only a few are 'spots and blemishes, indulging with delight in deceptive teachings' while associating with us. But overseers and others in the congregation must be vigilant, firmly rejecting any false teachers who may sneak into the congregation and try to promote immorality or wrong doctrine. (Jude 3, 4) Only by firm adherence to God's righteous standards will it be possible to keep the congregation spotless and unblemished.

What Is Required to Be "in Peace"?

¹⁵ To be found "in peace," Jehovah's people must maintain peace with him. (2 Peter 3:14) We have been granted this standing by means of Jesus Christ, concerning whom Paul wrote: "God saw good for all fullness to dwell in him, and through him to reconcile again to himself all other things by making peace through the blood he shed on the torture stake, no matter whether they are the things upon the earth or the things in the heavens." (Colossians 1:19, 20) Serious sins put a strain upon a person's relationship with Jehovah and cause the individual to be in a conscience-stricken, disturbed state, whereas peace is the possession of those

heeding God's commandments. (Psalm 38:3; Isaiah 48:18) To be found "in peace" at the coming of Jehovah's great day, then, we must remain in a godly state that allows for our sins to be atoned for by the blood Jesus shed on the torture stake.

¹⁶ We must also be at peace with other worshipers of Jehovah. Paul urged: "Let us pursue the things making for peace and the things that are upbuilding to one another." The context shows that we must be careful not to stumble fellow believers in connection with food, drink, or anything else. (Romans 14:13-23) But there is more to the matter than that, for Paul told Ephesian Christians: "I . . . entreat you to walk worthily of the calling with which you were called, with complete lowliness of mind and mildness, with long-suffering, putting up with one another in love, earnestly endeavoring to observe the oneness of the spirit in the uniting bond of peace." (Ephesians 4:1-3) Surely, we want to demonstrate our unity by avoiding all peace-disturbing words and deeds and by standing firm as supporters of Jehovah's sovereignty.

¹⁷ 'Seeking peace' certainly requires that we guard both our deeds and our words, for the apostle Peter wrote: "He that would love life and see good days, let him restrain his tongue from what is bad and his lips from speaking deception, but let him turn away from what is bad and do what is good; let him seek peace and pursue it. For the eyes of Jehovah are upon the righteous ones, and his ears are toward their supplication; but the face of Jehovah is against those doing bad things." (1 Peter 3:10-12; Psalm 34:12-16) In various ways, then, Jehovah's loyal ser-

14. What position should be taken regarding false teachers?

15. (a) How can one attain peace with God?

(b) What must we do to be found "in peace" at the coming of Jehovah's great day?

16. According to the apostle Paul, how can we pursue peace with fellow believers?

17. According to 1 Peter 3:10-12, what is involved in 'seeking peace'?

vants must continue to "seek peace" if they are to be found "in peace."

Depend on Jehovah's Help

¹⁸ Peter indicated that "the elements," the worldly spirit, or attitudes and ways, will be "dissolved," or destroyed, during "Jehovah's day." (2 Peter 3:7, 10) But what can we do if worldly ways, actions, or attitudes appeal to us? Surely, we need to take full advantage of spiritual provisions made through Jehovah's organization. Among other things, we should regularly study God's Word and the Christian publications provided by "the faithful and discreet slave." (Matthew 24:45-47) We must also show continuing gratitude for the ransom provision, Jesus' "precious blood, like that of an unblemished and spotless lamb."—1 Peter 1:18, 19.

¹⁹ We should pray for God's help to "pursue righteousness." (1 Timothy 6:11-14) If we realize that worldly attitudes are influencing us, or if some loving fellow believer has drawn this to our attention, it would be wise to be specific about this problem in our prayers by asking Jehovah to help us overcome these leanings. Surely, it would be appropriate to ask for God's spir-

18. What can we do if worldly ways, actions, or attitudes appeal to us?

19. How can prayer be helpful if worldly attitudes are influencing us?

How Would You Respond?

- ☐ Why is holiness required of Jehovah's people?
- ☐ How can we remain spotless and unblemished?
- ☐ What is required to be "in peace"?
- ☐ In what ways may we show dependence on God's help?

it and for his help in cultivating its fruitage that is so unlike worldly attitudes and ways. (Galatians 5:16-26; Psalm 25:4, 5; 119:27, 35) Jehovah can help us to concentrate on righteous, chaste, virtuous, and praiseworthy things. And how fitting to supplicate him earnestly so that the incomparable "peace of God" will guard our hearts and mental powers! (Philippians 4:6, 7) Then anxieties, temptations, and the like, will not grow to the point of being out of control. Rather, our lives will be marked by God-given tranquillity. Indeed, "abundant peace belongs to those loving [Jehovah's] law."—Psalm 119:165.

Remain 'Spotless, Unblemished, and in Peace'

²⁰ Happily, all within Jehovah's organization, including the new ones now coming in, can be acceptable to God. (Acts 10:34, 35) With Jehovah's help, it is possible "to repudiate ungodliness and worldly desires" and live as true Christians should. (Titus 2:11-14) Though we were once alienated from Jehovah, and our minds were on wicked works, we have been reconciled to God through the death of Christ. Thus a spiritually unblemished state is possible, provided that we continue in the faith and are not shifted away from the hope of the good news.—Colossians 1:21-23.

²¹ With the help of Jehovah, his Word, and his organization, we can remain unspotted by the world and unblemished by its ways, actions, and attitudes. Thus we can also know true peace. Yes, by persevering in our holy worship of Jehovah, we can finally be found 'spotless, unblemished, and in peace.'

20. Why can we say that a spiritually unblemished state is possible?

21. How can we finally be found 'spotless, unblemished, and in peace'?

Kingdom Proclaimers Report

'The One Finding Wisdom Finds Life'

"THE TRUTH is attracting 'all sorts of men,' from the various communities that make up the modern State of Israel," the branch office of the Watch Tower Society in that country writes. These honesthearted truth seekers are assured: "The one finding me [wisdom] will certainly find life, and gets goodwill from Jehovah." (1 Timothy 2:4; Proverbs 8:35) The experience of a woman in Israel illustrates this.

□ One of Jehovah's Witnesses called on a *Watchtower* subscriber and arranged to conduct a Bible study with her. The lady was happy to have the study. A neighbor of hers heard about it and attended. The neighbor "immediately recognized this as the thing for which she had been searching for the last few years," said the report. And what changes she rapidly made in her life! She and her husband were within a few days of a divorce decree but canceled it and made peace. She was deep into astrology and attached to a cult, but she threw out expensive books and everything else associated with demonism. She started attending meetings of Jehovah's Witnesses and talking to relatives and friends about her newfound faith. Regarding the friends that she lost as a result, she says: "Apparently, they weren't real friends."

Now this woman witnesses enthusiastically to customers in the family-owned store and shares regularly in preaching the good news from house to house. How happy she is that she has found wisdom and has learned about Jehovah's wonderful pro-

visions for eternal life in his new system! Her neighbor who originally wrote for the subscription has also continued to study and make progress.

□ Lloyd lives in Guyana. His march to religious freedom was long. He began his trek as a Presbyterian. He married a Hindu, and she became a Presbyterian too. "I was overwhelmed by the hypocrisy that prevailed" in that church, he later confessed. So he turned to Islam, but this did not satisfy his quest for freedom. Next he tried Hinduism. After learning much about reincarnation and the laws of Karma, he began to question these doctrines. He changed to occultism, built an altar, and indoctrinated his family with that teaching. "But the fearful and frightening experiences I and my family suffered made me abandon this religion," he said. He adopted a materialistic way of living, but his family life was falling apart. So he said: "I prayed to God, Father, Allah, and Ram, and I told him that I am speaking to the Creator of all things. I let him know that I wanted to please him and not man."

At this point, a "well-dressed, soft-spoken, mild-mannered" Jehovah's Witness called at Lloyd's door and answered his questions satisfactorily. The Witness left him the book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life* and a Bible. Soon a Bible study was started with Lloyd and his wife. They progressed in knowledge, separated from Babylon the Great—the worldwide system of false religion. In time they dedicated themselves to Jeho-

vah and were baptized. Lloyd said: "Love, real love, replaced hate and anger; but most important of all, meaning and purpose have been added to our life."

Now they are rejoicing in the 'truth that set them free.'—John 8:32.

□ A young woman in the Seychelles also learned of Jehovah, which resulted in a blessing. She had been living in a consensual relationship with a man and had several children by him. The woman appreciated the truth she was learning from the Bible but found it hard to take her stand so as to qualify for Jehovah's service. She was living in a fine house with comforts few people enjoyed. After prayer and encouragement from the circuit overseer, she put the alternative to the man she was living with—they would have to get married legally, or separate. The man was reluctant to take either step, so she moved out. How happy she was that she then qualified to preach the good news and dedicate her life to Jehovah and be baptized! This she did. Interestingly, the man she was living with was so impressed by her bold stand for Bible principles that he began to make arrangements to unite the family by legal marriage.

The psalmist acknowledged: "For with you [Jehovah] is the source of life." (Psalm 36:9) These persons acknowledged this, too, and sought wisdom so as to know Jehovah and his requirements for life. How they appreciate the fact that "the one finding [wisdom] will certainly find life!"

Professionals Who Found Real *Lifetime Employment*

THE night air was frigid and the water icy cold. Two hundred young men and women, clothed in white robes and holding candles high above their heads, waded into the water chest-deep. An initiation rite of some mystic cult? Or perhaps a youthful prank?

These young high school and university graduates were joining thousands of others their age in what might be considered a rite of passage into a professional career with a big company in Japan. The icy mass baptism was intended to purge prospective employees of any independent tendencies they might have acquired at school and to strengthen their bond of loyalty to the company.

Professionalism and Dedication

"In Japan the job is the society. The society is the job," writes Frank Gibney in his book *Japan: The Fragile Superpower*. What this means is that once a person enters a company, his whole life revolves around it. "If he works for Mitsubishi, he is a Mitsubishi man. Most of his friends come from Mitsubishi. He drinks with them, golfs or bowls with them, and shares his troubles with them. He competes with them, surely, but like siblings competing within a family which no one would think of leaving. With the exception of his relatives, and possibly a few school friends, most of his associations—and often those of his family's—go on within the framework of the company."

In exchange for such dedication and self-sacrifice, the workers are given security in the form of lifetime employment.

This includes endless training, orientations, transfers, and, of course, promotions.

Most young people in Japan readily accept this formula for success and become part of the system. Others, though not climbing the corporate ladder, are struggling to move ahead in other professional fields. But does such a system bring happiness and satisfaction? Does lifetime employment mean lifetime enjoyment? More and more are finding out that there is something better and more rewarding than climbing the corporate ladder or struggling to achieve personal wealth and fame.

His Job Was His Life

Junichi was graduated from the Keio University School of Commerce in 1961. Following in the footsteps of traditional university graduates, he joined a prestigious corporation. In his case, this was the largest car dealership in Japan, with some 4,700 employees. His climb up the corporate ladder was steady. Eventually, he became section chief in his department. Though his work, often from morning to midnight, left him virtually no time for his wife and five children, he accepted all of this as the necessary sacrifice for a secure future.

But something happened in October 1974. Junichi found out that his wife and children were studying the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses and attending Christian meetings. He did all he could to stop them, including moving out on them, but to no avail.



Cycling champion Takafu Yamaguchi

One day when he came home from work, the family had gone to the meetings. "I found the table set for my dinner, and there was a letter for me," said Junichi. "In the letter, my family told me that they could never give up the truth, that it was really for my benefit, too, and that one day I would understand." This made quite an impression on Junichi. "I thought that perhaps this *was* the truth, and I stopped opposing them."

"As time went on, the Witnesses would come and visit me and encourage me to study the Bible. This was where my professional life began to interfere. I was so busy at work that I felt I could never take time for Bible study and meetings. Then I knew that if I were to study, I would have to stop the sharp practices and frequent late-night entertaining associated with the job. Since that would hurt the business, I hesitated to study."

But with the encouragement of the Witnesses, Junichi began studying and soon progressed to the point of dedicating his life to God and getting baptized. Even though he still has his full-time job, Junichi has found what he considers real life-time employment. Since March 1978, he

has been serving continuously as an auxiliary pioneer, spending 60 hours a month in the preaching work.

Has Junichi benefited from his new way of life? "Yes, I have. I find that I am much more productive during the day in order to keep evenings free for pursuing Kingdom interests with my family. I have had many opportunities to witness to my fellow workers and to study the Bible with other men who are busy with secular jobs as I used to be. Two have been baptized, and I am studying with three others. I thank Jehovah for his patience with me."

He Wanted to Get Rich Quick

As one of six children in the family, Takafu survived World War II air raids on Nagoya City with the shirt on his back and a get-rich-quick philosophy. At the urging of his uncle, he entered a professional bicycle-racing school at the age of 15. By the time he was 22, he had 'made it' as an A-class cycle racer, with appearances at races all over the country. He remembers seeing his mother offering his winnings before the family altar as a token of gratitude. It appeared that Takafu had reached his goal in life and that everything was moving upward.

Then a missionary of Jehovah's Witnesses called at his home and gave Takafu some food for thought. Such words as these, spoken by Jesus, stuck in his mind and heart: "What benefit will it be to a man if he gains the whole world but forfeits his soul?" (Matthew 16:26) In time, Takafu progressed in Bible knowledge and realized that some changes would have to be made.

"As a professional cyclist, I knew that bicycle racing and gambling go hand in hand," said Takafu. "But still the decision was not easy. I had devoted seven years of my life to the sport, and my earnings seemed to be essential to my family's wel-

fare. But I had learned from the Bible that Moses and Paul faced similar decisions and chose the better course. So did I." Takafu took up a new race—the race for life—and he has continued in it till this day, for some years assisting congregations as a traveling overseer.

His Business Took All His Time

Satoshi was in the women's garment business. As the successful owner of four boutiques, he was financially secure. But his dealings in the business world also led him to the conclusion that worldwide pollution, food shortage, and war would soon spell the end of human existence. Thus, when a Witness called with a pamphlet giving the assurance that God would not permit this, Satoshi's interest was aroused.

But his business stood in his way. "Because of fierce competition, slowing down would mean losing one's business," said Satoshi. "It is a case of 'eat or be eaten.' The saying in the trade is that if you are not *really* busy you must be bankrupt." So it took two years, plus a great deal of effort, before Satoshi finally decided to have a Bible study.

After he became one of Jehovah's Witnesses, he sold two of his shops and has 'shop masters' look after the other two. Though Satoshi now works only two or three days a month as an accountant and consultant, he says: "I still have sufficient income. I want to put my service to Jehovah God first." Now he is pursuing his real profession in the full-time ministry, serving as a pioneer. He and his family are making fine spiritual progress.

His Profession Helped Him to Find God

Hiroshi was working in his family tin shop. But his real interest was in nature photography. He got to be so good at it

that some of his insect photographs were published. By the time he was 29, he was into nature photography professionally.

"From my study of insects," Hiroshi recalls, "I thought that if God did exist, he must have a good sense of humor. That led me to doubt the theory of evolution, and I became a little interested in the Bible."

On one winter's day, two Witnesses called on Hiroshi. "When I accepted from them two magazines that contained articles on animals, they offered to study the Bible with me at my home," said Hiroshi. "I thought that since I did not have to go to a church to study, I wouldn't have to become a member. So I agreed." Though he was surprised when he learned what the Bible has to say about the Creator, he quickly accepted it. His interest in creation became secondary to love for Jehovah.

Hiroshi now supports his family as a free-lance photographer. But his true profession is being a full-time minister.

They Found Something Better

The list goes on and on of professionals in Japan who changed their lives—and, sometimes, their jobs—when they came to know Jehovah and his purposes. Their ranks include doctors, dentists, architects, computer programmers and system designers, teachers, veterinarians, hairdressers, executives, and so on.

At one time, all these professionals were fully dedicated to their work. Upon learning that this system of things is nearing its end, they made a professional decision. They put their jobs in their proper place and started pursuing something better—God's Kingdom and its promised blessings. (Matthew 6:33) Relinquishing what they had formerly thought would be their lifetime employment, they have become professionals in a new field. They have taken up lifetime employment as pioneer servants of the Most High, Jehovah God.

Profaning God's Name—By Not Using It

JEHOVAH dealt mercifully with the people of Israel for the sake of his own name, that it might not be profaned among the nations. (Ezekiel 20:9, 13, 14, 22) In time, however, the Israelites refrained from using God's name, so that eventually its pronunciation was lost. This disuse of God's name was tantamount to profaning it.

Regarding this, R. Laird Harris remarked: "It is a most curious fact that the ancient pronunciation of the name of the God of Israel has been totally lost. Israel's faith was the only worthy faith in antiquity. It was the world's first monotheism and is the only ancient faith to have become truly a world religion. It was unique in being wholly spiritual and without a material representation of the deity. It was also unique, unfortunately, in its loss of the pronunciation of the deity's name. The situation is strange indeed and would hardly have been forecast by those sincere men who felt that they dared not pronounce the ineffable name lest they should

profane it. The result seems really to have been a profanation of a different kind. Not to use the name of God seems to profane it just as the coarse use of the Name would have done. But the facts are plain. The ancient Hebrews, naturally, pronounced and wrote the name of God."—*The Law and the Prophets*, edited by John H. Skilton, Nutley, New Jersey, 1974, page 215.

The Israelites knew that should they forget Jehovah's name, God himself would "search this out." (Psalm 44:20, 21) Subsequently, when this happened, he "turned his attention to the nations to take out of them a people for his name." (Acts 15:14) While we today do not know precisely how to pronounce the divine name in Hebrew, a suitable and an adequate rendering of the Tetragrammaton (the four Hebrew consonants representing the name) into English is *Jehovah*. Today, more than three million people are known as Jehovah's Witnesses, and they are happy to bear the name of their God and to be identified with it.

"Gentle" or "Babes"—Which?

AT 1 THESSALONIANS 2:7 the apostle Paul described himself and his companions as becoming "gentle in the midst of you, as when a nursing mother cherishes her own children." Some translations (*The Bible in Basic English*; *Today's English Version*) here read "gentle," but other translations (*Westminster Version*; *American Translation*) use the word "babes" or "children." Why this difference?

The translators follow one of the two different readings found in the Greek texts and manuscripts. Some Greek texts (*Textus Receptus*, Tischendorf, Merk) and manuscripts read *e'pi-oi*, meaning "gentle," but other Greek texts (Westcott and Hort, Nestle-Aland) and manuscripts read *ne'pi-oi*, meaning "babes."

Regarding this, *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (Volume I, 1975, page 282) remarked: "There are two readings of 1 Thess. 2:7: (a) *ēpioi* (we were gentle in your company); (b) *nēpioi* (babes). The preceding word [in this verse] ends with *n*, and it seems likely that this *n* has

been doubled by mistake in copying. Moreover the interpretation of the second reading leads to difficulties. For in v. 7b it is not himself but the Thessalonians whom Paul likens to 'children'; he and his colleagues were like a nurse (*trophos*)." Properly, then, many translations read here "gentle" rather than "babes."

But why did Paul use the word "gentle" here? This was because of real love and out of concern not to injure the spiritual growth of those whom he and his fellow missionaries taught. (1 Thessalonians 2:8) W. E. Vine (*An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, 1962 reprint, Volume II, page 145) remarks that *e'pi-os* "was frequently used by Greek writers as characterizing a nurse with trying children or a teacher with refractory scholars, or of parents toward their children. In 1 Thess. 2:7, the Apostle uses it of the conduct of himself and his fellow-missionaries towards the converts at Thessalonica." When we teach people God's Word, may we always have in mind the gentleness displayed by Paul and his companions and imitate their example.



Can You Accept Discipline?

NOWADAYS parents only beat the *tam tam* (dancing drum), not their children.' This comment was heard from the mouths of some schoolgirls in a college in Africa. What did they mean? That discipline was out of fashion. Parents did not want to administer it, and the children were quite happy not to receive it.

Are these wise attitudes? According to a dictionary, discipline is basically "training that corrects, molds, or perfects the mental faculties or moral character." Can anyone really do without that kind of discipline? Why did those African schoolgirls—and their parents—think that they could?

Actually, a negative attitude toward discipline is not limited to African schoolgirls and their parents. It seems that most people today view any counsel or discipline as unwarranted interference with their freedom, a curtailment of their rights. However, such an attitude is not peculiar

to the 20th century. Thousands of years ago, God himself noted that "the inclination of the heart of man is bad from his youth up." (Genesis 8:21) Pointing to the end result of thousands of years of such a bad inclination, the apostle Paul wrote: "Men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, self-assuming, haughty, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, disloyal, having no natural affection, not open to any agreement, slanderers, without self-control, fierce, without love of goodness, betrayers, headstrong, puffed up with pride." (2 Timothy 3:2-4) No wonder discipline is unpopular!

Is Discipline Really So Bad?

Does a Christian really need discipline? Well, Jesus said that the road to life is "cramped." (Matthew 7:13, 14) It is easy to wander off of it. So would it not be wise to accept discipline, training, as the dictionary calls it? Consider the case of a

traveler who accidentally wanders out of his way and ends up uncomfortably close to a dangerous area. If a stranger offered to show him how to get back on his route, how would he react? Would he angrily reject the help, insisting that he has the right to go where he desires? Would he charge the friendly stranger with infringing on his rights? Hardly. He would be grateful for the help offered.

So the wise Christian is grateful when help is offered in the way of kindly discipline. The words of the prophet are true no matter what our age or experience in life: "I well know, O Jehovah, that to earthling man his way does not belong. It does not belong to man who is walking even to direct his step." (Jeremiah 10:23) Hence, all of us need discipline.

They Rejected Discipline

One who rejected discipline was Cain, who was jealous of his brother Abel. Seeing that Cain was beginning to wander from the right path, Jehovah himself admonished him, asking: "Why are you hot with anger and why has your countenance fallen? If you turn to doing good, will there not be an exaltation? But if you do not turn to doing good, there is sin crouching at the entrance, and for you is its craving; and will you, for your part, get the mastery over it?" (Genesis 4:6, 7) Cain did not listen. He killed his brother Abel and thus introduced murder into human history.—Genesis 4:8-16.

In the days of Samuel, the sons of Eli also did not accept discipline. Their father was the high priest at Jehovah's sanctuary, but his sons used their position to steal from the offerings and induce women to commit immorality with them. Their father reprimanded them—rather weakly—but they did not listen. The result? Their rejection of discipline led to their being killed in battle, and the shock of

the news caused the death of Eli himself. —1 Samuel 2:12-17, 22-25; 3:11-18; 4:1-4, 10-18.

Some Listened

Others, however, did accept discipline. David, a king and a man of war, committed a horrible crime when he caused the death of Uriah, the man with whose wife David had committed adultery. But David accepted the reprimand God sent through the prophet Nathan, and thus Jehovah did not reject him completely. (2 Samuel 12:1-14) Yes, discipline can help us to recover even from very serious sins.

Job was counseled by the young man Elihu and could have angrily rejected the counsel. Although Job had suffered terribly at the hands of Satan, he had refused to "curse God and die." With such a record, he might have seen no reason to listen to the counsel of this young man. Job did listen, though, and learned that, despite his integrity, his attitude needed some adjusting. Then he was privileged to receive counsel from Jehovah himself and finally he was rewarded with many blessings. (Job 2:9, 10; 32:6; 42:12-16) Thus, discipline can help even those with outstanding records of endurance and faithfulness.

The apostle Peter, too, received discipline. Remember, Peter was an apostle of Jesus Christ, a witness of Jesus' transfiguration, and the one to whom Christ entrusted "the keys of the kingdom." (Matthew 16:18, 19) Yet, on one occasion the apostle Paul, a relatively new follower of Jesus, publicly disciplined Peter for his conduct in the Antioch congregation. Peter evidently accepted the discipline, for later he spoke of "our beloved brother Paul." (2 Peter 3:15; Galatians 2:11-14) Hence, a Christian with many privileges may also expect to receive discipline.

Modern Christians and Discipline

In the congregation, we should not be surprised to receive counsel from any mature person. But the ones who are particularly charged with the responsibility of watching over our interests are the appointed elders. It is to these spiritual shepherds that the Bible says: "You ought to know positively the appearance of your flock. Set your heart to your droves."—Proverbs 27:23.

It may help us to accept discipline if we realize that it takes real love, as well as courage, for elders to give counsel. Elders are often rebuffed when they try to help. For example, one African elder spoke to a longtime Christian, warning her that she was getting involved in something unchristian. It was difficult to give that counsel, and this was not made any easier when she took offense. Eventually, the counsel was rejected, and the one to whom it was offered refused to have anything further to do with the elder who had tried to help her. How much wiser if she had remembered that 'wounds inflicted by a loving friend are faithful'!—Proverbs 27:6.

Discipline can help us to apply another Bible proverb: "Shrewd is the one that has seen the calamity and proceeds to conceal himself, but the inexperienced have passed along and must suffer the penalty." (Proverbs 22:3) Those words would have helped a Christian man in the same country. He got into the habit of going to public restaurants without his wife and child. This disturbed some because in that area the waitresses in many of the restaurants were really prostitutes looking for customers. So several times the local elders spoke to this man about the matter. But he rejected the counsel, often quite vehemently. Finally, he fell into the trap of immorality. How much wiser to

have heeded the well-intentioned counsel!

If we forget our own viewpoint for a moment and try to see things as Jehovah sees them, we will more readily accept discipline. True, discipline may be an unwelcome reminder of our own imperfections. It may make us lose face a little. But think of how pleased Jehovah is when his servants act wisely and avoid falling into sin. "Be wise, my son," his Word says, "and make my heart rejoice, that I may make a reply to him that is taunting me." (Proverbs 27:11) If we can swallow our pride and accept the discipline offered, we will be among those who give Jehovah an answer to the challenges of Satan.

Discipline Yields Good Fruitage

As we have seen, discipline is for all of us. It is needed by men and women, young and old, those who have been in the truth a long time and the newer ones. Hence, we should expect discipline, even look for it. Study God's Word and notice what it says that serves as counsel for *you*. (2 Timothy 3:16, 17) Attend meetings and listen carefully to see what applies to *you*. (Hebrews 10:24, 25) If loving Scriptural discipline is offered on a personal basis, by all means accept it in the spirit in which it is offered. Take advantage of any corrective training that comes from Jehovah.

Paul told the Hebrews: "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) Thus, although discipline may hurt at times, it results in good. Accepting discipline can help us to be among those who please Jehovah. Discipline will help us to 'walk faultlessly, practice righteousness, and speak the truth in our heart.' (Psalm 15:1, 2) Therefore, may all of us accept discipline.

You Are Invited to the “Divine Peace” Conventions



HOW eagerly each Christian witness of Jehovah looks forward to the annual district conventions! There is no question about their being a highlight of each calendar year. The fine talks, the Bible dramas, the releases, the association—at times also the large attendance—combine to make these gatherings something truly special.

Consider, for example, some of the “Integrity Keepers” Conventions held last year. The two in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, had a peak attendance of 249,351, with 2,645 symbolizing their dedication to Jehovah God by water baptism. The convention at Montreal, Canada, attended by 78,804, was outstanding both for its trailer park and for its being held in 11 different languages. Those who attended the convention at Zurich, Switzerland, reported that never in all their life had they experienced anything like its enthusiasm

and overflowing joy. Delegates attending one or more of the conventions held in Poland expressed similar sentiments.

An incomplete worldwide report shows an attendance of 5,653,689 at 754 “Integrity Keepers” Conventions, with 75,202 new Witnesses being baptized. How wonderfully did Jehovah bless these gatherings of his people!

Contrary to the popular adage, for those attending these conventions realization exceeded the anticipation. Almost invariably the consensus was that the latest was the best yet. So all of Jehovah’s Witnesses will be eagerly looking forward to this year’s “Divine Peace” District Conventions, to be held worldwide—130 of them being scheduled for the United States.

What a fine theme for our district convention: “Divine Peace”! Today human society is riddled with strife. Not only are literal wars presently being fought around the earth but there are also other kinds of fighting: economic warfare and strife between marriage mates, as well as between parents and children. But in striking contrast, there is peace among Jehovah’s dedicated people. Theirs is a divine peace, emanating from the Divine One, Jehovah God, the God of peace who gives peace. They are at peace with him as a result of faith and works, so they are able to be at peace with one another, in the congregation and within the family.—Philippians 4:7; Romans 16:20.

Let it be noted, too, that this divine peace is not merely the absence of strife. The word for peace in Hebrew is *shal-ohm*, and it means not only peacefulness but well-being and prosperity. Yes, Jehovah’s Witnesses are enjoying prosperity as well as an absence of strife because of being in a spiritual paradise. This convention will enable all who attend to be ever more peace conscious and to be concerned about promoting peace, as far as it

lies within their power.—Romans 12:18.

As in previous years, these conventions will begin on Thursday afternoon at 1:30. Each day has a theme related to peace, that of the first day being "God Will Bless His People With Peace," based on Psalm 29:11. Meaningful prayer will be discussed, and the session will be climaxed by a talk on how Jehovah is proceeding to make all things new.

On Friday the keynote speech, "Divine Peace for Those Taught by Jehovah," will emphasize the source of our peace. Among other program features will be a heart-warming Bible drama tying in ancient times to our day.

In addition to the baptism talk, Saturday morning's program will stress our Christian obligations toward one another and the need ever to make progress as Christian witnesses of Jehovah. In the afternoon, there will be fine counsel for family members and appointed overseers.

A frank and hard-hitting modern-day drama will be featured Sunday morning. In the afternoon, the powerful public lecture "Peace at Last!—When God Speaks" will be one of the convention highlights. No doubt all attending the convention will go away feeling fully equipped by the God of peace to do his will.

Therefore, come for all four days with a good spiritual appetite, fully conscious of

your spiritual need. (Matthew 5:3) Schedule your affairs so as to be on time for the opening song and prayer each day. Come equipped to take notes, too, for writing down key points will help you to concentrate on what the speaker says. Moreover, the thoughts expressed will thus be more firmly imbedded in your heart and mind.

But let us never overlook the fact that the pure worship of Jehovah God is not just a matter of receiving. It is also a matter of giving. We want to keep in mind the Bible principle: "He that sows bountifully will also reap bountifully." (2 Corinthians 9:6) More than that, since Jesus said that "there is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving," let us get the greatest joy possible at the convention by giving as much as we can, freely volunteering our services. (Acts 20:35) Really, never should it be necessary to make appeals for volunteer help.

Further, let us take seriously the provision for sharing in field witnessing on Friday afternoon. And may we be on the lookout all four days for opportunities to do informal witnessing. This reminds us of another Bible principle: The generous soul will prosper, and he that waters will be watered. (Proverbs 11:25) Yes, let us invite all whom we can to learn for themselves how Jehovah's Witnesses are indeed basking in divine peace.

Index of Moral Breakdown

SOCIOLOGISTS attribute today's ever-worsening breakdown in morals to a variety of causes. Cunningham Geikie, a 19th-century Bible scholar, however, pinpointed quite accurately where the blame should fall. He astutely observed that "it is for ever true that the character of a nation's religion is an index to its national health and vigour." Interestingly, the Holy Bible portrays

false religion under the guise of a harlot with an identifying name on her forehead—"Babylon the Great." In her hand is a golden cup full of disgusting things and unclean things of her fornication. Obviously, it is the quality of this Babylonish false religion that is the true *index* of today's pernicious immorality and appalling wickedness.—Revelation 17:1, 2, 4, 5, 15.

Questions From Readers

■ Are Jehovah's Witnesses as firm about gluttony among their members as they are about the harmful tobacco habit?

Jehovah's Witnesses take a Bible-based stand against tobacco, and they equally accept the Scriptural condemnation of gluttony.

They believe that smoking violates Bible principles. Smoking involves a nicotine addiction. Further, it is unnatural to inhale smoke. Smoking defiles the body, causes health problems, and has shortened lives that should have been used to God's praise. Smoking also dangerously pollutes air that others breathe; certainly, that is not neighbor love.—2 Corinthians 7:1; Romans 12:1; Mark 12:33.

What, though, about gluttonous overeating? Frankly, the Bible condemns gluttony, which is greedy excess in eating, or voracious overeating. An Israelite son who was unrepentantly "a glutton and a drunkard" was to be executed. (Deuteronomy 21:18-21) Proverbs warns against "having companionship with gluttons." (Proverbs 28:7; 23:20, 21) Gluttony is also wrong since we are told that "greedy persons" will not inherit God's Kingdom. (1 Corinthians 6:9, 10; compare 1 Peter 4:3; Philippians 3:18, 19.) Christian overseers are to be "self-controlled," not "unemployed gluttons." (Titus 1:8, 12) This is so serious that some overseers have been removed because of their uncontrolled eating.

It must be recognized, however, that determining when gluttony exists is not easy. Eating (in contrast with inhaling tobacco smoke) is natural and proper. Nor is being fat the sole criterion of gluttony; a very thin person might be a glutton. It is not being overweight that the Bible censures but, rather, overeating, which may or may not result in obesity.

Some people are overweight because of glandular disorders or disease, though Professor Judith Rodin holds that only "5 percent of all cases of obesity are caused primarily by medical problems." Heredity may incline a person to stockiness. Dr. William Bennett comments: "Lots of fat people maintain their weight by eating about what an average-weight person does . . . They are metabolically different." Certain scientists even feel that if a fat person eats less, his body lowers its metabolic rate so that he burns calories more slowly. But even if a fat person is not a glutton in the sense of being a voracious eater, he (or she) may need to apply more seriously God's counsel.

For example, Christians should cultivate *self-control*, which applies to eating too. (Galatians 5:22, 23; 2 Peter 1:5-8) The apostle Paul urged the Christian to be like a runner who "exercises self-control in all things." Paul 'pummeled his body and led it as a slave that he should not become disapproved.' (1 Corinthians 9:24-27) A stout person may have reason to 'pummeled his body' as to how much, what, when, and how he eats.*

Being fat can be dangerous. Reports show that obesity can lead to higher blood pressure and cholesterol levels, adult-onset diabetes, several types of cancer, heart and gallbladder disease, arthritis, and respiratory problems. "A person

* How much: *consistently* eating less at each meal. What: cutting down on starchy junk foods and sodas, and on sweets and fats, such as butter and oils, in favor of a healthful, balanced diet. When: not snacking between meals or secretly. How: eating more slowly.

who is 20 percent overweight faces a death rate one-third higher than average; for those 30 and 50 percent overweight, the rates are 50 and 100 percent higher, respectively." (*The New York Times*, February 27, 1985) Similar reports of health problems come from England, Germany, and Italy.

A Christian truly wants to 'love Jehovah with his whole heart, soul [or, life], mind, and strength.' (Mark 12:30) Many, upon studying Christianity, quit smoking to preserve their health and life. Should not Christians be just as concerned that being overweight because of overindulgence might undermine their health and their life that is dedicated to Jehovah?

Some people eat more when they are sad, frustrated, lonely, or angry. While being a Christian does not wholly prevent such feelings, rather than finding relief in unnecessary eating, the Christian can turn to God and to his brothers. In this regard read Philippians 4:6, 7, 11-13. Even scientists who hold that a person has a natural inclination toward a certain weight admit that this can be changed. They stress cutting down on high-fat food and increasing physical activity. Interestingly, in many areas a Christian who shares regularly in the door-to-door ministry does much healthful walking and climbing. Paul, too, 'labored and toiled' in the ministry.—2 Corinthians 11:26, 27.

Thus, Jehovah's Witnesses disapprove of gluttony because of what the Bible says. Whatever their weight, they strive to 'exercise self-control in all things,' including eating. This is not primarily because of a cultural judgment about fashion but because they want to live by Bible principles and be active Christians having God's approval.



Butterfly, Squirrel, Frog: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service;
Bird: National Zoological Park, Washington, DC

Like an Exhilarating Ride

That is how one reader described her perusal of the fascinating, beautifully illustrated new publication *Life—How Did It Get Here? By Evolution or by Creation?* "Turning its pages one by one," she wrote, "I have just taken a brief 'trip' through it. What an exhilarating 'ride' that was! . . .

"My husband and I agree that it isn't just a book—it's an encyclopedia! The children are already arguing over whose turn it is to look at it next—we'll have to have more copies!

"Believe me, the excellent points, so logically and clearly made in favor of creation, positively *leap* from the pages. The book has a compelling authority, a sparkling power, that remains to the last page."