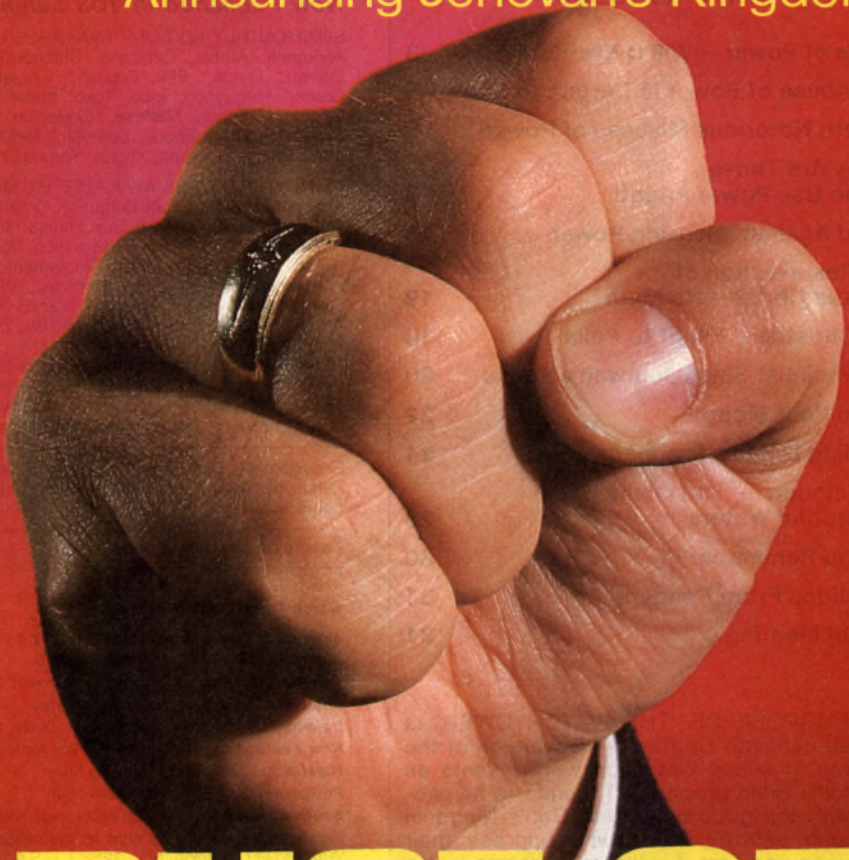
August 15, 1986

The Watchtower

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom



ABUSE OF POWER

Will It Ever End?

August 15, 1986
Vol. 107, No. 16

The Watchtower®

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom

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

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ABUSE OF POWER

Will It Ever End?

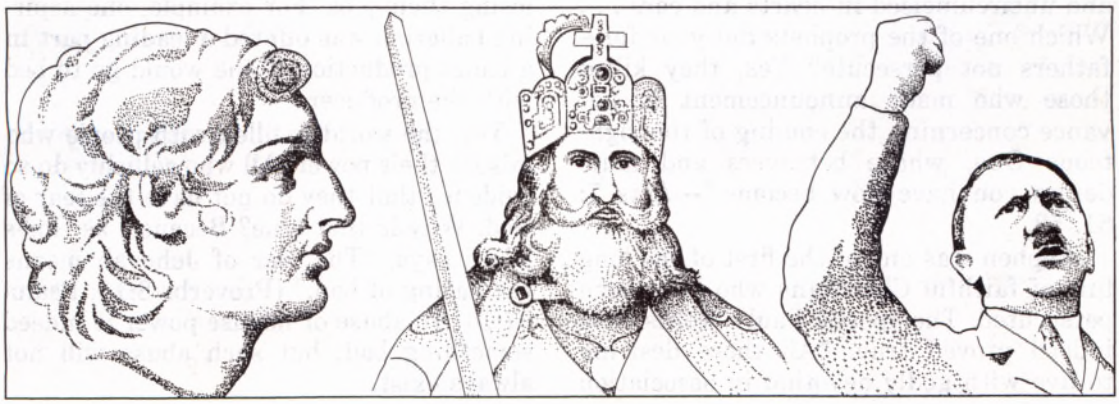
AMONG the ways in which imperfect people betray how selfish they are is in their craving for power. The well-known British writer Malcolm Muggeridge pointed out that people love power "because [they] have not realized that the basis of human life is love . . . But basically the urge for power is a very dangerous one. It's one that Jesus Christ declined to have."

Because of the prevalence of this craving for power, together with the havoc it can cause, the Founding Fathers of the United States devised a constitution that divided governmental powers into three parts: executive, legislative, and judicial. These parts were to provide checks so that there would be no abuse of power.

In spite of the Founders' noble intentions, there has been widespread abuse of power in that land. But you may know from personal experience and observation that there has been abuse of power in all parts of the world. History is filled with the records of men who abused power to their own aggrandizement and to the harm of their fellowman. Think, for example, of Alexander the Great, Charlemagne, Napoleon, and Hitler.

When Did It Start?

You have good reason to ask, though, when did all this abuse of power begin? A reliable answer is available in the book of man's earliest history, which is the Bible. There you can read about events in the garden of Eden. Satan the Devil, whom the Bible shows to be a real creature, hungered for power. He tempted the human race to start out on the road of sin. One manifestation of sin is man's widespread lust for power, to abuse it.



(Genesis 3:1-19; Romans 5:12) Satan long ago caused the nations to come under his control, so that he was able to offer rulership over them to Jesus Christ. (Matthew 4:8-10) The Devil has deceived almost all men, so that it can be said that "the whole world is lying in the power of the wicked one."—1 John 5:19; Revelation 12:9.

Here is a thought that may startle you: Foremost among those who have served the Devil's purpose have been many religious leaders. How is that so? Well, they have abused their power by teaching false doctrines, thereby enslaving people. False religious leaders have also abused their power by persecuting God's true servants. Stephen, the first Christian martyr, pointed to the sorry record of Israel's religious leaders: "Obstinate men and uncircumcised in hearts and ears . . . Which one of the prophets did your forefathers not persecute? Yes, they killed those who made announcement in advance concerning the coming of the righteous One, whose betrayers and murderers you have now become."—Acts 7: 51, 52.

Stephen was one of the first of the long line of faithful Christians who have been persecuted. The apostle Paul's words have indeed proved true: "All those desiring to live with godly devotion in association with Christ Jesus will also be persecuted." (2 Timothy 3:12) The record of Jehovah's Witnesses in modern times bears this out. Even now, in some 40 lands these Christians feel the abuse of power in that their ministry is being hindered by the authorities.

And how many other abuses of power there are! Look wherever we will, we see people groaning because of it. Abuse on the part of employers spawned the labor movement. But today it is apparent that some leaders in organized labor are also guilty of abusing power. Minority ethnic groups suffer from abuse of power by the majority. Another form of abuse is that by men in management positions taking liberties with women employees, who may feel pressured to submit out of fear of losing their jobs. For example, one aspiring ballerina was offered a leading part in a ballet production if she would go to bed with the producer.

Yes, the world is filled with people who misuse their power. All who selfishly do so evidence that they do not have the fear of God. Why is that true? Because, as God's Word says, "The fear of Jehovah means the hating of bad." (Proverbs 8:13; Psalm 97:10) To abuse or misuse power is indeed something bad, but such abuse will not always exist.

Why Abuse of Power Is Certain to End

ANCIENT King Solomon noted about the abuse of power in his day: "I myself returned that I might see all the acts of oppression [misuse of power] that are being done under the sun, and, look! the tears of those being oppressed, but they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors there was power."—Ecclesiastes 4:1.

You may well ask, 'Since abuse of power has existed so long, will it be with us forever?' No, it will not. Because, as Solomon himself wrote under inspiration, there is One who is taking note of it all: "If the oppression of the poor and the wresting of justice and righteousness [you] see in the province do not be astonished over the matter, for one high above the highest is watching, yea the Most High is over them."—Ecclesiastes 5:8, *Rotherham.*

God's Word, the Holy Bible, shows that Jehovah, the Most High, is infinite in power and wisdom, as well as perfect in justice, and he is the personification of love. Because he is such a God, he will not forever tolerate these unjust conditions. The psalmist David wrote: "Do not show yourself heated up only to do evil. For evildoers themselves will be cut off, but those hoping in Jehovah are the ones that will possess the earth."—Psalm 37:8, 9.

We get further assurance from the words of the prophet Isaiah: "I shall certainly bring . . . their own error upon the wicked themselves. And I shall actually cause the pride of the presumptuous ones to cease, and the haughtiness of the tyrants [abusers of power] I shall abase." —Isaiah 13:11.

But it has been centuries since those words were written, so why can we be certain that Jehovah God will yet carry out his promise to end all abuse of power? Because he has in times past demonstrated his determination to do so. Before the Flood of Noah's day, there was great abuse of power. We read that "the earth became filled with violence." (Genesis 6:5, 11) And what is violence but an abuse of power? The same was true of the wicked cities of Sodom and Gomorrah in Lot's day. (Genesis 18:20, 21; 19:4-29) In both cases Jehovah put an end to the abuse. So we see that Jehovah God is not one to tolerate abuse of power indefinitely.

As added basis for us to be sure that Jehovah will act is the fact that he is jealous for his name, and all abuse of power is an insult to his majesty. Notice this connection in these texts: "He that is defrauding the lowly one has reproached his Maker." "He that is holding the one of little means in derision has reproached his Maker."—Proverbs 14:31; 17:5.

We can rest assured, then, that the Most High will not for all time tolerate being reproached. That leaves just one question: When will abuse of power end?

When Will It End?

God's Word informs us that "for everything there is an appointed time, even a

time for every affair under the heavens." (Ecclesiastes 3:1) Some may be impatient with God's timetable, but we are told: "Jehovah is not slow respecting his promise, . . . but he is patient with you because he does not desire any to be destroyed." —2 Peter 3:9.

Fulfillment of Bible prophecy indicates

Modern Notorious Misuses of Power

IN THE law given through Moses, the Creator strongly condemned bribe taking on the part of judges. (Exodus 23:8; Deuteronomy 10:17; 16:19) We can see how wise such instructions were by noting some modern cases of misuse of power by officials.

One such involved Judge Martin T. Manton. Back in 1918 he tried to thwart the efforts of the Bible Students, as Jehovah's Witnesses were then known, to get bail for J. F. Rutherford and seven of his associates. These eight Christian ministers were charged with interfering with the war effort and were sent to the federal penitentiary in Atlanta, Georgia. The appeals court hearing their case consisted of three judges, including Manton. He dissented, but the other two judges granted the appeal, and the improper conviction was reversed.

What kind of judge was Manton? The press called him "the highest ranking judicial officer [in the United States] next to the nine Justices of the Supreme Court." He was also one of America's most distinguished laymen, the pope making him "Knight of St. Gregory." Manton's downfall came when he was convicted and sentenced to two years in prison and fined $10,000. For what? For selling judicial decisions. More than that, he had the temerity to blackmail those appearing before him, threatening that unless they paid him a large sum, he would decide against them. *The New York Times* said concerning him: "Blackmail was emanating from the Federal court house." What an abuse of judicial power!

Years later another notorious case surfaced, involving Spiro Agnew, vice president of the United States during 1969-73. He was charged with cheating the government out of thousands of dollars, and so he resigned. As late as 1983, he paid the state of Maryland more than $250,000 because of bribes he had accepted.

Then there was Richard M. Nixon, who had chosen Agnew to run as vice president. The U.S. Senate committee dealing with the Watergate case recommended that Nixon be impeached on three counts: that he had abused his presidential powers; that he obstructed justice; and that he had disobeyed subpoenas. Likely you know that he resigned on August 9, 1974, with two and a half years remaining of his presidency.

Such abuse of power is worldwide. For example, Canada's magazine *Maclean's* of July 15, 1985, reported on "wild sex parties on Parliament Hill . . . and unauthorized financial payoffs." It related that at a party a senior government personnel officer told a 30-year-old woman: "If you don't take your clothes off, you're not going to have a job."

At about the same time, an international news magazine published the article "Corruption Slows China's Turnabout." It reported: "Virtually every recent day, the official press has carried accounts of financial skulduggery, some involving high-ranking officials."

More recently, the *New Zealand Herald,* under the heading: "Curse of Corruption Major Threat in 'Lucky Country,'" reported the view of a retired judge: "Australia, in the middle of the 1980s, is rich, confident and corrupt." The article mentioned "a justice system that in the past year has seen a judge from the highest court in the land put behind bars and that reels almost daily with startling evidence of police on the take."

It is apparent that all such abusers of power ignore the principle stated by Christ: "There is nothing covered over that will not become uncovered, and secret that will not become known."—Matthew 10:26.

that we are living in the last days of this wicked world, or system of things. This generation has seen the fulfillment of Jesus' great prophecy regarding his presence and the conclusion of this system of things: wars, earthquakes, famines, pestilences, increase of lawlessness, and the preaching of the good news of God's Kingdom. (Matthew 24:1-35; Luke 21:10, 11) That pinpoints our time as the last days of this wicked world.

Because these are the last days, we can hope soon to see the prophecy at Zephaniah 3:8 fulfilled: "'Keep yourselves in expectation of me,' is the utterance of Jehovah, 'till the day of my rising up to the booty, for my judicial decision is to gather nations, for me to collect together kingdoms, in order to pour out upon them my denunciation, all my burning anger; for by the fire of my zeal all the earth will be devoured.'"

Surely, those words are an assurance that Jehovah God will end the abuse of power.

Happy Are Those Who Use POWER Aright!

"Jehovah is slow to anger and great in power, and by no means will Jehovah hold back from punishing."—NAHUM 1:3.

THERE are many kinds of power that intelligent beings can exercise in a right way. Because of natural endowment or due to circumstances, we may possess some particular power of one kind or another. But is this grounds for boasting? Not at all. What do we read at Jeremiah 9:23? "Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom or the strong man boast of his strength or the rich man boast of his riches." (*New International Version*) Why not? The apostle Paul gives a good answer at 1 Corinthians 4:7: "Who makes you to differ from another? Indeed, what do you have that you did not receive? If, now, you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as though you did not receive it?"

[2] Why do we need to be on guard against the misuse of any power that we might have? Because "the inclination of the heart of man is bad from his youth up." (Genesis 8:21) Since all of us have this inherited bent toward selfishness, we need always to be on guard that we use aright whatever power we have. A poet once expressed this thought: "Never a treasure without a following shade of care. Never a power without the lurk of a subtle snare." Yes, because of inherited imperfection, there is always the tendency to use power selfishly.

1. Why is a person's having some kind of power no grounds for boasting?
2. Why do we need to be on guard when it comes to using power?

Jehovah—Powerful but Also Wise and Just

[3] None other than the Creator, Jehovah God, sets us a fine, yes, perfect, example in the use of power. He is not hasty but slow to anger even when there is need to express his power adversely. (Nahum 1:3) No one has greater power than God, for which reason we refer to him as the all-powerful One, the omnipotent One. He rightly applies the title "Almighty" to himself. (Genesis 17:1) Not only does he have full power in the sense of having unlimited strength, but he also has supreme power in that he has all authority by reason of his position as the Sovereign Lord of the universe, which he created. That is why no one can presume to 'check his hand or say to him, "What are you doing?"'—Daniel 4:35.

[4] Because of the fact that Jehovah God is almighty, it is the course of wisdom for us to fear to displease him. Yes, "the fear of Jehovah is the start of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Most Holy One is what understanding is." (Proverbs 9:10) Paul warns us not to incite Jehovah God to jealousy by engaging in any form of idolatry because "we are not stronger than he is, are we?" Absolutely not! (1 Corinthians

3. What kinds of power reside in Jehovah?
4. Why is it the course of wisdom to fear Jehovah?

10:22) Yet, all who deliberately violate God's righteous commands are acting as if they were stronger than Jehovah! Paul's further words underscore this point: "Our God is also a consuming fire."—Hebrews 12:29.

5 These facts might cause us to be filled with a morbid fear or dread were it not that Jehovah God balances perfectly his almighty power with his three other cardinal attributes: wisdom, justice, and love. His use of power in an adverse way is always consonant, or consistent, with these qualities. For example, the Flood of Noah's day was truly a great manifestation of Jehovah's power. Yet was God's exercise of power unjust or unloving? By no means! Mankind had so corrupted its way that God felt hurt at heart over what he saw. (Genesis 6:5-11) Since those wicked antediluvians were misusing God's blessings, he acted properly in wiping the earth clean of them, especially since they ignored the warnings of the "preacher of righteousness," Noah.—2 Peter 2:5.

6 When the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah showed themselves to be grossly depraved sinners, by abusing the blessings that they, as part of mankind, were enjoying at Jehovah's hand, he decreed that the inhabitants should be destroyed. Out of consideration for his friend Abraham, Jehovah told that man of faith of His purpose regarding Sodom and Gomorrah. Abraham seemed to think that this would be a great misuse of power, so he asked Jehovah: "Is the Judge of all the earth not going to do what is right?" Abraham, though, labored under a misapprehension. In the end, he had to grant that Jehovah's decree was indeed righteous, for there could not be found even ten righteous souls in the two cities. Certainly this shows how careful Jehovah God is to use his power justly.—Genesis 18:17-33; Isaiah 41:8.

7 Later, when it came time to deliver the Israelites from unjust slavery in Egypt, Jehovah gave Pharaoh the opportunity to cooperate. This would be without harm to Pharaoh and his people. But that ruler haughtily and stubbornly refused to grant Jehovah's request. So God gave Pharaoh one demonstration of his power after another in the Ten Plagues on Egypt. (Exodus 9:16) After Pharaoh had let the Israelites go, he stubbornly continued to challenge Jehovah by pursuing the Israelites. Hence, Jehovah justly used his mighty power to wipe out Pharaoh and his military forces in the Red Sea. (Psalm 136:15) In each instance, let it be noted, Jehovah also used his great power to preserve his faithful servants: Noah and his family, Lot and his two daughters, and the nation of Israel.—Genesis 19:16.

8 Centuries later, in the time of King Hezekiah, Jehovah God manifested his

5. Why do we not need to have a morbid fear of Jehovah because of his almightiness?
6. Jehovah's dealings with Sodom and Gomorrah show what?

7. Why did Pharaoh merit receiving an adverse expression of Jehovah's power?
8. For what good reason did Jehovah deal with Sennacherib the way he did?

Jehovah's principal qualities are perfectly balanced

great power in a most striking and righteous way when the Assyrian monarch Sennacherib threatened Jerusalem. Jehovah's people, with God-fearing and loyal King Hezekiah at their head, appealed to Him for help. They were serving him faithfully, so God acted on their behalf. The emissary of King Sennacherib, on the other hand, had boasted: 'Do not listen to Hezekiah, do not let him allure you by promising that Jehovah will deliver you. Have any of the gods of the other nations been able to deliver their people out of Sennacherib's hand? Since none of these gods were able to do so, why do you imagine that Jehovah will be able to deliver you?' (Isaiah 36:13-20) Because of such a boast, God simply had to exert his great power, causing 185,000 soldiers to fall in one night, proving that there was, indeed, a difference between the gods of the nations and Jehovah.

[9] Consider just a few more of the many examples that could be given. When Jehovah struck Miriam with leprosy, that was a perfectly just and wise expression of his power. Miriam deserved such punishment for speaking so presumptuously against her brother Moses, God's appointed one. (Numbers 12:1-15) It was similar when King Uzziah brazenly invaded the sacred temple sanctuary and presumed to offer up incense upon the golden altar, haughtily refusing to be dissuaded by the Levite priests. Jehovah showed his power by justly smiting the king with leprosy. (2 Chronicles 26:16-21) Even as their sins were not to the same degree, so was Jehovah's punishment of them: Miriam's leprosy was temporary, but Uzziah died a leper. We can thus see that at all times Jehovah is careful to use his power in a wise and just way, being able to preserve

9. What other examples can be cited that show that Jehovah is careful as to how he uses power?

the faithful who love him and to destroy the wicked.—Psalm 145:20.

The Example of Jesus Christ

[10] God's Son was truly a fine imitator of his Father in the use of power. Among the earliest instances was the time when Satan disputed with him over the body of Moses. The Logos could easily have censured Satan severely. Instead, the Logos leaned over backward, so to speak, to let the rebuke come from Jehovah God himself.—Jude 8, 9.

[11] The very first temptation that Satan presented to Jesus in the wilderness was related to this matter of misusing power. Satan tempted Jesus to use his supernatural power for a selfish purpose, to turn stones into food. This was quite a temptation because Jesus had not eaten for 40 days, and "he felt hungry." Satan presented this temptation in such a way as to trap Jesus into taking a selfish course, for he began with, "IF you are a son of God, tell these stones to become loaves of bread." He no doubt hoped that Jesus would respond, 'Why of course I am a son of God, and to prove it I'll turn those stones into bread.' Jesus, rather than being tempted or trapped into acting selfishly or foolishly, replied: "It is written, 'Man must live, not on bread alone, but on every utterance coming forth through Jehovah's mouth.'" (Matthew 4:1-4) He ignored the implied doubt as to whether he was a son of God, and he refused to misuse the power with which God had endowed him.

[12] Later, after Jesus Christ had fed *5,000* men besides many women and children, the Jews wanted to make him king. Had he accepted their offer, that would have been a misuse of the power he had to influence people through his miracles. He knew he had to keep neutral as to worldly politics and to wait for Jehovah God to give him kingship. (John 6:1-15) Still later, when the mob came to take him prisoner, he could have asked for 12 legions of angels and thereby prevented his being taken prisoner. However, that would have been a misuse of power, for it was his Father's will that he submit.—Matthew 26:39, 53.

10, 11. What incidents show that Jesus was concerned with using power aright?

12. How did Jesus further show that he was not greedy for power?

Others Who Did Not Misuse Power

[13] Among imperfect humans who resisted the temptation to misuse power, Judge Gideon must be mentioned. After he delivered Israel from the hand of Midian, the people wanted to make him their king. Gideon refused, rightly stating: "I myself shall not rule over you, nor will my son rule over you. Jehovah is the one who will rule over you." Yes, the modesty that he displayed at the very beginning of his career as judge was still present. And Gideon's response reflected the way Jehovah God himself felt about Israel's having a human king. We can recognize that in God's response to Israel's wanting a king in the time of prophet Samuel.—Judges 8:23; 6:12-16; 1 Samuel 8:7.

[14] When, nonetheless, a king was chosen, Saul at first set a fine example of restraint in the use of power. Some good-for-nothing men said: "'How will this one save us?' Accordingly they despised him . . . But he continued like one grown speechless." He could have acted rashly, with his kingly power, but he did not. Similarly, after Saul had gained the victory over the Ammonites, some of his people thought this would be a fine time to pay back those who had despised Saul. So they

13, 14. (a) What fine example did Gideon set, showing he was not greedy for power? (b) How did Saul set a good example when he first became king?

said to him: "Who is it saying, 'Saul—is he to be king over us?' Give the men over, that we may put them to death." Saul, though, was not of that mind at all. He countered: "Not a man should be put to death on this day, because today Jehovah has performed salvation in Israel." We can see that Saul indeed started out well and in modesty. (1 Samuel 9:21; 10:20-23, 27; 11:12, 13) How sad that he began to misuse his royal power and so came to a bad end!—1 Samuel 28:6; 31:3-6.

15 Samuel, the prophet who also judged Israel, set a fine example. God used him mightily from his earliest youth on. Samuel justly judged his people and effected deliverance for them. Did he ever take advantage of his position for selfish gain? Absolutely not! He said in his farewell speech to the people: "Here I have listened to your voice as respects all that you have said to me, that I should cause a king to reign over you . . . Here I am. Answer against me in front of Jehovah and in front of his anointed one: Whose bull have I taken or whose ass have I taken or whom have I defrauded or whom have I crushed or from whose hand have I accepted hush money that I should hide my eyes with it?" His people had to admit that Samuel's course was blameless in all these matters. He had not misused the power of his judicial office.—1 Samuel 12:1-5.

16 Nor ought we to overlook the fine example David set. Twice he had King Saul within his power and could have killed him. David could have reasoned: 'Saul is out to get my life, so it is his or mine.' Or he might selfishly have reasoned: 'Since Samuel has anointed me to be the coming king of Israel, this is the way it must come about eventually. Why not now?' No, David waited patiently until it was Jehovah's time to give him the kingdom. (1 Samuel 24:1-22; 26:1-25) However, sad to say, after David became king, on two occasions he misused his power: in causing the death of Uriah and in numbering Israel's army.—2 Samuel 11:15; 24:2-4, 12-14.

15, 16. (a) Judge Samuel was able to give what testimony as to his use of judicial power? (b) What like example did King David provide?

Do You Recall?

- Why is counsel regarding the misuse of power necessary?
- What examples show that Jehovah God uses his power aright?
- Why can it be said that Jesus was careful not to misuse power?
- What Hebrew Scripture characters showed that they did not abuse power?
- How did the apostle Paul show himself exemplary in the use of power?

17 Among the followers of Jesus Christ, the apostle Paul set a fine example in this regard. He could have demanded support from the congregations he served. But he did not take advantage of this. He told the elders of Ephesus: "I have coveted no man's silver or gold or apparel. You yourselves know that these hands have attended to the needs of me and of those with me." (Acts 20:33, 34) When writing to the congregation at Corinth, the apostle expressed himself even more strongly on this point. (1 Corinthians 9:1-18) He had authority to refrain from secular work, for whoever serves as a soldier at his own expense? Did not Moses say not to muzzle the bull that is threshing out the grain? "But," Paul explained, "I have not made

17. How did Paul show that he was never greedy and that he did not misuse his power?

use of a single one of these provisions." What was his reward? "That while declaring the good news I may furnish the good news without cost, to the end that I may not abuse my authority in the good news."

[18] Truly it can be said, 'Happy are all those who do not abuse their power.' What an excellent name Jehovah God has because of setting such a fine example, letting his almighty power always be balanced by his other attributes of wisdom, justice, and love! We can, thus, say with the psalmist David: "Bless Jehovah, O my soul, even everything within me, his holy name." (Psalm 103:1) All who have followed Jehovah's example in the proper use of power are indeed happy. The examples we have considered from the Scriptures prove that even though we are imperfect humans, we, too, can use aright the power that we have. Doing so, we can have not only a clear conscience but also the approval of God and the respect of our fellowmen.

18. (a) How should we feel about Jehovah's fine use of power? (b) Why can those who imitate him in this respect be said to be happy?

Guard Against Misusing POWER

"The fear of Jehovah means the hating of bad. Self-exaltation and pride and the bad way and the perverse mouth I have hated."
—PROVERBS 8:13.

THE selfish misuse of power is doubtless among the bad ways that Jehovah God hates. His Word counsels us against this tendency of imperfect humans, for he understands the human heart. We read: "The heart is more treacherous than anything else and is desperate. Who can know it? I, Jehovah, am searching the heart, examining the kidneys, even to give to each one according to his ways, according to the fruitage of his dealings."—Jeremiah 17:9, 10.

[2] With good reason God's Word warns us against the misuse of power. There is such a tendency to misuse or abuse power that an English scholar observed: "Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely." He also observed: "Among all the causes which degrade and demoralize men, power is the most constant and the most active." Of course, power does not necessarily have a corrupting influence, as we have seen in the previous article, but there is a danger of that.

[3] Who needs to be on guard against misusing power? Just about everyone! In nearly every human relationship, there are situations where one person has the

1. What is one way in which the imperfect human heart shows itself to be treacherous?

2. Power tends to do what to those possessing it?

3. In what human relationships can power be abused, and why may this happen?

advantage over others by reason of wealth, learning, physical strength, position, physical charm, and so forth. The greater the advantage, the greater the temptation to use it selfishly. Why? Because "the inclination of the heart of man is bad from his youth up." (Genesis 8:21) Yes, the imperfect human heart is "treacherous," deceitful, or devious, and of evil bent.—Jeremiah 17:9.

Christian Elders

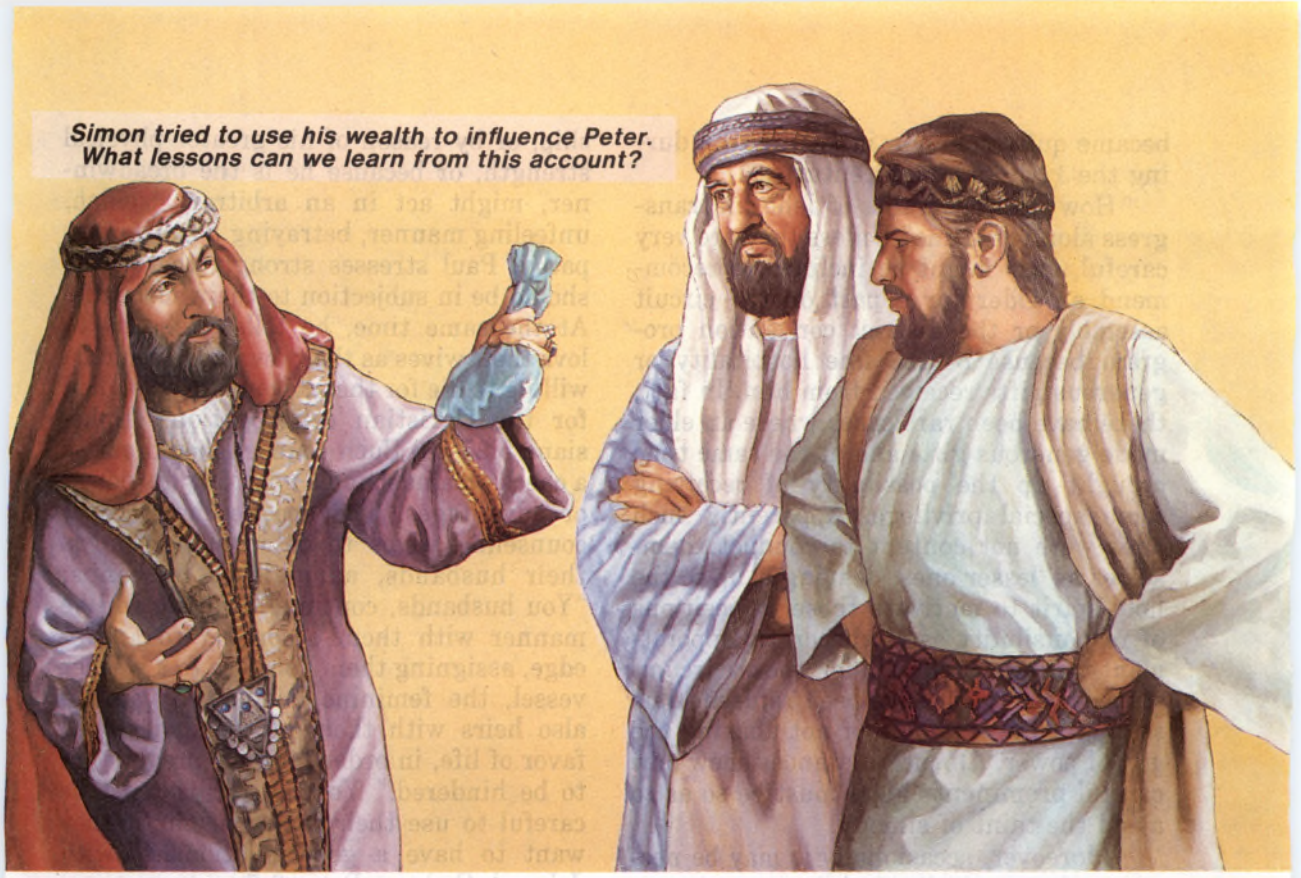
[4] Consider, to begin with, the elders, the overseers in the Christian congregation. When we think about their qualifications, we can recall Jethro's words to Moses in regard to choosing men to be over thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens: "You yourself should select out of all the people capable men, fearing God, trustworthy men, hating unjust profit." (Exodus 18:21) Such men could be trusted with oversight. They would not abuse the advantages that come with position of oversight, for the fear of God means the hating of bad. Such men would truly be "hating unjust profit" instead of seeking or loving it.

[5] The apostle Peter was aware of the danger of misuse of power by elders, so we find him counseling overseers in the Christian congregation: "Shepherd the flock of God in your care, not under compulsion, but willingly; neither for love of dishonest gain, but eagerly; *neither as lording it over* those who are God's inheritance, but becoming examples to the flock." (1 Peter 5:2, 3) To be shepherding the flock of God for dishonest gain would be to misuse power. Likewise, to lord it over the flock would be to take selfish advantage of one's power. For example, an elder may have definite opinions about how his family should dress. But he needs to be careful that he does not try to impose such personal views on the flock; to do so would be lording it over them.

[6] Unless elders are careful, they could be guilty of nepotism, which would also be a misuse of power. Nepotism? Yes, this is a word that comes from Latin, meaning "nephews." It was coined because of the notorious custom of popes and other church officials to bestow religious and material favors on their relatives and in particular on their brothers' or sisters' children. Pope Nicholas III was even known as "the patriarch of papal nepotism." Unless Christian elders are very careful, they may be unduly influenced by family ties instead of by spiritual principles. One elder felt very strongly that his son should be recommended as an overseer although the rest of the elders did not agree. The father thereupon moved to another congregation. Some years later the son was still not an elder. Clearly, the father had let blood relationship influence him.

[7] Another abuse of power in the form of nepotism appears when elders fail to act on the wrongdoing of their relatives. (Compare 1 Samuel 2:22-25, 30-35.) A few years ago, there was a shocking situation of wrongdoing in certain congregations in the central United States. More recently this developed in certain European congregations. Many young folks were involved in fornication, drug abuse, and the like. Not a few of these were children of elders, some of whom apparently winked at the misconduct of their offspring.

4. Jethro gave Moses what fine counsel, showing awareness of the temptations that go with receiving power and authority?
5. Why is the counsel at 1 Peter 5:2, 3 so fitting, and how can it be applied?
6. What is nepotism, and how might elders be guilty of it?
7, 8. What examples show that nepotism can be a real danger to elders?



Simon tried to use his wealth to influence Peter. What lessons can we learn from this account?

When the facts came to light, a number of these elders were removed because of their misuse of their prerogatives as elders, or more specifically, because of their failure to use their power aright.

[8] At times, there seems to be a tendency along this line when an elder or a ministerial servant presides over audience-participation parts on the meetings. He needs to be careful to avoid partiality. The members of his family could cooperate in this regard by being alert to offer comments when others fail to respond and not to be too anxious to comment when many others are volunteering to comment.

Traveling Representatives

[9] Christians in responsible positions, particularly traveling representatives of the Watch Tower Society, must be careful that they do not become guilty, either knowingly or unwittingly, of what is known as simony. The term comes from the Simon mentioned at Acts 8:9-24, who offered the apostles money for the gift of being able to impart the holy spirit by the laying on of his hands. Luke records: "Peter said to him: 'May your silver perish with you, because you thought through money to get possession of the free gift of God. You have neither part nor lot in this matter, for your heart is not straight in the sight of God. Repent, therefore, of this badness of yours, and supplicate Jehovah that, if possible, the device of your heart may be forgiven you.'" This was also a notorious practice among Roman Catholic Church officials in years gone by. One encyclopedia reports that "this crime

9. What is the abuse of power known as simony, and why is it so named?

became quite common in the Church during the 11th and 12th centuries."

[10] How might servants of Jehovah transgress along this line? Unless they are very careful, they might be inclined to recommend an elder for a part on the circuit assembly or the district convention program because of the fine hospitality or generous gifts received from him. In fact, there have been rare cases where an elder made generous gifts and at the same time brought up the possibility of receiving some special privilege. Apparently such ones were not content to conduct themselves as 'lesser ones,' leaving it up to the holy spirit to motivate those in positions of responsibility as to theocratic appointments. (Luke 9:48) Under those circumstances such gifts have been refused, thus setting a fine example of not abusing the gift of power. All such instances show how careful prominent elders must be so as to avoid the taint of simony!

[11] Moreover, occasionally it may be necessary for a traveling minister to give an elder firm counsel. But if the traveling minister had repeatedly been receiving gifts from that elder or had enjoyed his hospitality, he might find it difficult to give him straightforward counsel. Will selfish considerations keep him from discharging his duties to offer needed counsel? Will he put the spiritual interests of his brothers ahead of his own material benefits? Yes, will he seek to please God or men?—Galatians 1:10.

The Family Circle

[12] Within the family circle, there is also need for each member to be on guard lest he or she misuses advantages or power. A husband, by reason of his having the headship, or by reason of his greater physical strength, or because he is the breadwinner, might act in an arbitrary, selfish, unfeeling manner, betraying a lack of empathy. Paul stresses strongly that wives should be in subjection to their husbands. At the same time, he tells husbands to love their wives as their own bodies and be willing to die for them, even as Christ died for the Christian congregation. (Ephesians 5:25-33) Such counsel should act as a check on a husband's misusing his power or advantages. The apostle Peter, after counseling wives to be in subjection to their husbands, admonishes husbands: "You husbands, continue dwelling in like manner with them according to knowledge, assigning them honor as to a weaker vessel, the feminine one, since you are also heirs with them of the undeserved favor of life, in order for your prayers not to be hindered." Yes, husbands must be careful to use their power aright if they want to have a good relationship with Jehovah God.—1 Peter 3:7.

[13] It has been observed that the mate who loves more deeply is at the mercy of the one who loves less. There seems to be a measure of truth in that. Wives, in general, love more deeply than their husbands do—love is more important to them—and many husbands take selfish advantage of that. On the other hand, wives have been known to show reluctance to pay the marriage due when their wishes are crossed. In fact, some wives have even refused the marriage due altogether. Sad to say, at times this has contributed to a husband's committing adultery. All such failure to heed Paul's counsel at 1 Corinthians 7:3-5 is likewise a selfish misuse of power.

10, 11. How might elders fall victim to the snare of simony?

12. For what reason must husbands be alert to use power aright?

13. (a) What womanly trait have husbands at times taken advantage of? (b) How have selfish wives betrayed a misuse of power, violating what Scriptural injunction?

[14] The fact that children are to obey their parents in union with the Lord gives their parents, particularly their fathers, power over them. How will they use this power? Thoughtlessly, unfeelingly, without empathy? Many worldly fathers, and some mothers, do just that, giving rise to the prevalence of the "hurt child syndrome." According to *World Health,* January/February 1984, "there are ill-treated children in every society," and "it seems that nowadays more and more children are ill-treated, exploited, battered or abandoned, and no part of the world escapes its share." Another report tells that in the United States child abuse has more than doubled in the last ten years. Surely all such is an abuse of power. Even a Christian parent who would not think of severely mistreating a child might be guilty of a kind of child abuse. You can see what it is from Paul's counsel: "Fathers, do not be irritating your children, but go on bringing them up in the discipline and mental-regulating of Jehovah." "Fathers, do not be exasperating your children, so that they do not become downhearted." —Ephesians 6:4; Colossians 3:21.

[15] Strange as it may at first seem, children themselves can also be guilty of misusing power. How so? Children can cause their parents to act against their own better judgment because of the affection their parents have for them. A child, knowing that he deserves to be spanked, may cry so pitifully that his mother just cannot bring herself to administer the deserved spanking. A successful woman financier boasts of her ability to manipulate customers, saying: "Women are born with it. You should see my daughter manipulate her father."

14. What evidence is there that some parents misuse their power over their children?

15, 16. How may children be guilty of the misuse of power, requiring what of parents?

[16] According to one newspaper report, "there is an alarming increase in the number of 'power drunk children' in North America who dominate and manipulate their parents' lives." However, the remedy lies not in counseling the children but with the parents. The parents must present a unified position to their children. Youngsters are quick to note disunity and to play one parent against the other to get what they want. Parents must also be firm for what is right, at the same time always assuring their children of their love. As does Jehovah, Christian parents discipline because of love.—Hebrews 12:5, 6.

In Other Relationships

[17] The employer-employee relationship also presents temptations to misuse power. With this in mind, Paul counseled slave owners, who somewhat correspond to modern employers, overseers, bosses: "You masters, keep . . . letting up on the threatening, for you know that the Master of both them and you is in the heavens, and there is no partiality with him." (Ephesians 6:9; Colossians 4:1) Christians who have oversight in secular matters should be careful not to misuse their power. Boaz of old might be cited as one who had a fine relationship with those working for him.—Ruth 2:4.

[18] To mention just one other area in which Christians must guard against misuse of power, there is the matter of sex attraction. The very nature of young sisters inclines many of them to want to marry and to bear children. As a consequence, brothers may at times find it easy to trifle with sisters' affections. This certainly is a misuse of power. Paul counseled Timothy: 'Treat older women as mothers, younger women as sisters with all chasteness.' On the other hand, Christian women are counseled to "adorn themselves in well-arranged dress, with modesty and soundness of mind." Whether married or single, they should also be careful to display "chaste conduct."—1 Timothy 2:9; 5:2; 1 Peter 3:2.

[19] Much has been said in our Bible literature about Christians' being guided by divine wisdom, about exercising justice in all their dealings, and about being motivated by principled love, *a·ga′pe.* The foregoing shows that all of Jehovah's servants must also be concerned with the quality, attribute, or possession of power. They should never abuse it but always use it aright. Truly God's Word evinces divine wisdom in the counsel it gives along these lines. By carefully heeding such counsel, we will bring honor to Jehovah's name, will be a blessing to others, and will gain God's approval.

17. How may there be a misuse of power in the employer-employee relationship?
18. Unattached brothers and sisters must exercise what care, so that they are not guilty of a misuse of power?
19. In addition to manifesting wisdom, justice, and love, with the use of what other attribute must we be concerned?

What Counsel Do You Recall?

- ☐ How can it be said that we have an inherent tendency to misuse power?
- ☐ Why must elders be careful that they do not misuse their power?
- ☐ In what ways should husbands and wives not misuse their power in relationship to each other?
- ☐ Both parents and children ought to avoid what as to misusing power in their relationships?

The Resurrection of Jesus Christ —No Myth

COULD the Bible's account of the resurrection of Jesus be a mere fabrication? Recently the *International Herald Tribune* reported on an investigation done by a Jewish writer named Pinchas Lapide. His conclusion? The resurrection was no myth.

Several things led Lapide to this conclusion. For one thing, the Gospel accounts relate that three women visited Jesus' tomb and saw that it was empty. But in ancient times, women were "considered incapable of valid testimony," says the *Tribune's* report. Indeed, Jesus' own disciples did not believe the women! It is thus most unlikely that such a story would have been deliberately fabricated.

Lapide also cites the galvanizing effect that Jesus' resurrection had upon His disciples. From a group of men so timid that they abandoned Jesus at his arrest, they were "changed overnight into a confident mission society, convinced of salvation." Reports the *Tribune* on Lapide's reasoning: "No vision or hallucination is sufficient to explain such a revolutionary transformation."

Finally, there is the charge that Jesus' disciples merely stole his body. To this, Mr. Lapide replies: "Can swindlers let themselves be tortured and persecuted in the name of an illusion, up to joyful martyrdom?" While Mr. Lapide still does not profess faith in Jesus as the Messiah, he has little doubt that what an angel announced two thousand years ago was true: 'Christ was raised up.' —Matthew 28:6.

The Christians' Flight to Pella

IN 33 C.E., Jesus Christ warned his followers to "begin fleeing to the mountains" when they saw "Jerusalem surrounded by encamped armies." (Luke 21:20-24) But where did they actually flee to? French orientalist and historian Joseph Ernest Renan answers: "The place selected by the heads of the [Christian] community to serve as the principal asylum for the fugitive Church was Pella, one of the towns of Decapolis, situated near the left bank of the Jordan in an admirable position, overlooking on one side the whole plain of Ghor, and having on the other precipitous cliffs, at the foot of which runs a torrent. No wiser choice could have been made. Judæa, Idumæa, Peræa, and Galilee were in insurrection; Samaria and the coast were in a very unsettled state . . . Thus Scythopolis and Pella were the nearest neutral cities to Jerusalem. Pella, by its position beyond the Jordan, must have offered much more tranquillity than Scythopolis, which had become one of the Roman strongholds. Pella was a free city like the other towns of Decapolis . . . To take refuge there was openly to avow horror of the [Jewish] revolt . . . It was in this anti-Jewish town that the Church of Jerusalem found refuge during the horrors of the siege."

Bible Highlights

Psalms 1 to 41

The Psalmist Sings Jehovah's Praise

"Praises." This is the meaning of the Hebrew name for the book of Psalms, and how appropriate it is! The whole book is, in effect, one long shout of praise to Jehovah God. The Psalms recount Jehovah's qualities and mighty acts. They contain prophecies and also tell us the feelings of the inspired writers as they endured persecution, betrayal, discouragement, and even a bad conscience. Many Christians suffering similar trials have drawn strength from the words of the Psalms.

The book of Psalms is divided into five sections. Here we discuss the first of these, Psalms 1 to 41.

Submitting to Jehovah's Purposes

Please Read Psalms 1 to 14. This group of psalms introduces some of the major themes of the book of Psalms: the importance of the Law, prophecies about the coming Messianic King, and prayers for help in the face of severe pressures. Additionally, we learn that, despite the temporary ascendancy of the wicked, the righteous will be blessed.

♦ 2:1—What "empty thing" did the nations keep "muttering"?

The nations kept "muttering" (or, "meditating on") the perpetuation of their own authority, instead of accepting Jehovah's Anointed One. These words had an application in the first century C.E., when Roman and Jewish authorities worked together to kill Jehovah's anointed King, Jesus Christ. (Acts 4:26-28) However, the major fulfillment has been since 1914, when all the nations have rejected God's enthroned King and have tried to promote their own sovereignty.

♦ 2:12—Why the command, "Kiss the son"?

In Bible times, kissing was an expression of friendship and was used to welcome guests into the hospitality of one's home. In this verse, Jehovah commands the nations to kiss, or welcome, his Son as his anointed King.—Psalm 2:2, 6-8.

♦ 9:12—Why does Jehovah go "looking for bloodshed"?

Like a judge sitting in judgment, Jehovah seeks out those who are bloodguilty because of shedding the blood of his innocent people. (Genesis 9:5, 6; Luke 11:49, 50) He also punishes the guilty. But his punishments are not indiscriminate. The psalmist David assures us: "He is sure not to forget the outcry of the afflicted ones."—Compare 2 Peter 2:9.

♦ 11:3—What are "the foundations" that are torn down?

The foundations are justice, law, and order—the foundations on which society rests. When there is a breakdown in the social order, with no possibility of justice, what should the God-fearing person do? Trust in Jehovah. He is on his heavenly throne, sees everything that is going on, and will not fail us.

Lesson for Us: Psalm 4:5 urges God-fearing ones to "sacrifice the sacrifices of righteousness." In David's day, the Israelites had to offer sacrifices on Jehovah's altar. But they also had to have the right motives and be genuinely repentant. (Isaiah 1:11-17) When Christians offer their spiritual sacrifices, they, too, need to have the right motives and must live up to Jehovah's high standards.—Hebrews 13:4, 5, 15, 16; 1 Peter 2:1, 5.

The Unmatchable God

Read Psalms 15 to 24. This group of psalms contains a number of expressions of praise to Jehovah. He is the Protector of his people (18), Creator and Lawgiver (19), Savior (20), Protector of his chosen King (21), the Great Shepherd (23), and the Glorious King (24).

♦ 16:10—Who is the "loyal one" mentioned here?

Some Bible scholars apply this verse to faithful ones in general, citing as support the fact that in some Hebrew manuscripts the word for "loyal one" is in the plural. However, when this verse is quoted in the Christian Greek Scriptures, the word is in the singular, indicating just one "loyal one." Who is he? In the first instance, probably David himself. But prophetically, both Peter and Paul apply this verse to Jesus.—Acts 2:25-32; 13:35-37.

♦ 21:3—What was the "crown of refined gold"?

Perhaps this was a literal crown, such as the one removed from the idol Malcam. (Compare 2 Samuel 12:29, 30.) Or perhaps the crown is simply figurative, a symbol of the fact that David's victory had given further adornment to his glorious kingship. Prophetically, though, this psalm points to how Jehovah gave Jesus the crown of rulership in 1914. The "crown of refined gold" points to the fact that his rule is of the very highest quality.

♦ 22:1—Had God forsaken David?

No, but when David was under intense pressure from his enemies, it appeared so. However, David's human reaction to his dire straits did not reflect lack of faith, since he goes on to pray confidently for deliverance. (Verses 16-19) Interestingly, Jesus quoted from this psalm before dying on the torture stake. By asking "why?" Jesus expressed the extreme pressure he was under, while at the same time proclaiming his innocence of the false charges that led to his execution.

Lesson for Us: The apostle Paul quotes Psalm 22:22 and applies it to the way Jesus Christ takes the lead among his anointed brothers in declaring Jehovah's name. (Hebrews 2: 11, 12) Psalm 22:27 points to the time when "all the families of the nations" will join Jehovah's people in praising him. Today, a vast, international crowd worships God along with Jesus' brothers. (Revelation 7:9) We should stay close to this divinely organized arrangement.

Jehovah's Great Power

Read Psalms 25 to 34. In Psalms 25 and 26, David declares his desire to walk in his integrity. There then follow expressions of courageous trust in Jehovah and, in Psalm 33, a magnificent description of Jehovah's power.

♦ 28:8—Who is Jehovah's "anointed one"?

In this verse the "anointed one" is Jehovah's chosen people, as seen from the parallel line "Jehovah is a strength to his people." These words have a prophetic import similar to those of Habakkuk 3:13. They point to Jehovah's saving his anointed remnant at the battle of Armageddon.

♦ 29:5, 6—How does the voice of Jehovah break the cedars?

In this psalm the power of Jehovah is graphically portrayed by likening his voice to a thunderstorm. The storm travels from Lebanon in the north to the southern desert regions, inspiring awe as it goes. (Verse 9b) Its winds agitate the cedars of Lebanon, making them "skip about like a calf," and its lightnings strike some trees down, 'breaking them.' Similarly, the storm winds 'make the wilderness writhe' (verse 8), whipping up the sands of the desert so that they seem to be writhing in agony.

♦ 33:6—What is 'the spirit of Jehovah's mouth'?

The spirit, or breath, here meant is Jehovah's holy spirit, or active force. As our words and breath issue from our mouths simultaneously, so Jehovah's word, or command, is here coupled with his breath, or spirit. God used his holy spirit when creating the sun, moon, and stars, that is, all the figurative army of the material heavens.—Compare Genesis 1:1, 2.

Lesson for Us: At Psalm 26:5, David said he had hated the congregation of evildoers. Jehovah's Witnesses today similarly avoid association with evildoers. (1 Corinthians 15:33) Just as David showed great interest in God's house, these true Christians are delighted to associate with one another in Jehovah's organization.—Psalm 26:6-8; 122:1.

"Blessed Be Jehovah"

Read Psalms 35 to 41. Outstanding in this group are Psalm 36, identifying Jehovah as the Source of life, and Psalm 37, assuring us of the eventual rewards for the teachable ones. Especially noteworthy, too, is Psalm 40, containing expressions prophetic of Jesus Christ.

♦ 35:19—Why would David's enemies "wink the eye"?

The Hebrew text literally calls them "my enemies [in] falsehood." That is, their hatred stemmed from impure motives. David had done nothing to deserve their enmity, and he prayed that they might have no occasion to rejoice or exult over him. (Verse 19a) Then, he asked that his malicious foes would have no reason to "wink the eye," for such literal winking would give evidence that they were gloating over the success of their evil schemes. (Proverbs 10:10; 16:29, 30) Jesus quoted this verse and applied it to those who hated him.—John 15: 24, 25.

♦ 36:3—Did such wicked ones once have insight?

The implication is that there was a change in such a person's conduct and that he no longer was what he once professed to be. Perhaps he once displayed wisdom and did things that were good. But he had left that behind, becoming apostate. King Saul was one who left the course of wisdom, showing hatred for David. (1 Samuel, chapter 18) Some scholars even feel that David made this reference in Psalm 36 with Saul in mind.

♦ 40:6—What is meant by the words, 'My ears you opened up'?

This could mean that Jehovah caused David's ears to be attuned to God's directions, or even that Jehovah created ears with which David could hear His commands. Interestingly, in the *Septuagint* these words are rendered: "You prepared a body for me." Whatever the source of this translation, it carries the same basic idea as the Hebrew. That is, it stresses the need for obedience. (Compare 1 Samuel 15:22; Hosea 6:6.) Paul applied this verse to Jesus Christ. (Hebrews 10:5-10) Since Paul used the *Septuagint* rendering, the phrase "you prepared a body for me" is now a part of "all Scripture" that "is inspired of God."—2 Timothy 3:16.

Lesson for Us: Psalm 37 contains many lessons for us, living as we do in the midst of a wicked generation. Even though evildoers prosper, we should not be envious and try to imitate them. Rather, we should "keep silent before Jehovah," not finding fault but, rather, calmly trusting in him to act in our behalf in his own time.—Psalm 37:5, 7.

Yes, the Psalms offer many inspiring and comforting words. These first 41 psalms have shown repeatedly that, however difficult our circumstances may be, Jehovah will not abandon us. Surely, after reading them, we should be moved to echo the words that conclude Psalm 41: "Blessed be Jehovah the God of Israel from time indefinite even to time indefinite. Amen and Amen."

Guard Your Mouth!

IT CAN be as sharp and destructive as a weapon of war. But it can also be as sweet as honey and as soothing as balm. It can bring about life, and it can bring about death. Thus the Bible describes the faculty of human speech.—Proverbs 12: 18; 16:24; 18:21.

No wonder, then, that Solomon said: "The one guarding his mouth is keeping his soul. The one opening wide his lips —he will have ruin." (Proverbs 13:3) A ruined reputation, hurt feelings, strained relations, and even physical harm—all of these are the possible results of foolish speech. Doubtless, though, you are one who wants to 'keep his soul.' How can you learn to guard your mouth and avoid potential ruin?

"In the Abundance of Words . . . "

One simple way is not to talk too much! Perhaps you have been around a man or a woman who seems to have something to say on every matter. How irritating such a person can be! "The mouth of the stupid ones bubbles forth with foolishness," and "the foolish one speaks many words," says the Bible. (Proverbs 15:2; Ecclesiastes 10: 14) Of course, this does not mean that every talkative person is a fool or that everyone who speaks little is wise. But it *is* dangerous to talk incessantly. Proverbs 10:19 puts it this way: "In the abundance of words there does not fail to be transgression, but the one keeping his lips in check is acting discreetly."

Meditate Before Answering

Another way to guard your mouth is to think before you speak. When no forethought is given to what is being said, both the speaker and his listeners can be hurt. The inspired writer declares: "There exists the one speaking thoughtlessly as with the stabs of a sword."—Proverbs 12:18.

Indicating just how bad thoughtless speech can be, the Bible book of James states: "How little a fire it takes to set so great a woodland on fire! Well, the tongue is a fire. The tongue is constituted a world of unrighteousness among our members, for it spots up all the body and sets the wheel of natural life aflame and it is set aflame by Gehenna."—James 3:5, 6.

Gehenna draws its name from the Valley of Hinnom situated to the south and southwest of Jerusalem. At times in Israel's history, fires continually burned there to consume the city's refuse, making Gehenna a fitting symbol of total destruction. How, though, could an unbridled tongue be "set aflame by Gehenna?" A person who speaks lies, promotes God-dishonoring teachings, or otherwise misuses the tongue can cause both himself and others to lose God's favor. The result? *Eternal destruction!* For example, Jesus Christ told the Pharisees: "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because you traverse sea and dry land to make one proselyte, and when he becomes one you make him a subject for Gehenna twice as much so as yourselves."—Matthew 23:15.

The Bible therefore gives us this practical advice: "The heart of the righteous one *meditates* so as to answer." (Proverbs 15: 28) It is much better to think about what you are going to say, rather than blurt out something that may well do harm!

"A Word at Its Right Time"

Speaking at the right time is yet another way to guard your mouth. Observed Solomon: "For everything there is an appointed time . . . a time to keep quiet and a time to speak." (Ecclesiastes 3:1, 7) When your mate seems exhausted from a long day of secular work or domestic chores, is that necessarily the time to burden him or her with minor problems or demands? Perhaps this is the "time to keep quiet."

On the other hand, there is "a time to speak." We read at Proverbs 15:23: "A word at its right time is O how good!" Do you know someone who is weighed down with problems and troubles? Might not a well-timed word of encouragement be just what that person needs?

Jesus Christ never failed to seize an opportunity to encourage others. Once he told his disciples: "Come, you yourselves, privately into a lonely place and rest up a bit." The account adds: "So off they went in the boat for a lonely place to themselves. But people saw them going and many got to know it, and from all the cities they ran there together on foot and got ahead of them." From the vantage point of the crowds, this surely seemed the right time for words of comfort! From the perspective of Jesus and his disciples, however, the timing seemed less than advantageous. "Well, on getting out [of the boat], he saw a great crowd, but he was moved with pity for them, because they were as sheep without a shepherd. And he started to teach them many things." (Mark 6:31-34) Yes, Jesus guarded his mouth. He knew when to speak and when to be silent.—Compare Matthew 26:63; 27:12-14.

You, too, can learn to guard your mouth. Make a personal effort to avoid talking too much. Avoid thoughtless speech that can hurt your reputation and that of others. And watch for opportunities to share with others a beneficial "word at its right time." Doing so will help you 'keep your soul.'—Proverbs 13:3.

Fulfilling Isaiah's Prophecy

AFTER Jesus learns that the Pharisees and party followers of Herod plan to kill him, he and his disciples withdraw to the Sea of Galilee. Here great crowds from all over Palestine, and even from outside its borders, flock to him. He cures many, with the result that all those with grievous diseases press forward to touch him.

Because the crowds are so large, Jesus tells his disciples to have a boat continually at his service. By pulling away from shore, he can keep the crowds from pressing in upon him. He can teach them from the boat or travel to another area along the shore to help the people there.

The disciple Matthew notes that Jesus' activity fulfills "what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet." Then Matthew quotes the prophecy that Jesus fulfills, namely:

"Look! My servant whom I chose, my beloved, whom my soul approved! I will put my spirit upon him, and what justice is he will make clear to the nations. He will not wrangle, nor cry aloud, nor will anyone hear his voice in the broad ways. No bruised reed will he crush, and no smoldering flaxen wick will he

extinguish, until he sends out justice with success. Indeed, in his name nations will hope."

Jesus, of course, is the beloved servant of whom God approves. And Jesus makes clear what is true justice, which is being obscured by false religious traditions. Because of their unjust application of God's law, the Pharisees will not even come to a sick person's aid on the Sabbath! So, making clear God's justice, Jesus relieves people of the burden of unjust traditions, for which religious leaders try to kill him.

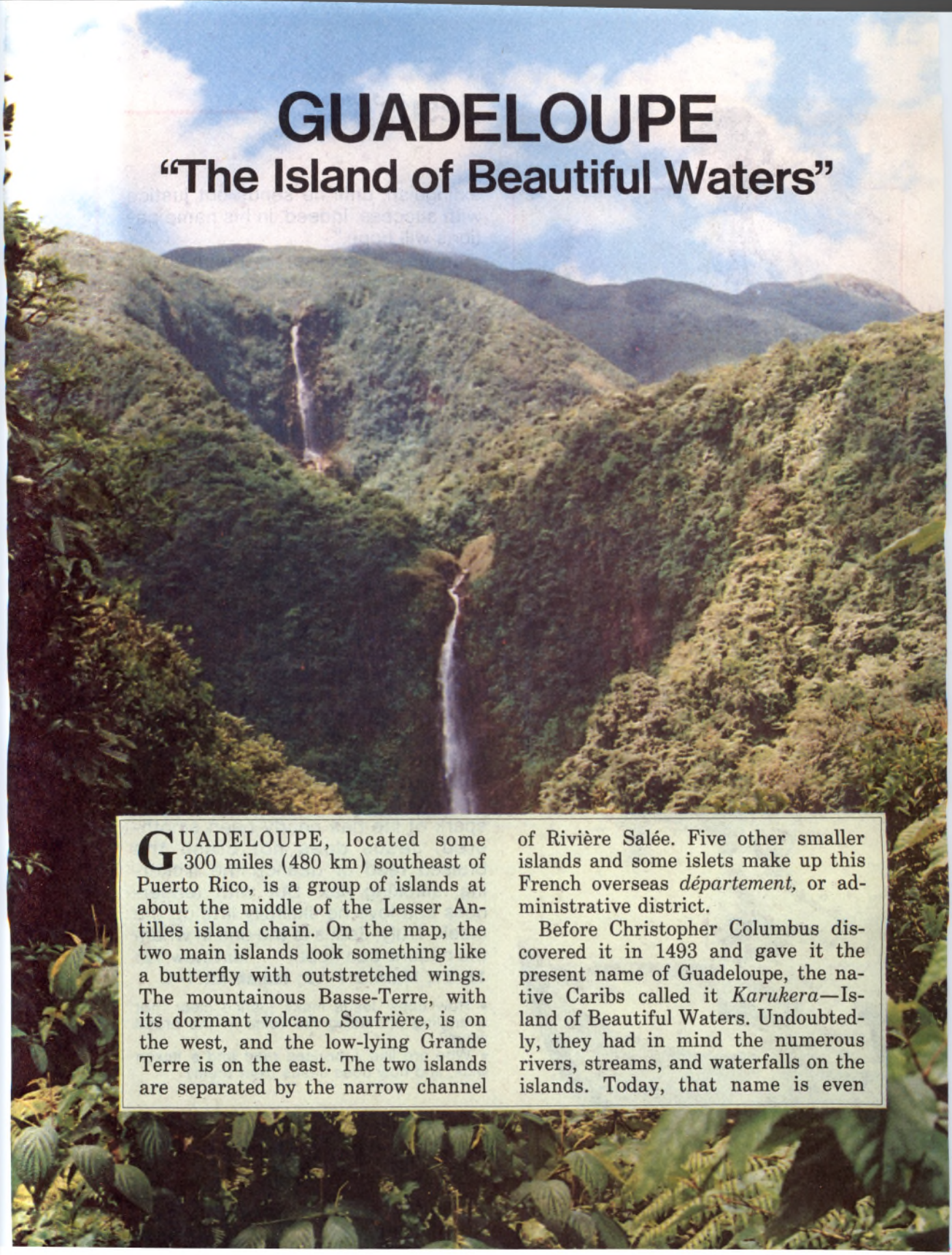
What does it mean that 'he will not wrangle, nor raise his voice so as to be heard in the broad ways'? Well, when curing people, Jesus 'strictly charges them not to make him manifest.' He does not want noisy advertising of himself in the streets or to have excited reports passed from mouth to mouth and distorted.

Also, Jesus carries his comforting message to persons who are figuratively like a bruised reed, bent over and knocked underfoot. They are like a smoldering flaxen wick, whose last spark of life has nearly been smothered. Jesus does not crush the bruised reed or quench the flickering, smoking flax. But with tenderness and love he skillfully lifts up the meek. Truly, Jesus is the one in whom the nations can hope! **Matthew 12: 15-21; Mark 3:7-12; Isaiah 42:1-4.**

- How does Jesus make justice clear, not wrangling or raising his voice in the broad ways?
- Who are like a bruised reed and a flaxen wick, and how does Jesus treat them?

GUADELOUPE

"The Island of Beautiful Waters"



GUADELOUPE, located some 300 miles (480 km) southeast of Puerto Rico, is a group of islands at about the middle of the Lesser Antilles island chain. On the map, the two main islands look something like a butterfly with outstretched wings. The mountainous Basse-Terre, with its dormant volcano Soufrière, is on the west, and the low-lying Grande Terre is on the east. The two islands are separated by the narrow channel of Rivière Salée. Five other smaller islands and some islets make up this French overseas *département,* or administrative district.

Before Christopher Columbus discovered it in 1493 and gave it the present name of Guadeloupe, the native Caribs called it *Karukera*—Island of Beautiful Waters. Undoubtedly, they had in mind the numerous rivers, streams, and waterfalls on the islands. Today, that name is even

more appropriate because of the abundant waters of truth flowing to the 328,000 inhabitants. Though predominantly Catholic, many of these courteous and hospitable folk are eagerly taking in the pure waters of truth from God's Word, the Bible.

Waters of Truth Started to Flow

The first trickle of waters of truth began to flow in Guadeloupe in 1938, just prior to the outbreak of World War II. Cyril Winston and his family came from the neighboring island of Dominica and started to preach the good news to the islanders. Soon 5 persons began to meet regularly, and by June 1940 the first congregation was organized, with about 15 people attending the weekly *Watchtower* Study in French.

World War II, however, brought strong pressure from the German-controlled government in France. During that time an entire shipment of literature from Brooklyn was burned at the docks upon arrival, and ties with headquarters in Brooklyn were severed. Brother Winston became seriously ill and had to return to Dominica, where he died three months later. The flow of waters of truth were at a low ebb; it was a difficult time for the small group of Christians.

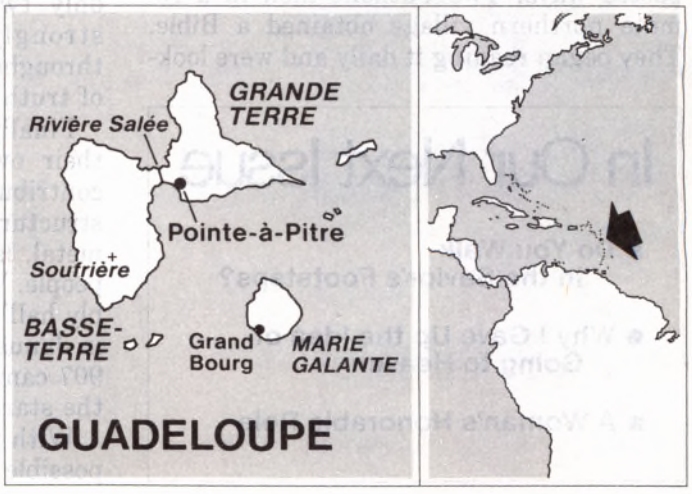
After the war, the brothers resumed their work the best they could. In order to reach as many people as possible, they tried putting on Bible talks in public places in the evenings. The speaker would give his talk standing up on something high, with the people gathered around in a circle. Another brother would provide the light by holding up a homemade torch. In the mild, tropical evenings, passersby and neighbors enjoyed listening to God's Word being discussed in the open.

But during one such talk a band of Catholic boy scouts suddenly appeared. Surrounding the speaker, they began to blow their bugles and beat on some large kettles, trying to drown out the speaker's voice. Realizing what was going on, the speaker calmly went on with his talk but only by gesturing and moving his lips. Soon, the scouts, running out of breath, gave up and left. And the brother went on with his talk as planned.

The Flow Quickened

Over the years a number of missionaries were sent to Guadeloupe to help the little group of zealous local publishers. Initially, the language barrier limited them in what they could do. In the mid-1950's, however, French-speaking missionaries began to arrive, and the work moved ahead.

Because of strong religious opposition, however, many who accepted the Bible's truth had to take their stand with unusual determination. This was the case with one woman who had to be baptized in the sea under the cloak of darkness at five o'clock



in the morning. This woman and her husband started to study the Bible together. But when neighbors began to pressure them, the husband gave up the study for fear of losing them as customers at his little family grocery store. The woman continued and made fine progress. Soon, however, tension became so strong that her husband threatened to kill her.

One evening, she found a knife hidden under her husband's pillow, and his attitude, she felt, left her with no doubt as to his intentions. Sensing that her life was in danger, she fled to the home of a Witness family, walking about ten miles (16 km) through tropical forest and banana plantations. While in hiding from her husband, she asked to be baptized, saying: "If I have to face death because of my faith, I want to be counted among Jehovah's people!" Later this faithful sister took up full-time service and has been a special pioneer for the last 24 years. Though she has lost her fleshly family on account of her faith, she has gained a large spiritual family, as promised by Jesus at Matthew 19:29. She has helped about 35 people to dedication and baptism.

The waters of truth reach out in unexpected ways. Two Catholic men in a remote northern village obtained a Bible. They began reading it daily and were looking for someone to help them understand it. A neighbor told them that he could contact a cousin, a "Jehovah's," who would be glad to help them. That was the first time they had ever heard of God's name.

The cousin sent them some copies of the *Awake!* magazine, which they not only enjoyed reading themselves but also distributed to others in the village. When they learned that an assembly was being held near Pointe-à-Pitre, they went to it and told the circuit overseer: "We have come to this assembly, and we would like to be baptized." Of course, they were warmly welcomed but were also helped to understand that certain steps must be taken and changes made before qualifying for baptism. So arrangements were made to help them, and they were baptized at the next assembly.

Experiences such as these brought great joy and encouragement to the brothers. The waters of truth continued to flow, and by 1960, there was a total of 251 Kingdom proclaimers in Guadeloupe.

A Challenge Taken Up

A big problem in this small island has been finding facilities large enough for assemblies. For a long time, there were only two sites available. The brothers strongly desired to hold assemblies throughout the island so that the waters of truth could reach more people.

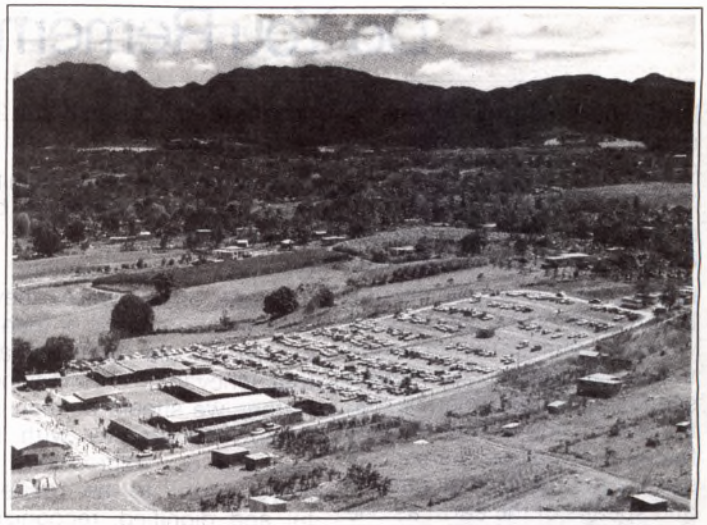
Finally, the brothers decided to build their own facility. They designed, and contributed enough funds for, a portable structure made of steel pipes and sheet metal, large enough to accommodate 700 people. When they used their own "assembly hall" for the first time in Basse-Terre in January 1966, an enthusiastic crowd of 907 came. The "hall" was too small from the start!

With this new provision, it has become possible to hold assemblies even in some

In Our Next Issue

- **Do You Walk in the Savior's Footsteps?**
- **Why I Gave Up the Idea of Going to Heaven**
- **A Woman's Honorable Role**

of the outlying islands. This has given real impetus to the dispensing of waters of truth in many areas. Imagine the reaction of the local people in Grand Bourg, a little town of about 6,000 people on the island of Marie Galante, when they were "invaded" by three boats carrying about a thousand conventioneers along with their luggage and other gear. It was a sight never seen before—a long line of people marching from the wharf through the town to the assembly site. This gave a fine witness to the local people, and today there are three zealous congregations on this island.



Over the years, the "hall" had been enlarged many times. Eventually, it became a 30-ton structure, covering about 32,000 square feet (3,000 sq m), with a seating capacity of 5,000. Obviously, it was a tremendous task transporting, setting up, and taking down all the equipment each time an assembly was held. To complicate matters, it was becoming harder and harder to find suitable locations at which to set up the portable "hall" because vacant land was rapidly taken up by building projects. It appeared that the only solution was to find a permanent place for the "hall."

Once more Jehovah provided for the needs of the brothers. A centrally located piece of property of over half a million square feet (50,000 sq m) became available. With generous contributions from all the congregations in the islands, the site was purchased in 1979. It became a permanent center of true worship for Guadeloupe.

Ever-Increasing Flow of Waters of Truth

Back in 1954 when the branch in Guadeloupe was first established, there were 128 Kingdom publishers. Now that number has grown to over 4,500. That means that about one in every 72 persons in Guadeloupe is a witness of Jehovah. And in Pointe-à-Pitre, the principal city, the figure is one in every 29—undoubtedly one of the best ratios in the world!

These faithful ones have been busy dispensing the waters of truth, conducting more than 7,300 home Bible studies with interested ones throughout the territory. Their efforts were blessed when 12,553 gathered in 1986 to commemorate the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. Truly, the brothers in Guadeloupe feel that Jehovah God is 'rocking' their islands to gather "the desirable things" together.—Haggai 2:7.

The "island of beautiful waters" is becoming more beautiful than ever in a spiritual way. Many are those responding to the call: "Come!" and who are taking in "life's water free."—Revelation 22:17.

Do You Remember?

Have you found the recent issues of *The Watchtower* to be of practical value? Then see if you can recall the following:

□ **Why can it be said that the Bible is a book for all mankind?**

Right from its beginning, the Bible presents a world view when it comes to mankind's future. (Genesis 1:28) It transcends all racial prejudice, nationalism, and other divisive forces that plague mankind. It speaks to people of all nations and speaks of the earth as one large home for the entire human race. (Acts 17:26)—4/15, page 5.

□ **What did Jesus mean when he said: "If, then, your eye is simple, your whole body will be bright"? (Matthew 6:22)**

The word "simple" is from a Greek word that basically means singleness of mind or devotion to a purpose. By making the doing of God's will our goal in life, we will seek to reflect the glorious good news about the Kingdom in every aspect of our lives.—5/1, pages 12, 13.

□ **What is meant by Jehovah's being omnipotent and omniscient?**

Jehovah told Abraham: "I am God Almighty." (Genesis 17:1) Being almighty—omnipotent—Jehovah can use his power to overcome any obstacle to the fulfillment of his promises and purposes. Jehovah is also all-knowing, all-wise—omniscient. He thus can foresee whatever he wishes to foresee. These two qualities make it impossible for Jehovah to fail. (Isaiah 14:24) —5/15, page 4.

□ **How can we show humility when publicly praying on behalf of others?**

We can show humility by the tone of our voice—never sounding bombastic or theatrical. We should never demand that Jehovah do certain things. Rather, we should petition Jehovah in harmony with his will, and our expressions always ought to be respectful and dignified, recognizing our own insignificance. (Matthew 6:5; Isaiah 66:2)—5/15, pages 21, 22.

□ **How can a Christian maintain a positive attitude under persecution?**

He should never allow his mind to dwell on negative things. Rather, he needs to meditate on what other faithful servants of Jehovah did in times of trial. They had complete faith and confidence in Jehovah, trusting in his ability to resurrect and reward them. (Revelation 2:10) Similarly, the persecuted Christian today can keep clearly in mind his hope in Jehovah's righteous new system. (Compare Hebrews 12:2.) —6/1, page 30.

□ **On what one important matter did Hus, Wycliffe, and Luther agree?**

They all agreed that God's Word had to come first, no matter what the opinions of men. The first Christians held this same enlightened viewpoint because they had been taught by Jesus Christ himself. (Acts 5:29; John 17:17) —6/15, page 31.

□ **Is black skin color the result of a divine curse placed upon Canaan and his descendants?**

No. The black race descended not from Canaan but from Cush and possibly Put. No curse was placed upon either of these two grandsons of Noah. (Genesis 9:24, 25; 10: 1, 6)—7/1, page 4.

□ **What did Jesus mean when he spoke of hating one's own family members and even oneself? (Luke 14:26)**

Jesus meant that in comparison to one's love for God and devotion to Christ, the relationship to one's relatives might seem like hatred. (Compare Matthew 12:46-50.) —7/1, page 27.

□ **How was Jesus "Lord of the sabbath," as stated at Matthew 12:8?**

Jesus was referring to his peaceful Kingdom rule of a thousand years. This great Sabbath rule of Christ will be a time of rest from all suffering and oppression.—7/15, page 9.

□ **Why is it unwise for a child to set his own goals in life?**

Children's experience is too limited for them to set their own goals in life. If parents do not help them to set such goals, someone else will—perhaps children at school or the school counselor. Christian parents can help their children to set goals that harmonize with their appreciation for spiritual things.—8/1, page 28.

Questions From Readers

■ **Who or what is pictured by "Leviathan" of Isaiah 27:1?**

Isaiah 27:1 reads: "In that day Jehovah, with his hard and great and strong sword, will turn his attention to Leviathan, the gliding serpent, even to Leviathan, the crooked serpent, and he will certainly kill the sea monster that is in the sea." We understand this prophecy to apply to both Satan the Devil and his wicked organization on earth.

The Watchtower of October 15, 1985, explained that Isaiah chapter 27 is a restoration prophecy. Its initial fulfillment involved the ancient nation of Israel, which would be restored to its homeland after 70 years of captivity in Babylon. Though most of the exiles were from Babylon, some would return from Egypt and the territory of Assyria. Jehovah God determined that his people should be freed, so such nations could not stop him through independent or combined efforts. They might have seemed to humans to be powerful and wily, like an ancient Leviathan (probably a crocodile), yet Jehovah would succeed in behalf of ancient Israel.—Compare Job 41:1-34.

What, though, would "Leviathan" picture in a larger fulfillment of Isaiah chapter 27? Understandably, Satan the Devil comes to mind, for Revelation 12:9 describes him as "the great dragon" and "the original serpent." He has long been an enemy of God and His people. Furthermore, the Scriptures make plain that Satan will meet his end. God has set a day to exercise his power through his Son to eliminate the Devil. So that "dragon" or "serpent" will be cut down as with a great and strong sword. —Hebrews 2:14; Revelation 20:1-3, 10.

Recall, though, that the immediate enemies facing ancient Israel were visible national opposers, such as Egypt, Assyria, and Babylon. Similarly today, God's Christian servants worldwide are confronted by tangible opposers amid the restless sea of mankind alienated from God. (Revelation 17:1, 15) Satan controls a worldwide organization that he uses to obstruct those "who observe the commandments of God and have the work of bearing witness to Jesus." (Revelation 12:17) This Devil-dominated organization has proved to be sly and fierce, like a leviathan. Yet, early in this century this "Leviathan" lost its control over spiritual Israel, namely, the anointed Christian witnesses of Jehovah. And it will fully be cut down when, accompanied by angelic warriors, Jesus rides forth with "a sharp long sword, that he may strike the nations with it." —Revelation 19:11-16.

So even though in one respect Satan can be spoken of as the Leviathan of Isaiah 27:1, that prophecy includes more than "the original serpent." It focuses particularly on the visible earthly organization dominated by him. Thus, *The Watchtower* mentioned above could point readers to the time when "the present wicked system over which Satan the Devil has dominated as its god, will not exist. Jehovah will have turned his attention to the symbolic Leviathan, the gliding, crooked serpent that is in the midst of the sea of humanity. He and the nations, and even unions of nations, will be gone."

Annual Meeting
October 4, 1986

THE ANNUAL MEETING of the members of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania on October 4, 1986, will be held at the Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 2932 Kennedy Boulevard, Jersey City, New Jersey. A preliminary meeting of the members only will be held at 9:30 a.m., followed by the general annual meeting at 10:00 a.m., Saturday, October 4, 1986.

It will be appreciated if the members of the Corporation will inform the Secretary's Office of any change in their mailing addresses during the past year so that the regular letters of notice and proxies can reach them shortly after August 15.

The proxies, which will be sent to the members along with the notice of the annual meeting, are to be returned so as to reach the Office of the Secretary of the Society not later than September 1. As each member knows, he should complete and return his proxy promptly, stating whether he is going to be at the meeting personally or not. The information given on each proxy should be definite on this point, as it will be relied upon in determining in advance those who will actually be personally present.

It is expected that the entire session, including the formal business meeting and reports, will be concluded by 1:00 p.m. or shortly thereafter. There will be no afternoon session. Due to limited space, admission will be by ticket only. No arrangements will be made for tying in the annual meeting by telephone lines to other locations.

How Do You Correct Your Children?

IT ISN'T easy, most parents probably will agree. The parents of children ages ten and seven relate how the books *Listening to the Great Teacher* and *Your Youth—Getting the Best out of It* have been a great help.

"When it is necessary to correct our children," they write, "we talk with them and determine what seems to be the problem, for example, possibly not showing love for a sibling or lack of respect for us as parents. Then we send them off to read, in the privacy of their own room, an appropriate chapter from one of these two books. We also assign them to look up certain scriptures and read them."

The result? "When they come out to tell us that they are finished and ready to review the chapter and the scriptures with Daddy or Mommy, what a change!" Regarding their seven-year-old, who is inclined to be very strong-willed, they write: "Even though she might angrily stomp down the hallway to her room, she comes out smiling and says, 'I can see that I was wrong. I am sorry!'"