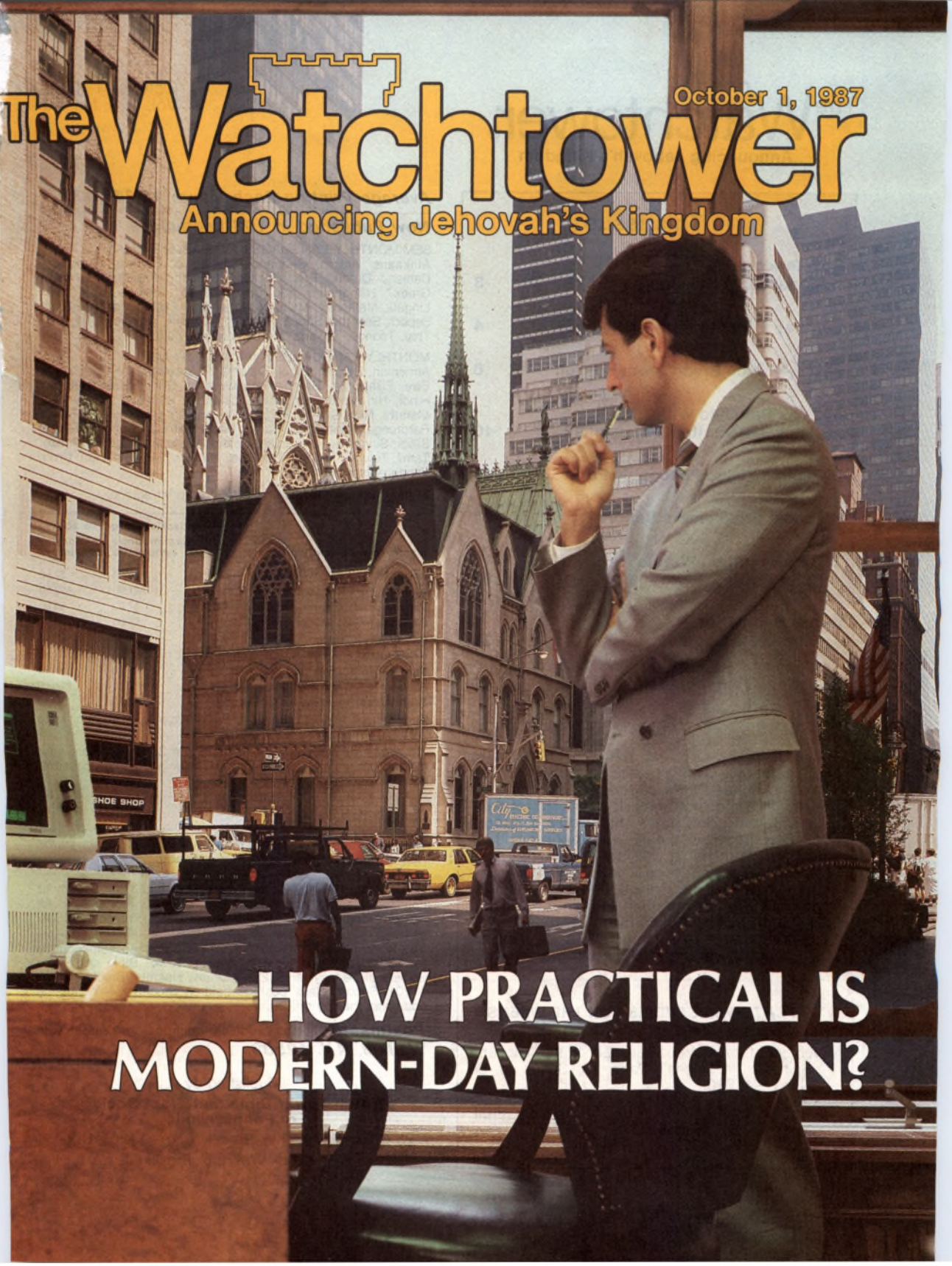
October 1, 1987

The Watchtower

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom



HOW PRACTICAL IS MODERN-DAY RELIGION?

The Watchtower®
Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom

October 1, 1987
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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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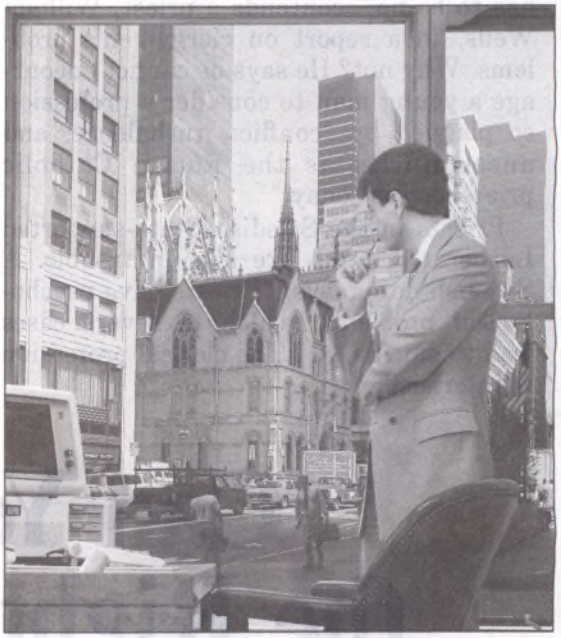
How Practical Is Modern-Day Religion?

"I THREW the Bible in the den on my way to my bedroom. I thought I would never pick it up again or attend another church. I had been searching for about six years. Still I found no help."

Ronald, a 26-year-old computer operator, had gone through some hardships and feared his life would fall apart. Religion seemed to be of no practical value to him. "I am through with it," he said.

Many people, like Ronald, are disappointed with religion. How about you? Do you think religion has given people practical help and guidance to become better workmates, neighbors, husbands, wives, parents, or children? Has religion been a force for peace and unity among people? Has it helped them understand the purpose of life? Has it instilled in their minds and hearts a sure hope for the future?



Practical Guidance Lacking

In this complex world, people need wise, clear guidance. Can they expect this from spiritual leaders? In a letter to a magazine columnist, a woman complained:

"All we ever hear now in our church . . . for quite awhile now is love, love, love. . . . What ever happened to the 'Thou shalt nots'—'Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not steal,' and all the rest? We need to be reminded often that some things are No-No's. . . . But we don't even hear the word 'Sin' any more. It's like they shun it as if it were a dirty three letter word."

Evidently, some feel that their religious counselors have become too lax, too permissive. Such spiritual guides are weak. They are like a doctor who glosses over his patient's problem and prescribes diluted medicine. What are some reasons for such failure?

Profession in Crisis

A person who is weighed down with his own problems is not going to be able to spend much time and effort helping others. Media reports show that an increasing number of clergymen are deeply encumbered with their own professional and personal problems. Here are some examples:

"While stress and burnout are common in many professions today, nowhere are they more critical than among the Jewish clergy," says clinical psychologist Dr. Leslie R. Freedman after a four-year university study of the Jewish clergy.

"If I had a son, would I want him to become a priest? Regrettably, my answer has to be no," contends a priest, William Wells, in a report on clergymen's problems. Why not? He says he cannot encourage a young man to consider a profession so plagued by "conflict, turbulence, and uncertainties as the Roman Catholic priesthood is today."

Priests in the Swedish State-supported Lutheran Church are also in trouble. A Swedish daily says: "Priests have psychological problems, which in severe cases lead to suicide. . . . The clerical profession is in crisis."

Distracting Disunity

In those countries where the religious leaders are involved in exhausting and divisive wars, they are diverted from giving proper attention to people's spiritual needs. They also have to share the responsibility for the loss of manpower and money that could have been used for people's material welfare.

There are those in all parts of the world who have lost their trust in religion and become religiously indifferent. Loss of members and decline in churchgoing are reported from such places as Sweden, Finland, Germany, Britain, Italy, Canada, and the United States.

Are you among those who, like Ronald, think they are through with religion? And yet, could there be a religion that has proved to be of practical value to many? The following article will discuss this.

Can You Find the Right Religion?

RONALD—mentioned in the preceding article—thought he should give up his search for a religion that could give him practical help and guidance. But he decided to give himself a last chance. "If there really was a God, I wanted him to know that I was honestly searching for him," he said. So one night Ronald prayed: "If you really are a loving God, you find me because for years I have looked for you and found nothing."

A few days later at his job, Ronald was assigned to work on a shift with one of Jehovah's Witnesses. He began to ask her questions about the Bible. The answers triggered his curiosity. Soon he began to study the Bible regularly. He also went to meetings of the local congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses.

Six months later Ronald was convinced that he had found a religion that gave him the incentive to adjust his life in a most practical way. After three years of association with Jehovah's Witnesses, he explained in a letter to the *Watchtower* magazine some benefits he had derived from this association.

"Killer Instinct" Done Away With

Ronald writes: "The first benefit from learning the truth [the Bible's teaching]

was being better able to control my temper. For a long time I was involved in the martial arts. . . . I used to train from six to eight hours a day, and it was always instilled in me to develop a killer instinct."

Fighting and killing are not effective ways to solve conflicts with one's fellowman. Therefore, a useful religion is a force for peace. The Bible says at Romans 12: 18: "Be peaceable with all men." Jehovah's Witnesses do not train their bodies for fighting, nor do they seek to protect themselves by learning to handle guns. They are known around the globe for their peaceful, neutral stand in time of war.

Seeing the practical force or potential of such a religion, a Roman Catholic nun wrote in an Italian church magazine: "How different the world would be if we all woke up one morning firmly decided not to take up arms again, . . . just like Jehovah's Witnesses!"

This peaceable attitude among the Witnesses has contributed to the forming of a worldwide brotherhood of more than three million people in 208 lands. They treat one another as true friends, whatever their nationality, race, or social rank. This is most practical in a hostile world, especially when help is needed. Eva, a young Swedish woman who is one of Jehovah's Witnesses, experienced this.

While visiting Greece, Eva contracted meningitis. Unconscious, and with blood poisoning and internal bleeding, she was rushed to a hospital in Athens, where she knew no one. Her father in Sweden was informed by phone. He called an elder in the local congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses. This elder called Witnesses he knew in Athens. Eva was quickly contacted by Greek fellow believers she had never met before.

This calls to mind an illustration that the apostle Paul used, showing how oneness and compassion belong together. He said at 1 Corinthians 12:25, 26: "There should be no division in the body, but . . . its members should have the same care for one another. And if one member suffers, all the other members suffer with it."

This is what Eva experienced in Greece. For almost three weeks her new friends did not leave her unattended. She recovered and returned to her home. She says: "I really experienced the benefits of a loving brotherhood."

Real Christians treat one another as true friends

Not Desiring "That Extra Dollar"

Let us go back to Ronald's letter. After telling

how his new belief helped him to control his temper, get rid of that "killer instinct," and become more peaceable, he says that the Bible's teaching gave him a balanced view of work and money. "I was my employer's number one computer operator," Ronald says, "and I used to skip being with my family and friends just to work overtime. I worked nights for over seven years. I always wanted that extra dollar."

Such desire for "that extra dollar" can, in the long run, be harmful, fatally harmful. "To some, money means security. To some it means power. To others it means they're going to be able to buy love, and to a fourth group it means competition and winning the game," says psychiatrist Jay Rohrlich, whose clients are mostly financial executives from New York's Wall Street district.

Commenting on this statement, a report in the magazine *Science Digest* says: "The belief that money can produce these things . . . often leads to impotence, insomnia, heart attacks and problems with a spouse or children." The Bible's advice is: "Let your manner of life be free of the love of money." Ronald learned that and applied it. He found it most beneficial. —Hebrews 13:5.

Proper View of Work

The quest for money often induces people to force themselves up the career ladder. This can cause the healthiest people severe stress and emotional conflict—even to the point of suicide. "One man, who came into work one morning to find that his desk had been moved, climbed up to the top of the building and jumped off." Dr. Douglas LaBier related that in a *U.S.News & World Report* interview dealing with the link between careers and emotional problems.

"What is needed," says Dr. LaBier, "is a more developed life, one that is not so centered around a career. In addition to such things as adequate diet, rest and exercise, people who want more balanced lives need to think about doing more with their families and developing noncareer competencies that give them pleasure."

Jehovah's Witnesses learn from the Bible to be balanced as to work and money. Ecclesiastes 4:4, 6 speaks about hard work that involves "rivalry of one toward another" and says: "Better is a handful of rest than a double handful of hard work and striving after the wind." Ronald found this to be practical wisdom. He cut down on his secular work so as to have more time for his spiritual interests and for his family and friends.

A Happier Family Life

Ronald then says in his letter that the Bible's counsel on marriage and family life has helped him to deal more wisely with family situations. This is essential now when family life seems to be on the way out in many places. Industrialized countries report fewer marriages, more divorces, and a falling birth rate.

This trend is alarming because the family circle is where some of the most basic human needs are satisfied. In a survey, the Australian *Sydney Morning Herald* asked 2,000 people which of the following gave them greatest satisfaction: work, family, friends, leisure activities, possessions, or religion. The overwhelming majority gave "family" the first place.

Jehovah's Witnesses are interested in keeping their families strong. For example, over just the last five years, their two magazines *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* (combined circulation of some 22 million copies in over 100 languages) have carried some 60 practical articles about handling different situations in family life. Without a doubt, a Bible-based religion that helps

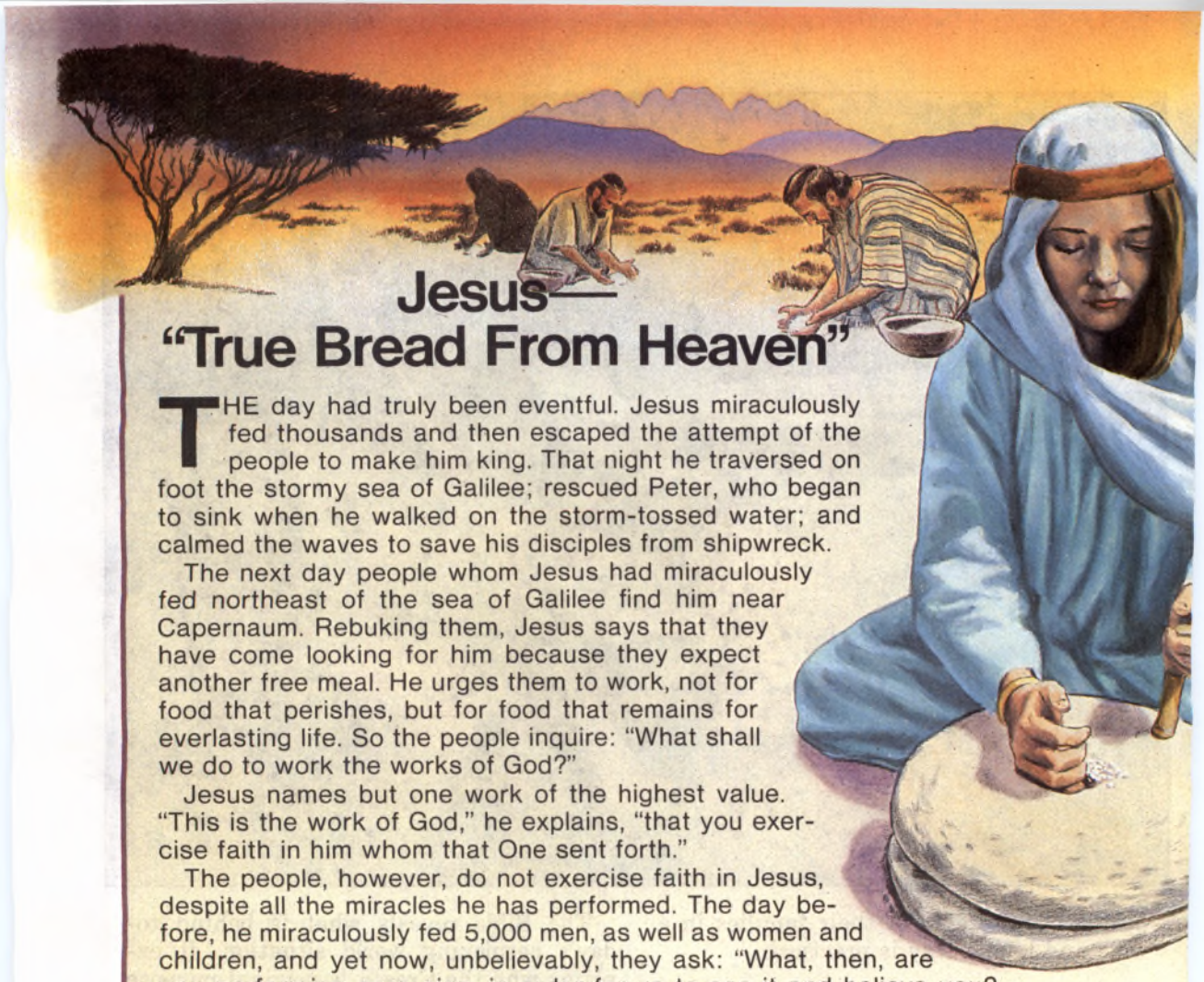
people to take care of their families in a wise and loving way is practical.

The Big "Why?" Answered

Ronald concludes his letter by saying: "There is one thing that often comes to mind when I read the newspaper, watch the news, converse with workmates, or tell others about my faith. It is that being one of Jehovah's Witnesses gives me the answer to one of the most widely asked questions in the world—'Why?' Why all the crime, violence, war, immorality, disease, turmoil, besides all the everyday problems? Knowing that this system and its problems are only temporary has lifted a heavy weight from my shoulders."

The Bible reveals what is behind today's perplexing world situation. It explains why the Creator's original purpose to make this earth a paradise home for mankind has not yet become a reality. It explains how God will remove all disturbing influences from the earth and establish a permanent paradise for people to enjoy forever.—2 Peter 3:9-13.

For a religion to be of practical value, it must bear good fruit. It must produce better people. It must be able to explain why things are as they are on earth today. And it should instill a sure hope for the future in people's minds and hearts. Ronald searched for such a religion, and he found it. The same opportunity is still open for you.—Matthew 7:17-20.



Jesus—"True Bread From Heaven"

THE day had truly been eventful. Jesus miraculously fed thousands and then escaped the attempt of the people to make him king. That night he traversed on foot the stormy sea of Galilee; rescued Peter, who began to sink when he walked on the storm-tossed water; and calmed the waves to save his disciples from shipwreck.

The next day people whom Jesus had miraculously fed northeast of the sea of Galilee find him near Capernaum. Rebuking them, Jesus says that they have come looking for him because they expect another free meal. He urges them to work, not for food that perishes, but for food that remains for everlasting life. So the people inquire: "What shall we do to work the works of God?"

Jesus names but one work of the highest value. "This is the work of God," he explains, "that you exercise faith in him whom that One sent forth."

The people, however, do not exercise faith in Jesus, despite all the miracles he has performed. The day before, he miraculously fed 5,000 men, as well as women and children, and yet now, unbelievably, they ask: "What, then, are you performing as a sign, in order for us to see it and believe you? What work are you doing? Our forefathers ate the manna in the wilderness, just as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'"

In response to their request for a sign, Jesus makes clear the Source of miraculous provisions, saying: "Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but my Father does give you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is the one who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

"Lord," the people say, "always give us this bread."

"I am the bread of life," Jesus explains. "He that comes to me will not get hungry at all, and he that exercises faith in me will never get thirsty at all. But I have said to you, You have even seen me and yet do not believe. Everything the Father gives me will come to me, and the one that comes to me I will by no means drive away; because I

have come down from heaven to do, not my will, but the will of him that sent me. This is the will of him that sent me, that I should lose nothing out of all that he has given me but that I should resurrect it at the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone that beholds the Son and exercises faith in him should have everlasting life."

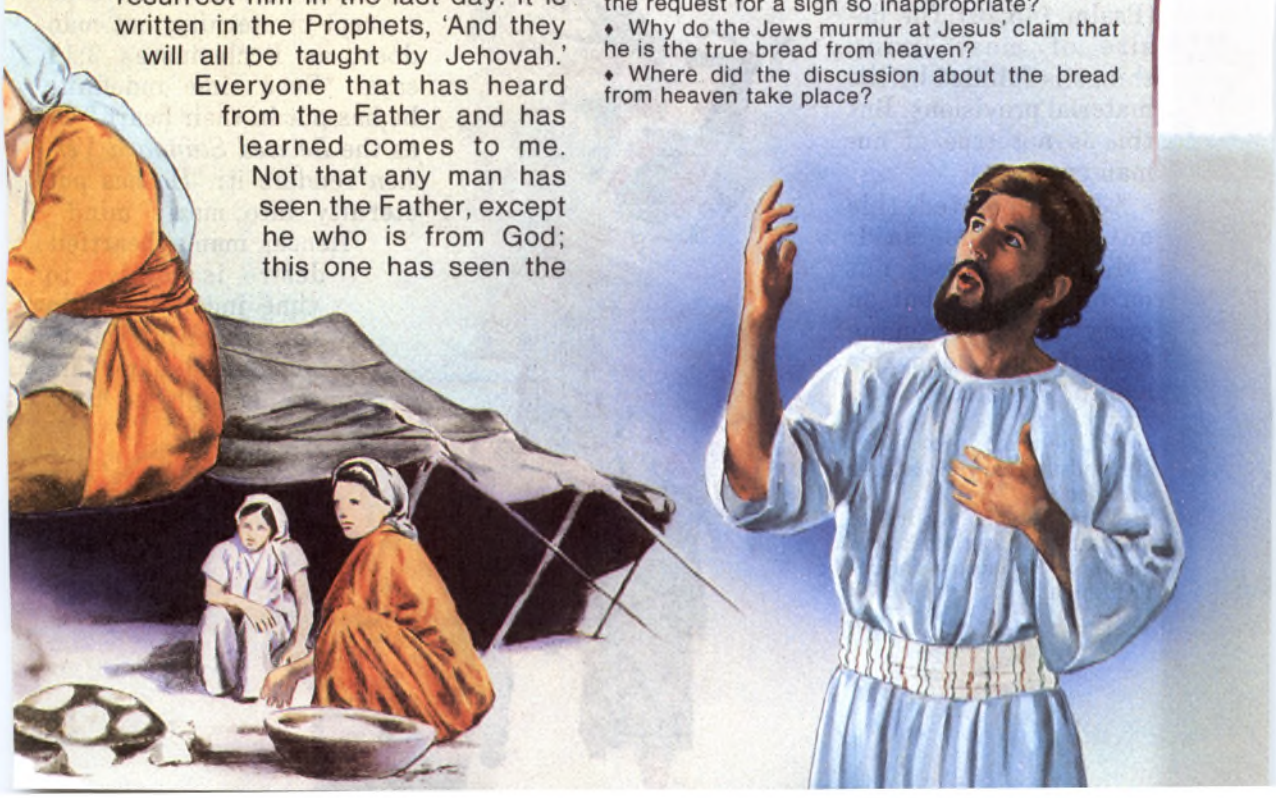
At this the Jews begin murmuring at Jesus because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." They see in him nothing more than a son of human parents and so object in the same manner as did the people of Nazareth: "Is this not Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it that now he says, 'I have come down from heaven'?"

"Stop murmuring among yourselves," Jesus responds. "No man can come to me unless the Father, who sent me, draws him; and I will resurrect him in the last day. It is written in the Prophets, 'And they will all be taught by Jehovah.' Everyone that has heard from the Father and has learned comes to me. Not that any man has seen the Father, except he who is from God; this one has seen the Father. Most truly I say to you, He that believes has everlasting life."

Continuing, Jesus repeats: "I am the bread of life. Your forefathers ate the manna in the wilderness and yet died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that anyone may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven; if anyone eats of this bread he will live forever." Yes, by exercising faith in Jesus, the one God sent forth, people can have everlasting life. No manna, or any other such bread, can provide that!

The discussion regarding the bread from heaven apparently began shortly after the people found Jesus near Capernaum. But it continued, reaching a climax later while Jesus was teaching in a synagogue in Capernaum. **John 6: 26-51, 59; Psalm 78:24; Isaiah 54:13; Matthew 13:55-57.**

- What events preceded Jesus' discussion regarding the bread from heaven?
- In view of what Jesus has just done, why is the request for a sign so inappropriate?
- Why do the Jews murmur at Jesus' claim that he is the true bread from heaven?
- Where did the discussion about the bread from heaven take place?

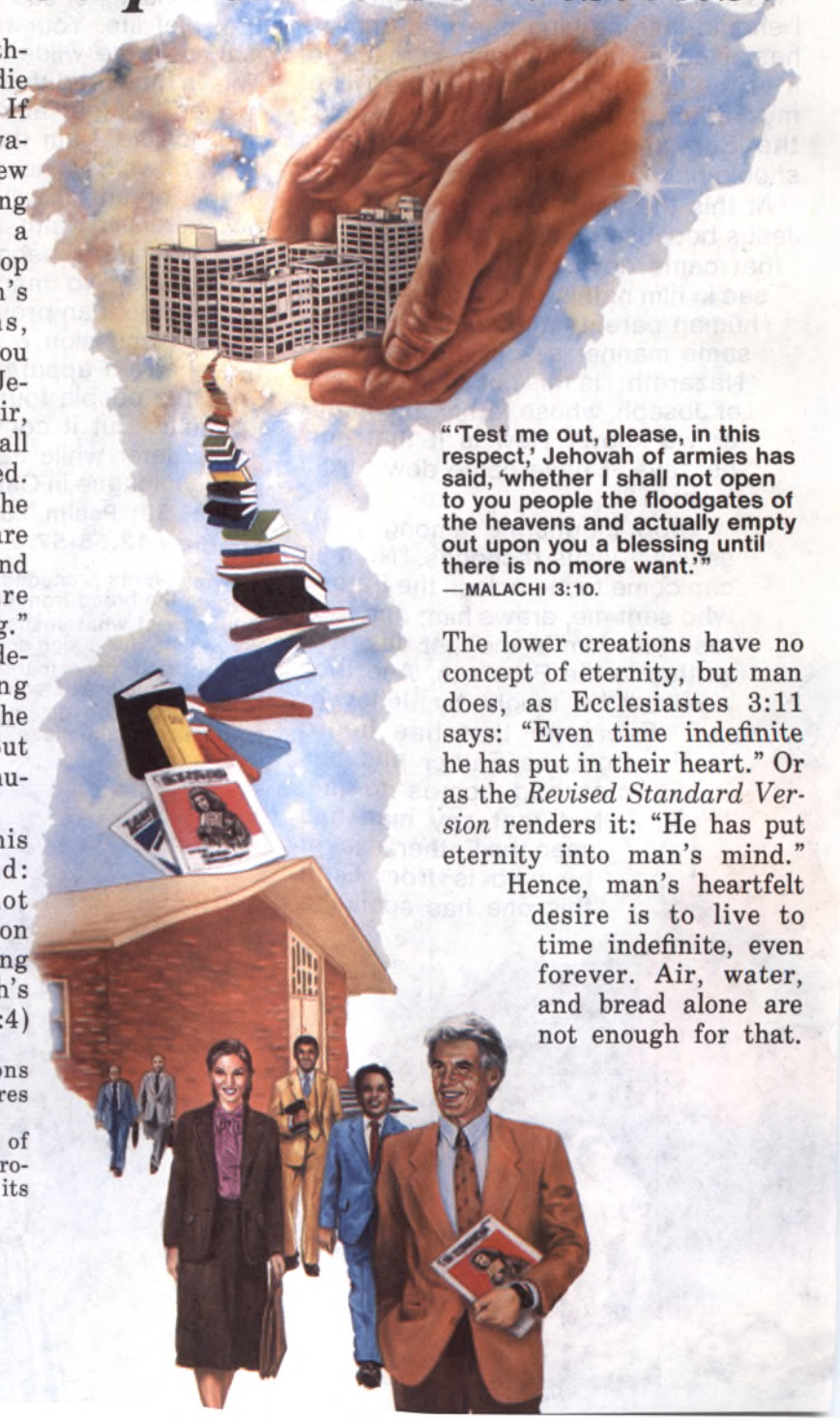


Are You Satisfied With *Jehovah's Spiritual Provisions?*

IF YOU stop breathing air, you will die in a few minutes. If you stop drinking water, you will die in a few days. If you stop eating food, you will die in a few weeks. If you stop feeding on Jehovah's spiritual provisions, then when you die you will be dead forever. Jehovah provides the air, water, and food that all living creatures need. Hence, to Jehovah the psalmist says: "You are opening your hand and satisfying the desire of every living thing." (Psalm 145:16) The desire of most living things is fulfilled by the material provisions. But this is not true of human creatures.

[2] Jesus pointed this out when he said: "Man must live, not on bread alone, but on every utterance coming forth through Jehovah's mouth." (Matthew 4:4)

1. With what provisions are most living creatures satisfied?
2. What is the desire of man's heart, and what provision is necessary for its fulfillment?



"'Test me out, please, in this respect,' Jehovah of armies has said, 'whether I shall not open to you people the floodgates of the heavens and actually empty out upon you a blessing until there is no more want.'"
—MALACHI 3:10.

The lower creations have no concept of eternity, but man does, as Ecclesiastes 3:11 says: "Even time indefinite he has put in their heart." Or as the *Revised Standard Version* renders it: "He has put eternity into man's mind." Hence, man's heartfelt desire is to live to time indefinite, even forever. Air, water, and bread alone are not enough for that.

To live forever requires spiritual provisions based on "every utterance coming forth through Jehovah's mouth." Today, they are found in one book, the Bible, and the supply is inexhaustible—all that you need, more than you can hold. This cupboard is never bare.

[3] Jesus taught us to pray for the needed material food: "Give us today our bread for this day." But soon thereafter he put spiritual matters in first place when he said: "Keep on, then, seeking first the kingdom and his righteousness." (Matthew 6:11, 33) Material food keeps us alive a day at a time; continued spiritual feeding can do it for a lifetime, and even for eternity. So do not be anxious about material things. Paul was not. He spoke of spiritual resources that enabled him to be content regardless of material circumstances, saying: "I have learned the secret of both how to be full and how to hunger, both how to have an abundance and how to suffer want. For all things I have the strength by virtue of him who imparts power to me."—Philippians 4:12, 13.

Calamity Comes to Dissatisfied Ones

[4] Many, however, are not satisfied with Jehovah's provisions. Our first parents were not. They lived in a paradise garden—beautiful scenery delighted their eyes, fragrant flowers perfumed the air they breathed, delicious foods stimulated their taste buds, the songs of birds serenaded their ears. Moreover, they had the interesting work of caring for this garden, plus the blessing of filling the earth with perfect offspring. But they were selfish. What God had given was not enough. They wanted more. They wanted to decide for themselves what was right and what was wrong. So they did, and the very first decision they made was calamitous, resulting in the loss of everything, for themselves and for their offspring.—Genesis 3: 1-7, 16-19.

[5] The Israelites copied their bad example. God delivered them from slavery in Egypt, made them a nation, gave them a perfect Law, guided them in their wilderness journeyings, provided them with clothes that never wore out, and miraculously sustained them with manna that fell from heaven and water that gushed out of a rock. But they were not satisfied with Jehovah's provisions. (1 Corinthians 10:1-5) As they traveled through the wilderness, they complained time and time again.—Exodus 13:21, 22; Numbers 11: 1-6; Deuteronomy 29:5.

[6] They still grumbled after they were established in the Promised Land—a fertile, well-watered land "flowing with milk and honey." Still ungrateful, still dissatisfied with Jehovah's provisions, they abandoned worship of him, turned to idolatrous sex worship, sacrificed their children to Molech, and brought destruction upon themselves as a nation. Restored from Babylonian captivity, they followed oral traditions that made void God's Word. They ended up killing their promised Messiah, Christ Jesus.—Deuteronomy 6:3; 8: 7-9; Judges 10:6; 1 Kings 14:22-24; 2 Kings 21:1-16; Isaiah 24:1-6; Matthew 15:3-9; 27:17-26.

[7] Down to this day mankind generally has continued to prefer false religious creeds. The clergy despise Jehovah's name, not even using it. They dishonor

3. What did Jesus single out as most important, and what secret did Paul learn?
4. What provisions were not enough for the first human pair, and what more did they want?
5. With what did Jehovah bless the Israelites, and what was their reaction?
6. What course brought destruction upon the Israelites as a nation?
7. How have Christendom's clergy of today continued in the same course as the unfaithful priests of Malachi's time?

him with such unscriptural teachings as the Trinity, the immortal soul, and eternal torment in hellfire. Their doctrines are not only polluted with falsehoods taken from ancient Babylon and Egypt but also, in many cases, poisoned by the denial of Christ's ransom and the acceptance of evolution. They rob Jehovah of his deserved praise, just as did the priests in Malachi's day.—Malachi 1:6-8; 3:7-9.

[8] Israelites back then were encouraged to cleanse themselves and return to Jehovah. "Return to me, and I will return to you," Jehovah said. He further invited them: "'Test me out, please, in this respect,' Jehovah of armies has said, 'whether I shall not open to you people the floodgates of the heavens and actually empty out upon you a blessing until there is no more want.'" (Malachi 3:7, 10) Only a remnant of the Jewish nation returned; today, a faithful remnant of spiritual Israel have come out of this world's false religions. They, together with a growing great crowd of other sheeplike worshipers, praise Jehovah as his Witnesses. (John 10:16) To them, Jehovah has kept his promise and has 'opened the floodgates of heaven and emptied out upon them blessings until there is no more want'—a veritable banquet of spiritual food!—Isaiah 25:6.

Spiritual Food in Abundance

[9] "The faithful and discreet slave" Jesus foretold for our day is busily providing spiritual food in abundance. (Matthew 24:45) Last year alone, in 208 lands and islands of the sea, and in some 200 languages, over three million of Jehovah's Witnesses made these spiritual provisions available through house-to-house visits and the distribution of hundreds of millions of books, magazines, and Bibles. Many partook of this spiritual food and were satisfied: Over 225,000 new ones were baptized in one year!

[10] Jehovah's spiritual provisions have also been made available by means of district conventions, circuit assemblies, and the five weekly meetings regularly held in some 52,000 congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses—all in obedience to Paul's admonition at Hebrews 10:25 'not to forsake our gathering together.'

[11] When a woman invites guests to a meal, she does not just boil a piece of meat and plop it on a plate. She uses spices and sauces to add tantalizing flavors and some decorative touches to give it eye appeal. Just its appearance and aroma are enough to make the mouth water and the gastric juices flow. That is the way Jehovah's spiritual provisions have been prepared —not in a dry, encyclopedic style, but in a tasty way to delight the mind and touch the heart. Each individual Christian should follow that example. "Does not the ear itself test out words as the palate tastes food?"—Job 12:11.

[12] The *Theocratic Ministry School Guidebook* in its first lesson stresses using delightful words. Solomon used not only correct words but also delightful ones. (Ecclesiastes 12:10) Psalm 45:2 foretold of the Messiah, Jesus Christ: "Charm has been poured out upon your lips." It proved to be so. His hearers marveled "at the winsome words proceeding out of his mouth." They kept hanging onto him to

8. (a) What invitation did the priests of Malachi's day and the religious leaders of today reject? (b) Who did respond to the invitation, and with what result?
9. What spiritual provisions are available today, by what means, and with what result?
10. What provisions are available for heeding Paul's admonition to assemble together?
11. What illustrates the desirable way for spiritual food to be prepared?
12. What examples do we have of spiritual food being appetizingly prepared?

hear him, came early to the temple to hear him, listened to him with pleasure, were astounded at his way of teaching. Officers sent to arrest him declared: "Never has another man spoken like this." (Luke 4:22; 19:48; 21:38; Mark 12:37; Matthew 7:28; John 7:46) The *Guidebook* was provided to help us speak delightful words of truth. Do you use it to the full?

[13] Ephesians 5:15-17 admonishes us: "Keep strict watch that how you walk is not as unwise but as wise persons, buying out the opportune time for yourselves, because the days are wicked. On this account cease becoming unreasonable, but go on perceiving what the will of Jehovah is." The Greek word here translated "time" does not mean time in just a general sense but signifies an appointed time, a seasonable time for a specific purpose. The Greek verb translated "buying out" is in the intensive form, and "in this context it probably means to 'buy up intensively'; i.e., to snap up every opportunity that comes."* Do you snap up time from your schedule to make yourself wise by partaking of Jehovah's spiritual provisions? You should. All of us should. Why? "Because the days are wicked."

From Spiritual Desert to Spiritual Paradise

[14] An outstanding spiritual provision is our *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures—With References,* released in 1984. It has many features that make it possible to use 'bought-out time' to increase our knowledge.* One example is its cross-references. Take Psalm 1:3, which deals with the condition of the man that meditates on God's law day and night. That verse reads: "He will certainly become like a tree planted by streams of water, that gives its own fruit in its season and the foliage of which does not wither, and everything he does will succeed." There is more, much more, to this verse than meets the eye of the reader who merely reads quickly and passes on.

[15] Please take note: The tree is planted. Who planted it? It is by streams, plural. Does one tree grow on the banks of several streams? No. So be curious. What is this tree all about? The cross-references open the eyes of our mind. They are Isaiah 44:4, 61:3, and Jeremiah 17:8. Isaiah 44:4 says that his people will be like trees "by the water ditches." Many water ditches? Why, yes! The streams are irrigation ditches that water the trees in an orchard!

[16] Isaiah 61:3 calls some of these trees "big trees of righteousness, the planting of Jehovah, for him to be beautified." Jehovah is the one who plants and irrigates these, and he is the one beautified by the fruits the trees bear! Jeremiah 17:8 likens the man who meditates on God's law day and night to "a tree planted by the waters, that sends out its roots right by the watercourse; and he will not see when heat comes, but his foliage will actually prove to be luxuriant. And in the year of drought he will not become anxious, nor will he leave off from producing fruit." Its

* See *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology,* Volume 1, page 268, by Colin Brown.

13. How emphatic is Ephesians 5:15-17 about 'buying out time,' and why is this stressed?
14. What Bible verse serves as an example of what feature of our English-language *New World Translation Reference Bible?*

* You may not have it in your language as yet but will no doubt find interest in the above example of its use.

15. What questions are raised about the tree of Psalm 1:3, and what enlightenment does Isaiah 44:4 give?
16. What further clarification is given by Isaiah 61:3 and Jeremiah 17:8?

foliage does not wither; everything it does succeeds!

[17] Now the scales fall from our eyes! Psalm 1:3 is painting a beautiful picture. Those who meditate on Jehovah's law day and night are like trees planted by an unfailing source of water. They are no longer any part of spiritually arid worldly organizations but are now associated with God's organization that is abundantly supplied with the refreshing waters of truth. Indeed, they are in a spiritual paradise, are refreshed spiritually, and are bearing spiritual fruitage to Jehovah's praise. And just think! God is using his Witnesses to direct people away from the arid, parched, worldly organizations to this refreshing, well-watered spiritual paradise.

[18] To accomplish this work effectively, we must discipline our minds and hearts so as to make use of all of Jehovah's spiritual provisions. Some hear others explain Bible texts and then say: "I wish I knew the Bible as he does!" But if such ones discipline themselves to study the Bible, they too can increase in Bible knowledge. Some hear others witness at the doors and then say: "I wish I could witness at the doors the way she does!" But if they discipline themselves to share frequently in the field service, using the book *Reasoning From the Scriptures,* they too can become more skilled Witnesses. Some hear others give Bible lectures and then say: "I wish I could give talks the way he does." But, again, if these ones discipline themselves to prepare their speaking assignments well, absorbing the lessons of the *Theocratic Ministry School Guidebook,* they too will progress in speaking ability.

[19] Now, to wish is fine, but wishing without working does not get the job done. It is work that makes the wish come true. Discipline yourself to buy out the time, and do the work that makes the wish come true. If you do not use a muscle, it will atrophy. If you do not use a skill, it will fade away. If you do not use your mind, thinking ability will wither. If you do not use knowledge, you will lose what you have. In each and every case, the rule is, "Use it or lose it." It is 'through use that the perceptive powers are trained.' Then "thinking ability itself will keep guard over you, discernment itself will safeguard you."—Hebrews 5:14; Proverbs 2:11.

[20] So use Jehovah's spiritual provisions. Rejoice with his satisfied ones. Escape the famine that Amos foretold: "'Look! There are days coming,' is the utterance of the Sovereign Lord Jehovah, 'and I will send a famine into the land, a famine, not for bread, and a thirst, not for water, but for hearing the words of Jehovah.'" (Amos

17. What picture now emerges concerning Psalm 1:3, and what role do we play in it?
18. How do some react when they see others excelling in witnessing, and why may they fall short?

19. What is the key to developing our potentials for witnessing?
20. By taking advantage of Jehovah's spiritual provisions, what will we avoid, and what will we gain?

Do You Recall?

- How did the nation of Israel show its dissatisfaction with Jehovah's provisions?
- How has Malachi 3:10 been fulfilled upon Jehovah's Witnesses?
- What is the underlying meaning of Psalm 1:3?
- Why is it essential to make use of the things learned through Jehovah's spiritual provisions?

Those who meditate on Jehovah's law are like trees planted by an unfailing source of water

8:11) Share with those who eat and rejoice, not with those who reject the food and suffer shame: "This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah has said: 'Look! My own servants will eat, but you yourselves will go hungry. Look! My own servants will drink, but you yourselves will go thirsty. Look! My own servants will rejoice, but you yourselves will suffer shame."—Isaiah 65:13.

Discipline Yields Peaceable Fruit

"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.

JEHOVAH'S Word says that "it does not belong to man who is walking even to direct his step." (Jeremiah 10:23) Man says it is in him to do so, and from the outbreak of rebellion in Eden, he has done so. From then until now, with many people it has been as it was in the days of the Judges in Israel: "What was right in his own eyes was what each one was accustomed to do." (Judges 21:25) But the words of Jehovah at Proverbs 14:12 have proved true: "There exists a way that is upright before a man,

1. (a) What does Jehovah's Word say about man's ability to direct his life's course, yet what does man say? (b) Who has been proved true, and who false?

but the ways of death are the end of it afterward." For 6,000 years, men have taken the way that seemed right to them, and all that time it has led to war, famine, sickness, crime, and death. History has proved Jehovah's words true and man's ways false.

[2] Imperfect people need discipline. They need it from childhood onward. God's Word says: "The one holding back his rod is hating his son, but the one loving him is he that does look for him with discipline." (Proverbs 13:24) Many child psychologists dispute this divine wisdom. Years ago one asked: "Do you mothers realize that every time you spank your child you show that you are hating your child?" Yet their permissiveness produced such a deluge of juvenile delinquents that a Brooklyn court judge made this caustic comment: "I think we need the woodshed for some young folks. But that is not considered fashionable now. Now we are told you must not strike a child; you may be stunting a genius." But their permissiveness produced no crop of geniuses—only a lawless wave of teenage criminals.

[3] Now winds of change are in the air. Burton L. White, authority on child development, says that your strictness will not cause your child to "love you less than if you were lenient. . . . Even if you spank them regularly, you will find they keep coming back to you." He stresses the child's primary need for overflowing "irrational love." Dr. Joyce Brothers reported on a study of hundreds of strictly disciplined fifth and sixth graders who believed that the strict rules "were an expression of parental love." The *Journal of Lifetime Living* said: "The child psychologists, wrangling over scheduled versus demand feeding, spanking versus non-spanking, have found that none of it makes much difference *so long as the child is loved."* Even Dr. Benjamin Spock, author of *Baby and Child Care,* took part of the blame for the lack of parental firmness and the resulting delinquency. He said blame rested on the experts, "the child psychiatrists, psychologists, teachers, social workers and pediatricians like myself."

2. What position do child psychologists take on spanking, but what fruitage has their permissiveness produced?

3. Based on the statements of several authorities, what trend is becoming evident?

The Rod of Discipline

[4] "Rod" as used above does not necessarily mean spanking; it represents the means of correction, whatever form it may take. *The New International Version* says on this verse: *"rod.* Probably a figure of speech for discipline of any kind." A rod is a symbol of rule or authority—in this case parental authority. A parent gets no thanks later for his permissiveness and spoiling: "If one is pampering one's servant [or child] from youth on, in his later life he will even become a thankless one." (Proverbs 29:21) To abdicate parental authority by permissiveness brings shame and shows not love but indifference; to use the rod of discipline kindly but firmly reflects loving concern. "The rod and reproof are what give wisdom; but a boy let on the loose will be causing his mother shame."—Proverbs 29:15.

[5] Referring to Proverbs 13:24, the Keil-Delitzsch *Commentary on the Old Testament* explains: "A father who truly wishes well to his son keeps him betimes under strict discipline, to give him while he is yet capable of being influenced the right direction, and to allow no errors to

4. Of what is the rod of discipline a symbol, and what is shown by its proper use in contrast with permissiveness?

5. (a) What does one commentary say on Proverbs 13:24, and with what other Bible text is it in agreement? (b) Who are the ones that Jesus and Jehovah discipline?

Do you wisely "listen to discipline"?

root themselves in him; but he who is indulgent toward his child when he ought to be strict, acts as if he really wished his ruin." Moffatt's *New Translation of the Bible* at Proverbs 19:18 concurs: "Chastise your son, while there is still hope of him, and do not let him run to ruin." Kind but firm discipline from early childhood reflects parental love. Jesus said: "All those for whom I have affection I reprove and discipline." As for Jehovah, "whom Jehovah loves he disciplines."—Revelation 3:19; Hebrews 12:6.

[6] Discipline may at times involve spanking, but often it does not. Proverbs 8:33 does not say, "feel" discipline but, "listen to discipline and become wise." Many times discipline comes in the form of words, not spankings: "The reproofs of discipline are the way of life." "Take hold on discipline; do not let go. Safeguard it, for it itself is your life." (Proverbs 4:13; 6:23) When Jehovah's servant Job needed to be disciplined, it was accomplished by reproving words, first by Elihu and then by Jehovah himself. (Job, chapters 32-41) Job accepted the reproof and said to Jehovah: "I make a retraction, and I do repent in dust and ashes."—Job 42:6.

6. What form does discipline often take, and what examples support your answer?

[7] *Pai·dei'a* is the Greek word translated "discipline." In its various forms it means to train, to educate, to be "instructing with mildness." (2 Timothy 2:25) It relates more to training in conduct than to acquiring knowledge. This disciplining is to be "with all long-suffering and art of teaching." (2 Timothy 4:2) It is well exemplified in the admonition to fathers: "And you, fathers, do not be irritating your children, but go on bringing them up in the discipline and mental-regulating of Jehovah." (Ephesians 6:4) Kindly but firmly, this discipline is to regulate youth in Jehovah's way of thinking.

The Source of Discipline

[8] The principles involved in disciplining children also apply to adults. The Bible is the source of information about what we

7. What is the meaning of the Greek word translated "discipline," how is it to be administered, and what does it accomplish?
8. From what source and in what ways can we discipline ourselves?

The principles involved in disciplining children also apply to adults

should and should not be. As we read it, we can test ourselves and apply correction where needed. (2 Corinthians 13:5) As we ponder Jehovah's precepts, feelings of guilt may be stirred up in us, helping to identify needed changes for us. It did this for the psalmist: "I shall bless Jehovah, who has given me advice. Really, during the nights my kidneys ["my deepest emotions"] have corrected me." (Psalm 16:7) We may discipline ourselves as Paul did: "I pummel my body and lead it as a slave, that, after I have preached to others, I myself should not become disapproved somehow."—1 Corinthians 9:27.

[9] Discipline may come from someone else. It may come as a look, a frown, a word, a gesture, a verbal reproof. Jesus gave Peter a look that reminded him of the prediction of his grave sin, and he went out and wept bitterly. (Luke 22:61, 62) Another time it was a rebuke in four words that crushed Peter: "Get behind me, Satan!" (Matthew 16:23) Reading Watch Tower publications, attending meetings, talking with others, enduring hard experiences—all such activities may open our eyes to areas where we need to make changes. The all-important source and guide for disciplining, however, is God's Word itself.—Psalm 119:105.

[10] The proverbs of Solomon were given for people of all ages, for them "to know wisdom and discipline, to discern the sayings of understanding, to receive the discipline that gives insight, righteousness and judgment and uprightness, to give to the inexperienced ones shrewdness, to a young man knowledge and thinking ability." But perhaps a person "will not let himself be corrected by mere words, for he understands but he is paying no heed." (Proverbs 1:2-4; 29:19) Some inexperienced ones insist on learning in life's "school of hard knocks," as did the prodigal son before "he came to his senses." —Luke 15:11-17.

[11] Commenting on a letter that he had

9. What other means are there for beneficial disciplining?

10. Of what value are the proverbs of Solomon for disciplining, yet what course do some insist on following?

11. (a) How were the Corinthian congregation and Jonah disciplined? (b) What disciplinary punishments were visited upon David for his adultery and cover-up efforts? (c) What words of Psalm 51 written by David show the depth of his repentance?

previously written to the Christian congregation at Corinth, Paul said: "You were saddened into repenting; for you were saddened in a godly way, . . . [and it resulted in the] righting of the wrong." (2 Corinthians 7:9-11) Jonah was disciplined by means of an ocean storm and a big fish. (Jonah 1:2, 3, 12, 17; 2:10; 3:1-4) David's adultery and attempts at a cover-up brought disciplinary punishments upon him, as shown at 2 Samuel 12:9-14. His repentance was movingly expressed in these words from the 51st Psalm: 'Wash me from my error, cleanse me from my sin. My sin is in front of me constantly. Wipe out all my errors, create in me a pure heart, put within me a new spirit. Do not throw me away from before your face. A heart broken and crushed, O God, you will not despise.'—Verses 2, 3, 9-11, 17.

[12] With some persons more drastic measures may be necessary, as Proverbs 26:3 indicates: "A whip is for the horse, a bridle is for the ass, and the rod is for the back of stupid people." At times Jehovah let his nation of Israel be subdued by the troubles they brought upon themselves: "They had behaved rebelliously against the sayings of God; and the counsel of the Most High they had disrespected. So with trouble he proceeded to subdue their heart; they stumbled, and there was no one helping. And they began calling to Jehovah for help in their distress; out of the stresses upon them he as usual saved them." (Psalm 107:11-13) Some stupid ones, however, harden themselves beyond the reach of any kind of healing discipline: "A man repeatedly reproved but making his neck hard will suddenly be broken, and that without healing." —Proverbs 29:1.

12. What more drastic measures are needed for some, and what is the outcome for those who reject repeated reproofs?

Giving and Receiving Reproof

[13] Whatever form the discipline may take, it should never be given in anger. In fact, rather than helping, "anger stirs up contention." We are also advised: "He that is slow to anger is abundant in discernment, but one that is impatient is exalting foolishness." Moreover, "the insight of a man certainly slows down his anger, and it is beauty on his part to pass over transgression." (Proverbs 29:22; 14:29; 19:11) When needed, discipline should never be excessive. Give it at the proper time and to the proper degree—not too soon, not too late, not too little, not too much.

[14] Here are some guidelines for those giving reproof: "Do not severely criticize an older man. To the contrary, entreat him as a father, younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, younger women as sisters with all chasteness." (1 Timothy 5:1, 2) Do you entreat, not browbeat? "Brothers, even though a man takes some false step before he is aware of it, you who have spiritual qualifications try to readjust such a man in a spirit of mildness, as you each keep an eye on yourself, for fear you also may be tempted." (Galatians 6:1) Do we counsel in mildness, always aware of our own frailties? "Always treat others as you would like them to treat you." (Matthew 7:12, *The New English Bible*) Do you put yourself in the other one's place, showing empathy?

[15] Receiving reproof requires humility. Does it seem picky, unfair, unjust? Do not be hasty. Think about it. Do not be negative. Reflect on it positively. If not all seems valid, is part of it? Open your mind to be receptive; evaluate it objectively. Are

13. What should we avoid in giving reproof, and how should it be given?
14. What other guidelines are given for those offering reproof?
15. What does receiving reproof require, and what additional counsel is given to those being reproved?

you being overly sensitive, too quickly offended? It may take time to see it in a positive light, after any initial hurt or offense has subsided. So wait. Hold your tongue. Calmly evaluate what was said. Is it possible that you are prejudiced against the one giving the counsel, and you rejected it on that basis? Nevertheless, see it as well meant and not to be summarily rejected.

[16] Here are some scriptures to reflect on when you are reproved: "Anyone holding back his sayings is possessed of knowledge, and a man of discernment is cool of spirit." (Proverbs 17:27) Do you listen and remain cool? "The way of the foolish one is right in his own eyes, but the one listening to counsel is wise." (Proverbs 12:15) Do you quickly decide that you are right, or do you listen receptively? "Be swift about hearing, slow about speaking, slow about wrath." (James 1:19) Do you follow these words when counseled? "Do not hurry yourself in your spirit to become offended, for the taking of offense is what rests in the bosom of the stupid ones." (Ecclesiastes 7:9) Are you quick to take offense? How lovely if we can feel as the psalmist did: "Should the righteous one strike me, it would be a loving-kindness; and should he reprove me, it would be oil upon the head, which my head would not want to refuse."—Psalm 141:5.

Endure Discipline and Reap Peaceable Fruit

[17] Discipline is not always easy to take. It may involve some embarrassment and bring some restrictions. It may even cause you some grief. But endure all of this. It will pass; joy comes afterward. Remember: "It is for discipline you are enduring. God is dealing with you as with sons. For what son is he that a father does not discipline? 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 12:7, 11.

[18] So if the discipline is grievous and hard to endure, wait for the peaceable fruit that comes afterward. Wait for Jehovah, as did Jeremiah: "Without fail your soul will remember and bow low over me. This is what I shall bring back to my heart. That is why I shall show a waiting attitude." (Lamentations 3:20, 21) Remember what the psalmist in distress said to himself: "Why are you in despair, O my soul, and why are you boisterous within me? Wait for God, for I shall yet laud him as the grand salvation of my person."—Psalm 42:5, 11; 43:5.

[19] So when disciplined, let each one of us wait for God. After we have been trained by it, we will reap the harvest of peaceable fruit, namely, righteousness.

16. (a) What scriptures and related questions should we consider when receiving counsel? (b) What feeling expressed by the psalmist might we imitate?

17. Why is discipline not always easy to take, yet how will keeping Hebrews 12:7, 11 in mind help us endure it?

18, 19. What strong feelings did both Jeremiah and the psalmist express that set a proper course for us when we are undergoing discipline?

Do You Recall?

- □ What is the value of using the rod of discipline?
- □ What is the main source of discipline? What are other sources of discipline?
- □ In addition to words of reproof, what stronger measures may be needed?
- □ What are some guidelines for giving reproof?
- □ What counsel will help us to accept reproof?

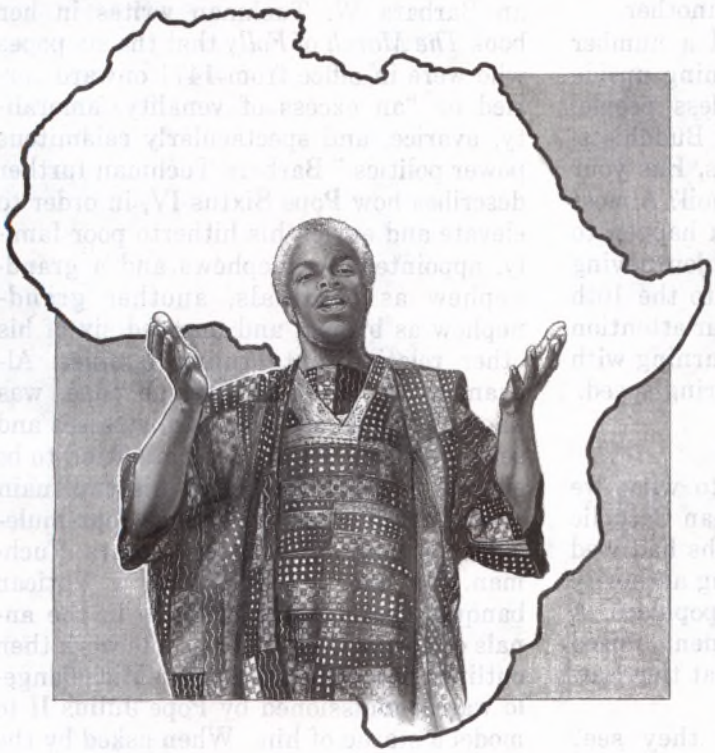
Kingdom Proclaimers Report

A Chief Speaks Up

IT IS encouraging to know that there are still men in high station in this world who love honesty and justice and who speak out to uphold these qualities. An example is a chief in an African country where the work of Jehovah's Witnesses is restricted. Let the report tell us:

"Recently different religious groups held an interdenominational convention in our town, and this included Catholics, Presbyterians, Pentecostals, and so forth. The Paramount Chief was invited to address the convention toward the closing sessions. To the surprise of the whole gathering, he told them, among other things, to imitate the honesty and high moral standards of Jehovah's Witnesses, adding that if all were like Jehovah's Witnesses, there would be peace in the nation.

"The next day leading members of the churches represented at the convention came to the Chief's palace and protested vehemently against the part of his address that praised the Witnesses and asked him if he was not aware that the Witnesses had been banned in the country. The Chief replied in the affirmative but told them that he found no fault in Jehovah's Witnesses. He went on to say: 'For all my years as Paramount Chief, not once has one of Jehovah's Witnesses been brought to my court for gross wrongdoing. On the other hand, if cassava is stolen from a farm, it often turns out that a Catholic is the thief. If yam is stolen, it is a Presbyterian who is responsible. Members of your church have polluted my land with abortions, and yet not one of Jehovah's Witnesses has been brought to my court for such offenses. Do not God's laws forbid such evils, or are the churches no longer bound by God's law?' The clergymen had no answer.



"Later, the Paramount Chief called representatives of Jehovah's Witnesses and exhorted them to take good care of themselves so that no reproach is brought upon the name of their God and upon his own name as the Paramount Chief who has spoken up for Jehovah's Witnesses."

The report states that now many new ones are taking their stand for the truth. One Witness states that he has recently been able to start Bible studies with three chiefs in the area, one of them being the Paramount Chief, and all three are attending meetings of Jehovah's Witnesses!

Jehovah God takes note of those who love truth and righteousness and speak up in behalf of his servants.—Matthew 10:42.

The Reformation Waters Burst Forth

"SUDDENLY I heard another sound, as if of thunder, rushing toward us. Our family . . . started to run frantically to a nearby hill. The foaming waters overtook us. We swam as never before. Though gulping down a quantity of seawater . . . , we made it."

This is how one Filipino recounted a terrifying experience that changed his world. You have probably never been hit by a natural disaster—of water or any other kind. But a look at history reveals that millions of lives have been reshaped by cataclysms of one form or another.

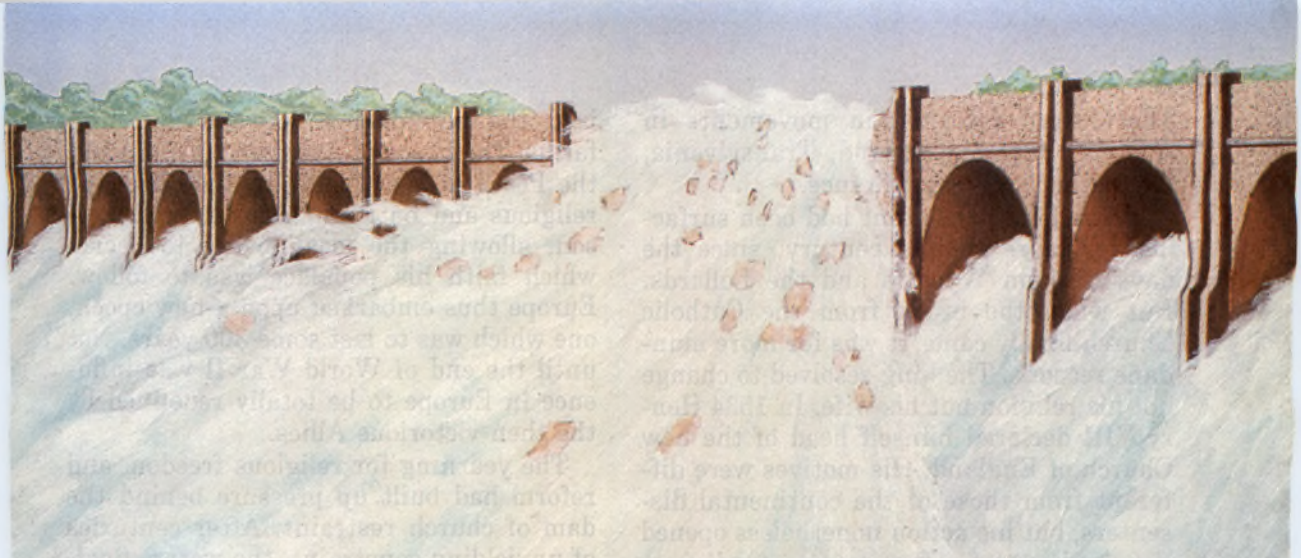
Religion has also witnessed a number of tremendous upheavals, turning upside down the daily lot of countless people. These have included Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims, Jews, and Christians. Has your life been affected by such turmoil? Almost certainly it has, wherever you happen to live. Let us illustrate this by journeying back some 400 years in time to the 16th century. First of all we focus our attention on Europe, which was then churning with dissent, like a whirlpool gathering speed.

A Growing Swell

For centuries, leading up to what we call the Reformation, the Roman Catholic Church and European monarchs had vied with one another, each claiming authority over the other and over the populace. A body of people on the continent raised their voices in objection to what they saw as abuses by the church.

What sort of abuses did they see? Greed, flagrant immorality, and interference in politics. Common folk were indignant at men and women who on the one hand claimed special privileges by reason of their vows of poverty and chastity but at the same time flouted the law by being openly corrupt and immoral. Noblemen in England were incensed at the rather strange situation of having to pay tribute to a pope who was then living in and allied with France, England's enemy at war.

The corruption within the Catholic Church seeped down from the top. Historian Barbara W. Tuchman writes in her book *The March of Folly* that the six popes who were in office from 1471 onward carried on "an excess of venality, amorality, avarice, and spectacularly calamitous power politics." Barbara Tuchman further describes how Pope Sixtus IV, in order to elevate and enrich his hitherto poor family, appointed five nephews and a grandnephew as cardinals, another grandnephew as bishop, and married six of his other relatives into ruling families. Alexander VI, when he became pope, was known to have had several mistresses and seven children. In his determination to be elected to office, he bribed his two main rivals, one of them receiving "four mule-loads of bullion," writes Barbara Tuchman. He later presided over a Vatican banquet that became "famous in the annals of pornography." The same work then outlines how famous sculptor Michelangelo was commissioned by Pope Julius II to model a statue of him. When asked by the



craftsman if the statue should show him holding a book, the warrior pope replied: "Put a sword there. I know nothing of letters."

Breach in the Dam

Ordinary Europeans still desired spiritual guidance. Observing the various echelons of power locked in a frenzy of self-gratification, these more lowly ones turned to an alternative source of authority, one they considered superior to all others—the Bible. According to author Joel Hurstfield, the Reformation was "in the profoundest sense a crisis of authority." Appalled at the corruption in the church, preachers and friars in Italy took to speaking publicly on the need for reform. But nowhere were the waters of discontent gathering more ominously than in Germany.

In pagan times, Germanic tribes had a tradition whereby money could be paid to effect release from punishment for crimes. With the expansion of the Roman faith, the custom found accommodation within the church in the form of indulgences. This allowed a sinner to buy from the pope the value of dead "saints'" merits and apply these against temporal penalties for sins committed. Under financial pressure, caused by wars against France and by extensive building works in Rome, Pope Leo X authorized the sale of indulgences, offering total remission of temporal penalties for sin. An indignant Martin Luther expounded his now famous 95 theses on the false teachings of the church. The movement toward reform, which had started as a trickle some generations before, became a torrent as more and more people gave their support.

In the 16th century, individuals such as Luther in Germany, Zwingli and Calvin in Switzerland, and Knox in Scotland became rallying points for many who saw the chance to purify Christianity and return to the original values and standards of the Bible. A term was coined in Germany to describe those who refused to acknowledge restrictions placed on faith by Roman Catholic princes, and who avowed allegiance to God above anyone else. This term later came to include all who lent support to the Reformation movement. The term was "Protestant."

Protestantism swept through Europe with breathtaking speed, reshaping the religious landscape, sketching new theological boundaries. Germany and Switzerland led the way, quickly followed by Scotland, Sweden, Norway, and Denmark.

There were reformation movements in Austria, Bohemia, Poland, Transylvania, the Netherlands, and France.

In England discontent had been surfacing for more than a century, since the days of John Wycliffe and the Lollards. But when the break from the Catholic Church finally came, it was for more mundane reasons. The king resolved to change not his religion but his wife. In 1534 Henry VIII declared himself head of the new Church of England. His motives were different from those of the continental dissenters, but his action nonetheless opened the floodgates for the waters of religious change to flow into Britain. All over Europe, these waters swiftly turned red with the blood of thousands who were stretched on the rack of religious polarization.

Wherever the urge for reform took hold, church properties and estates caught the eye. Within just four years, the English Crown confiscated 560 monasteries, some having huge incomes. Other countries saw kings as well as laymen taking over church lands. When Rome itself was sacked, cruelty knew no bounds. "The ferocity and bloodthirstiness of the attackers 'would have moved a stone to compassion,'" is how Barbara Tuchman describes it. "Screams and groans filled every quarter; the Tiber floated with dead bodies." Minorities, both Catholic and Protestant, were brutally persecuted. In Bohemia, Protestants were expropriated, whereas in Ireland it was the Catholics' turn. Protestant French Huguenots were hounded, as were Scottish Presbyterians and English Puritans. It seemed as if a senseless merry-go-round of slaughter had been set in motion, and religion was the chief lubricant. Would the atrocities never stop?

The church had no olive branch to offer. But the monarchs, tired of the drain of civil war, reached agreements that formalized the boundaries between opposing faiths. The Peace of Augsburg in 1555 and the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 brought religious and national frontiers into unison, allowing the local prince to decide which faith his populace was to follow. Europe thus embarked upon a new epoch, one which was to last some 300 years. Not until the end of World War II was influence in Europe to be totally redefined by the then victorious Allies.

The yearning for religious freedom and reform had built up pressure behind the dam of church restraint. After centuries of unyielding constraint, the waters finally burst forth, cascading through the valleys of Europe, leaving a devastated landscape in their wake. When the swell settled, guidance in matters of faith in Protestant lands had been swept away from the clergy and lay beached on the shores of secular powers. Europe was still drenched in religious intolerance, though, and refugees fled from one country to another. The continent could no longer embrace the loosened waters. They soon began to spill abroad. The 17th century offered a channel for the overflow. The New World was being colonized.

Spillover Funneled Abroad

"One of the prime causes for early migration to America," writes A. P. Stokes in *Church and State in the United States,* "was the desire for religious freedom." People were tired of the harassment. Baptists, Quakers, Roman Catholics, Huguenots, Puritans, Mennonites, and others all were willing to put up with the rigors of the voyage and to take a plunge into the unknown. Stokes quotes one as saying: "I yearned for a country where I could be free to worship God according to what the Bible taught me." The measure of intolerance these emigrants left behind can be judged by the hardships they were willing to endure. According to

historian David Hawke in *The Colonial Experience,* a heartbreaking departure from the home country was likely to be followed by "two, three, or four months spent with daily expectation of swallowing waves and cruel pirates." Thereafter, the weather-beaten traveler would be "landed among barbarous Indians, famous for nothing but cruelty . . . [and would remain] in a famishing condition for a long space."

Individuals reached out for freedom, the colonial powers for wealth. Regardless of motive, settlers took with them their own religion. Germany, Holland, and Britain made North America a Protestant stronghold. Particularly the British government wanted "to prevent Roman Catholicism . . . from getting the upper hand in North America." Canada came under the influence of both France and Britain. The policy of the French government was that of "keeping New France in the Roman Catholic faith," even refusing to allow Huguenots to immigrate to Quebec. Southern Africa and parts of West Africa came under Protestant influence. This influence increased with the passage of time as Australia, New Zealand, and many Pacific islands were added to the Protestant fold.

Spain and Portugal were already Catholicizing South and Central America. French and Portuguese hoisted the Catholic banner in Central Africa. In India, Goa was under Portuguese influence, so Catholicism took root there.

The Society of Jesus (Jesuits) was formed in the 16th century to advance the Catholic cause. By the middle of the 18th century, there were over 22,000 Jesuits working all over the globe, and they even solidified Catholic influence in China and Japan.

The New Panorama

Unleashed water has tremendous power, as the witness quoted at the beginning of this article testified. It flattens landscapes, carves new valleys and ravines, smashes obstacles in its path. A raging torrent knows no master, cannot be controlled or directed. It was just so with the Reformation deluge.

"What happened . . . was, therefore, not so much the triumph of a new separatist faith," states G. R. Elton in *The Reformation Crisis,* "as the general and gradual acceptance of a divided Christendom which no one had wanted." Christendom was split, storm tossed, sapped of its strength. Allegiance became more closely tied to local monarchs and to smaller national churches. The long-established rule from Rome had been undermined. Nationalism took root in the sodden landscape of Protestantism. Britain and the United States, firmly in the hands of Protestant secular leaders, together formed the seventh world power of Bible history, taking hold of the rudder in the 18th century.

However, the Reformation movement did not do the very thing that it had been hoped it would accomplish. What was that? With the passage of time, basic doctrines of Protestant churches, whether national churches or otherwise, fell largely into line with those of Rome. Early reformers had dreamed of returning to Bible standards, to pure Christianity. As the wave of support grew in size and momentum, confusion in direction simply poured cold water on those dreams.

The ground swell of the Reformation waters has left trenches even in our 20th century. Can you identify some of them? Still more important, we stand on the brink of a final worldwide religious upheaval. Religion's past is catching up with it. Will you then survive to peruse the new horizon? These questions will be answered in a November issue of this magazine.

I Have Seen That Jehovah Is Good

As told by Lennart Johnson

ON SUNDAY, July 26, 1931, the second president of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, J. F. Rutherford, delivered the talk "The Kingdom, the Hope of the World" at the Columbus, Ohio, coliseum. Our family in Rockford, Illinois, listened to it on the radio. I was only 14 years old, but this program lifted, as it were, a thick curtain from my eyes.

Though my father was interested in the Kingdom message, and later my brother too, my mother was always indifferent. Father died the following year, in 1932. Other Watch Tower broadcasts kept feeding me spiritually, but it was not until April 1933 that I found the place where Jehovah's Witnesses met, miles away on the other side of the river.

What a surprise it was for the small group there to see a slim teenager bicycle up to their meeting for a study in *Vindication* Book Two! At each meeting, I kept learning more and was glad two months later to start going from door to door with the Kingdom message. I was baptized at a regional (now circuit) assembly that same year.

After school each day, I would spend an hour or so visiting the neighbors in the area around our home with the Kingdom message. I also had opportunity to witness in school. For example, one course echoed the hellfire and torment theory. This prompted me to provide Scriptural proof that the dead are not suffering but, rather, are not conscious and are in their graves with the prospect of the resurrection. The teacher allowed me to read my extensive composition before the entire class.

The Full-Time Ministry

In May 1935, I attended the Washington, D.C., convention, where pioneering (the full-time ministry) was emphasized. On returning home, I wrote to the Watch Tower Society, and they not only sent back a list of available territories but also, to my surprise, included several plans for building a house trailer. In those days pioneering often meant going to new areas, and a trailer provided one a place in which to live. So I decided to work toward getting a car and a trailer so that I might pursue the full-time ministry.

In the meantime, I became involved in using a sound car that our congregation had acquired to advertise the Kingdom message. When another brother and I were invited up to Monroe, Wisconsin, to use it, I met and soon afterward married Virginia Ellis. Now we could work together to get that car and trailer to use in the pioneer work!

In the fall of 1938 my mother died, and about then Harold Woodworth wrote us from New Mexico: "Come on out here; the need is great." So we set out for New Mexico, which was an overland trip of about a thousand miles. At one address along the way, a telegram reached us. "Come back home," it urged. I was offered

a well-paying job with excellent chances for advancement. I tore the telegram up. If Jehovah had helped us to prepare for pioneering, I was not going to let anything interfere!

In March 1939 we began our pioneer service around Hobbs, New Mexico. This was cattle country; there were also many new oil-field settlements to visit in this area. The small congregation had meetings on Friday and Sunday, so we would take along literature, water, food, a small stove, and a folding cot and spend Monday through Friday afternoon preaching in the rurals. When night came, we slept in the wilds with the sky as a roof and an oil-field "torch" nearby to scare away the rattlesnakes. We spent the weekends in town working with the congregation.

After several months of this schedule, the Society sent us on to Roswell and then to Albuquerque, New Mexico. Here we again used the sound car, which was particularly effective in witnessing to Indian villages in the area. When the new work of street witnessing with our magazines began early in 1940, we were glad to share in it with the brothers in Albuquerque.

Opposition During War Hysteria

The second world war had begun in Europe the previous September, and a period of vicious opposition followed because of our neutral stand toward participation in the war. Once my shirt was literally torn off my back while I was sharing in the ministry.

It was Jehovah who gave his servants the victory!

In the summer of 1940, brothers were working with the magazines near El Paso, Texas, and a number of them were arrested. The following Monday, Harold Woodworth and I went to help them during their trial. By questioning the brothers before the court, I was able to bring out pertinent points in their defense. After all of them were declared innocent, the newspaper report referred to me as a "promising young lawyer from Albuquerque." But really, it was Jehovah who gave his servants the victory that day!

Similarly, our brothers were jailed for preaching in another city. After I appeared in court in their defense, Brother David Gray and I took a letter to each city official. The letter noted the legal right of Jehovah's Witnesses to do their work, and it warned that if the Witnesses continued to be harassed, the officials would be held responsible for any damages that might result.

The mayor received the letter and read it without comment, but the chief of police told us: 'Out here in the West, people take a trip out of town, and . . . well . . . others look for them later, and they can never be found.' The threat was not carried out, however; rather, things quieted down, and

the court action against the brothers was dropped.

About this time I was appointed by the Watch Tower Society as a zone servant (now called circuit overseer). My assignment covered much of New Mexico and a portion of Texas.

Gilead and a Foreign Assignment

In 1943 Virginia and I received an invitation to attend the second class of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead. After graduation in January 1944, we were at first assigned to work with the Flatbush Congregation in Brooklyn, New York. We lived behind the Society's factory in an old building that was later demolished to enlarge the Adams Street factory facility.

All the loyal ones greatly cherished the spiritual strength that Jehovah kept giving them

In time, however, we received our assignment to the Dominican Republic, where Rafael Leónidas Trujillo Molina was the absolute dictator. When we arrived on Sunday, April 1, 1945, Virginia and I were the only Witnesses in the country. We went to the Victoria Hotel and acquired accommodations—$5 a day for the two of us, including meals. That very afternoon we started our first home Bible study.

It happened this way: Two Dominican women with whom we had studied the Bible in Brooklyn had given us the names of relatives and acquaintances, one of whom was a Dr. Green. When we visited him, we also met his neighbor Moses Rollins. After telling them how we got their names and addresses, they listened intently to the Kingdom message and agreed to a Bible study. Soon Moses became the first local Kingdom publisher.

That very evening Dr. Green took us house hunting from the upper deck of a two-story bus. We finally rented a small concrete home there in the capital, Ciudad Trujillo (now Santo Domingo). In June four more missionaries joined us. A second missionary home was opened, and then more missionaries arrived. By August 1946 we had a peak of 28 publishers. Soon many more missionaries arrived, and homes were opened for them too. The increase was on!

Serving Under Ban

By 1950 we had grown to well over 200 publishers. However, because Jehovah's Witnesses maintain a position of strict neutrality, Trujillo's government began putting our young brothers in prison. Then, to top it all off, a total ban was placed on the work of Jehovah's Witnesses on June 21, 1950.

Unable to meet in Kingdom Halls, the brothers began meeting quietly in small groups in private homes. There we studied *Watchtower* articles that were produced by mimeograph. All the loyal ones greatly cherished the spiritual strength that Jehovah kept giving them in these small study groups.

In Our Next Issue

- **Is Religion a Force for Moral Good?**
- **Setting Matters Straight Between God and You**
- **Opening the Way to Increase in Gibraltar**

Virginia and I worked with many faithful brothers from all parts of Puerto Rico

Sunday was our day to visit the many Dominican brothers in Trujillo's prisons. We would be frisked on entry, with our full identification being duly noted. Sometimes soldiers would surround us when we were with these brothers, watching us carefully. On one occasion we were joined by Stanley Aniol from Chicago, who was visiting his missionary daughter Mary (now Mary Adams, serving at Brooklyn Bethel). Moved by the integrity of the young Dominican brothers, Brother Aniol tenderly kissed all of them before the eyes of the onlooking soldiers.

At the end of the visit, as we were walking down the main business street, a car full of Trujillo's men followed us at a snail's pace. This was one of Trujillo's well-known methods of trying to instill fear in people. When we told Brother Aniol what they were up to, it did not shake him in the least. Indeed, it was necessary to ignore Trujillo's efforts to intimidate and to put full confidence in Jehovah.

At times impostors, Trujillo's spies, would call at our door, claiming to be brothers. So we had to be "cautious as serpents and yet innocent as doves." (Matthew 10:16) We would test such persons with searching questions to determine whether they were really our brothers or not.

During the ban several speakers would each give Memorial talks at three different study groups, traveling as unobtrusively as possible from one location to the other. Often we had torrential rains on Memorial night, and since Trujillo's army of spies were as afraid of a heavy rain as people in other places are of a severe blizzard, it was a blessing to us.

Since reentry into the country would have been refused by Trujillo's government, most of the missionaries did not attend the international conventions in New York City in 1950 and 1953. We had to be content with the convention coverage in *The New York Times,* which provided beautiful convention pictures and detailed day-by-day descriptions of the program. Also, a local theater gave a lengthy showing of the large baptism at the 1953 convention.

In 1956 Roy Brandt and I were called in for official questioning. Officials of the Trujillo government had earlier invited Brother Manuel Hierrezuelo to come and see them. But later Manuel was returned to his family as a corpse. So now, how would things work out for us?

Upon arriving, we were questioned

separately, our answers evidently being recorded. Nothing more took place then, but two months later the newspapers announced that the Trujillo government was removing the ban on Jehovah's Witnesses and that we could resume our activities publicly. Kingdom Halls were again located, and Jehovah's work kept on progressing.

However, in June 1957 a violent new wave of persecution began, and all the missionaries were expelled from the country. Our departure was indeed a sad day for us. Virginia and I had served 12 years in the Dominican Republic and had seen the number of Witnesses grow from just the two of us to well over 600. In 1960 the second ban was removed, and the number of publishers continued to grow until now it is about 10,000!

Serving in Puerto Rico

When we arrived in Puerto Rico in August 1957, our Christian brothers as well as newspaper reporters were on hand to receive us. The resulting press accounts gave a wide witness. At the time, there were fewer than 1,200 Kingdom publishers in Puerto Rico; now there are nearly 22,000!

In 1958 the Society invited me to become a traveling overseer. Thus, over the years we came to know and work with many faithful brothers from all parts of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. In due course, my wife and I became members of the local Bethel family. And since the formation of the Branch Committee here, Jehovah has favored me with being a member of it.

It fills me with happiness to have received personally from Jehovah the foretold "hundredfold now . . . brothers and sisters and mothers and children." (Mark 10:30) I never have wanted to spend my life in any other way than in his service. And so, as I look back on the some 48 years since I began to pioneer, I rejoice to say that, indeed, I have seen that Jehovah is good!—Psalm 34:8.

While the above life story of Lennart Johnson was in final preparation, Virginia Johnson died peacefully in her sleep on January 31, 1987

Questions From Readers

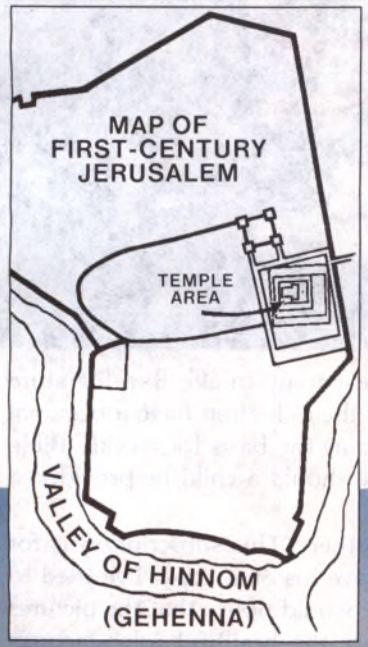
■ **Why did Jesus say that a proselyte of the Pharisees was "a subject for Gehenna twice as much so" as the Pharisees?**

Evidently, Gentiles who converted to the Pharisaic sect of Judaism were very reprehensible. Some of them may previously have had God's disapproval, but on becoming Pharisees, they became doubly disapproved, certainly headed for destruction in Gehenna.

The Valley of Hinnom was south/southwest of Jerusalem's walls. It had at times been used for idolatry and human sacrifices. (2 Chronicles 28:1-3; 33:1-6; Jeremiah 32:35) So it became a place for waste disposal, including bodies of criminals viewed as unfit for burial with the prospect of a resurrection.—Compare Matthew 5:22.

The New Bible Dictionary (edited by J. D. Douglas, 1962) says that the 'valley of Hinnom was situated outside Jerusalem, where children had been sacrificed by fire to Molech. It became a prophetic symbol for judgment and later for final punishment.' Jesuit John L. McKenzie, in his *Dictionary of the Bible* (1965), adds: "Because of this [cultic shrine for human sacrifice] Jeremiah cursed the place and predicted that it would be a place of death and corruption (7:32; 19:6 ff). This valley is re-

ferred to, not by name in Is[aiah] 66:24, as a place where the dead bodies of the rebels against Yahweh shall lie . . . In rabbinical literature, however, the eternal fire is not surely eternal punishment . . . [Gehenna] is a place where the wicked are destroyed body and soul, which perhaps echoes the idea of annihilation (Mt 10:28)."



When we read accounts such as Matthew 15:1-8; John 8:12-19, 31-41; 9:13-34; 11:45-53, we can understand why Jesus said that the Pharisees merited annihilation, symbolized by Gehenna. True, some might repent and win God's approval, but as a class, they were worthy of permanent destruction. Christ said: "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.

So much for the Jewish Pharisees, but how would those who became proselytes be 'subjects for Gehenna twice as much' as the Pharisees? These proselytes were not Gentiles who were simply sympathetic toward the Jews or even those who converted and were circumcised. (Luke 7:2-10; Mark 7:24-30; Acts 8:26-34; 10:1, 2) No, Jesus was not speaking of proselytes to Judaism but of proselytes to hypocritical Pharisaism. What had their state become?

Some of these may formerly have been gross sinners or fanatical worshipers of demon gods, thus having God's serious disapproval. Perhaps some were even in line for Gehenna because they had somehow sinned against God's spirit. (Matthew 12:32) If their situation before Jehovah had not yet reached that stage, they took a step for the worse. They converted to follow the extremism of the Pharisees. These proselytes immersed themselves in hypocritical ritual and extreme views that overruled any moral goodness and truth that other converts to Judaism might have gained. Evidently, these proselyte Pharisees became more extreme than their condemned teachers. So if the Jewish Pharisees were 'subjects for Gehenna,' these proselytes were more so or, as Jesus expressed it, doubly so.

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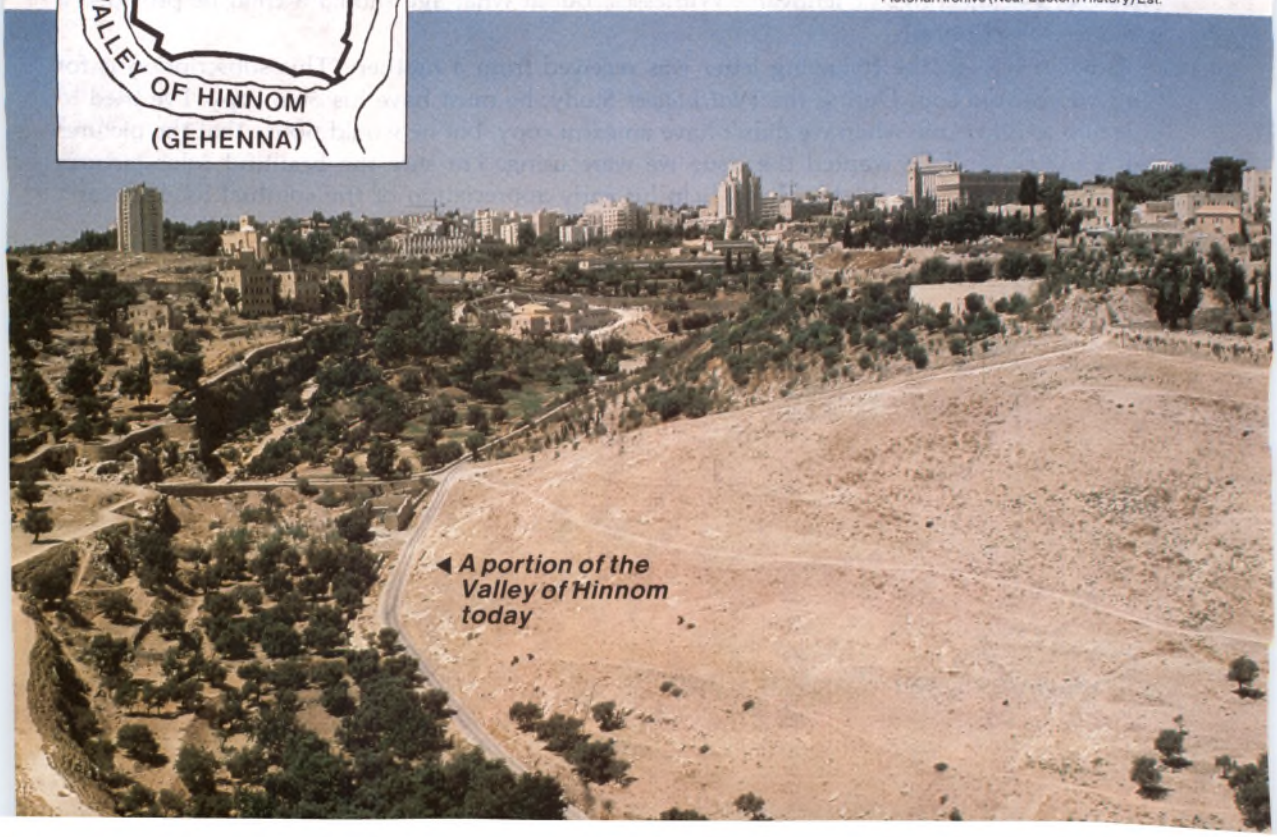

◀ *A portion of the Valley of Hinnom today*

TO CULTIVATE in their youngsters a desire to learn, wise parents make fine literature readily available to them. Many, for example, see to it that their children have a personal subscription for the Bible journal *The Watchtower*, which is used as the basis for weekly Bible discussions at meetings of Jehovah's Witnesses. But at what age should a child be provided a personal subscription?

Earlier this year, the following letter was received from a mother: "This subscription is for our two-year-old son. During the *Watchtower* Study, he must have his own copy. I've tried to give him another one when we didn't have an extra copy, but he would notice that the pictures didn't match, and he wanted the issue we were using. I'm sure the beautiful color pictures impress even a young child and will help his early appreciation of the spiritual food he can't understand as yet."