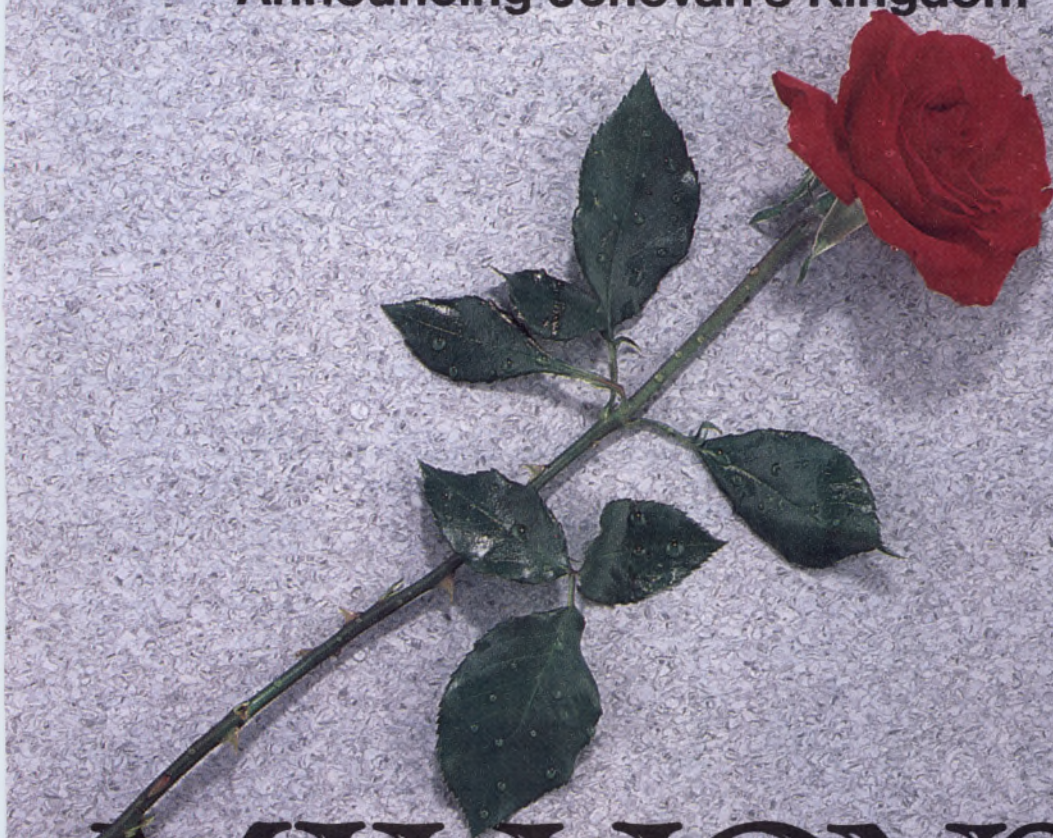


The **Watchtower** May 1, 1990
Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom



**MILLIONS
NOW DEAD
WILL LIVE AGAIN**

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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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When Death Takes a Loved One

"IN 1981 my mother died of cancer. She was my adoptive mother. Her death was very hard on me and my adoptive brother. I was 17, and my brother was 11. I missed my mother so much. I was raised a Catholic, and having been taught that she was in heaven, well, I wanted to take my own life to be with her. She was my best friend."
—Roberta, 25 years old.

Have you had a similar experience? If so, you know firsthand the pain that accompanies the loss of a loved one. It seems so unfair that death should have the power to take away someone you love. And when it happens, the thought of never again being able to talk to, to laugh with, or to hold your loved one can be most difficult to bear. And as Roberta's words indicate, that pain

is not erased by being told that your loved one is up in heaven.

How, though, would you feel if you knew that it is possible to be reunited with your dead loved one in the near future, no, not up in heaven but right here on earth under peaceful, righteous conditions? And what if you also learned that at that time humans will have the prospect of enjoying perfect health and that they will never have to die? 'Surely wishful thinking!' you may say.

Yet, back in the first century C.E., Jesus Christ boldly stated: "I am the resurrection and the life. He that exercises faith in me, even though he dies, will come to life." (John 11:25) That was a promise that the dead will live again—a thrilling prospect indeed!

Perhaps, though, you are wondering: 'Is there a sound basis for believing in such a promise? How can I be sure that it is not just wishful thinking? And if there is a basis for believing it, what may the fulfillment of this promise mean for me and my loved ones?' The following article will discuss these and other questions.



Millions Now Dead Will Live Again

MILLIONS now dead will live again —what a heart-stirring hope! But is it realistic? What would it take to convince you? To believe in a promise, you would need to be sure that the one making the promise is both willing and able to fulfill it. Who, then, is it that promises that millions now dead will live again?

In the spring of 31 C.E., Jesus Christ boldly stated that he had been empowered by Jehovah God to resurrect the dead. Jesus promised: "Just as the Father raises the dead up and makes them alive, so the Son also makes those alive whom he wants to. Do not marvel at this, because the hour is coming in which all those in the memorial tombs will hear his [Jesus'] voice and come out." (John 5:21, 28, 29) Yes, Jesus Christ promised that millions now dead will live again on this earth and have the prospect of remaining on it forever. (John 3:16; 17:3; compare Psalm 37:29 and Matthew 5:5.)* Since Jesus made the promise, it is safe to assume that he is willing to fulfill it. But is he able to do so?

According to the Bible record, up to the time that Jesus made that promise, he had never resurrected anyone. But less than two years later, he demonstrated in a powerful way that he is both willing and able to perform the resurrection.

"Lazarus, Come On Out!"

It was a touching scene. Lazarus was gravely ill. His two sisters, Mary and Martha, sent word to Jesus, who was across the Jordan River: "Lord, see! the one for whom you have affection

is sick." (John 11:3) Yes, Jesus loved this family very much. He had been a guest at their home in Bethany, perhaps frequently. (Luke 10:38-42; compare Luke 9:58.) But now Jesus' dear friend was very sick.

What, though, did Mary and Martha expect Jesus to do? They did not ask him to come to Bethany. But they knew that Jesus loved Lazarus. Would not Jesus want to see his sick friend? Undoubtedly they hoped that Jesus would miraculously heal him. After all, by this time in his ministry, Jesus had performed many miracles of healing, and not even distance was a barrier for him. (Compare Matthew 8:5-13.) Would he do any less for such a dear friend? Curiously, instead of going to Bethany immediately, Jesus stayed where he was for the next two days. —John 11:5, 6.

Lazarus died some time after the message was sent, perhaps by the time that Jesus received the news. (Compare John 11:3, 6, 17.) But no further message was necessary. Jesus knew when Lazarus died, and he intended to do something about it. Speaking about Lazarus' death, he told his disciples: "Lazarus our friend has gone to rest, but I am journeying there to awaken him from sleep." (John 11:11) Jesus had previously raised two persons from the dead, in each case shortly after

* See the article "Exercise Faith for Everlasting Life," pages 23-8.

***Jesus' raising of Jairus' daughter
gives basis for faith in a future
resurrection of the dead***

the person died.* This time, however, would be different. By the time Jesus finally arrived in Bethany, his dear friend had been dead four days. (John 11:17, 39) Could Jesus bring back to life someone who had been dead that long and whose body had already begun to decompose?

On hearing that Jesus was coming, Martha, a woman of action, ran out to meet him. (Compare Luke 10:38-42.) As soon as she met Jesus, her heart prompted her to say: "Lord, if you had been here my brother would not have died." Still, she expressed her faith: "I know that as many things as you ask God for, God will give you." Touched by her sorrow, Jesus assured her: "Your brother will rise." When she indicated her faith in a future resurrection, Jesus plainly told her: "I am the resurrection and the life. He that exercises faith in me, even though he dies, will come to life."—John 11:20-25.

Upon arriving at the tomb, Jesus directed that the stone closing its entrance be taken away. At first Martha objected: "Lord, by now he must smell, for it is four days." But Jesus assured her: "Did I not tell you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?" Then, after praying aloud, he commanded: "Lazarus, come on out!" At Jesus' command Lazarus came out, even though he had been dead four days! —John 11:38-44.

* During the time that elapsed after Jesus made the promise recorded at John 5:28, 29 and the death of Lazarus, Jesus raised the son of the widow of Nain and the daughter of Jairus.—Luke 7:11-17; 8:40-56.

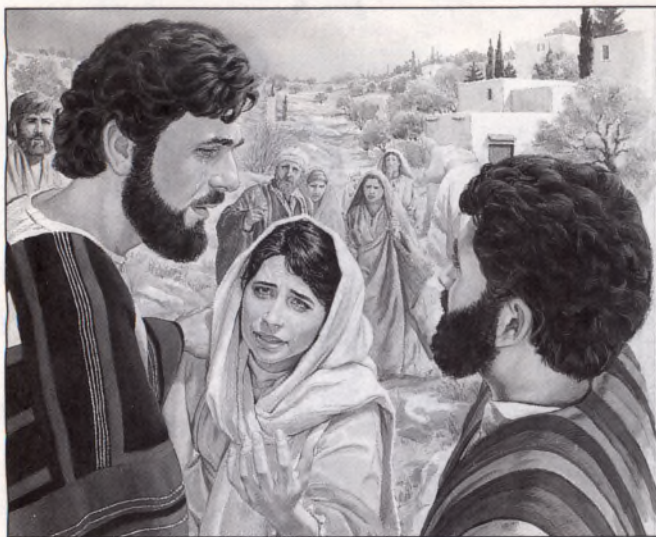


Did It Really Happen?

The account of the raising of Lazarus is presented in the Gospel of John as a historical fact. The details are too vivid for it to be a mere allegory. To question its historicity is to question all the miracles of the Bible, including the resurrection of Jesus Christ himself.* And to deny the resurrection of Jesus is to deny Christian faith as a whole.—1 Corinthians 15:13-15.

Actually, if you accept the existence of God, you should have no problem exercising faith in the resurrection. To illustrate: A person can videotape his last will and testament, and after he dies his relatives and friends can see and hear him, in effect, as he explains how his estate is to be handled. A hundred years ago, such a thing was unthinkable. And to some people now living in remote parts of the world, the "miracle" of video recording is beyond comprehension. If scientific principles established by the Creator can be used by humans to reconstruct such a visible and audible scene, should not the Creator be able to do far more? Is it not reasonable, then, that

* See chapter 6, "The Miracles—Did They Really Happen?" in the book *The Bible—God's Word or Man's?* published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.



Jesus was deeply moved by the death of Lazarus

the One who created life is capable of resurrecting a person by reproducing his personality in a newly formed body?

The miracle of Lazarus' restoration to life served to increase faith in Jesus and the resurrection. (John 11:41, 42; 12:9-11, 17-19) In a touching way, it also reveals the willingness and desire of Jehovah and his Son to perform the resurrection.

'God Will Have a Yearning'

The response of Jesus to Lazarus' death reveals a very tender side of the Son of God. His deep feelings on this occasion clearly indicate his intense desire to resurrect the dead. We read: "Mary, when she arrived where Jesus was and caught sight of him, fell at his feet, saying to him: 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.' Jesus, therefore, when he saw her weeping and the Jews that came with her weeping, groaned in the spirit and became troubled; and he said: 'Where have you laid him?' They said to him: 'Lord, come and see.' Jesus gave way to tears. Therefore the Jews began to say: 'See, what affection he used to have for him!'"—John 11:32-36.

Jesus' heartfelt compassion is here indicated by three expressions: "groaned," "became trou-

bled," and "gave way to tears." The original-language words used by the apostle John in recording this touching scene indicate the degree to which Jesus was moved with emotion.

The Greek word rendered "groaned" is from a verb (*em-bri-ma'o-mai*) that signifies to be painfully, or deeply, moved. Bible commentator William Barclay notes: "In ordinary classical Greek the usual usage of [*em-bri-ma'o-mai*] is of a horse *snorting*. Here it can only mean that such deep emotion seized Jesus that an involuntary groan was wrung from His heart."

The expression translated "troubled" comes from a Greek word (*ta-ras'so*) that indicates agitation. According to *The New Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, it means "to cause one inward commotion, . . . to affect with great pain or sorrow." The expression "gave way to tears" comes from a Greek verb (*da-kry'o*) that means "to shed tears, weep silently." This is in contrast with the "weeping" of Mary and the Jews with her, mentioned at John 11:33. There the Greek word (from *klai'o*) used means to weep audibly or loudly.*

Jesus, then, was deeply moved by the death of his dear friend Lazarus and the sight of Lazarus' sister weeping. Jesus' heart was so filled

* Interestingly, the Greek word for weeping audibly (*klai'o*) is used of Jesus on the occasion when he foretold the coming destruction of Jerusalem. Luke's account says: "When he got nearby, he viewed the city [Jerusalem] and *wept* over it."—Luke 19:41.

with emotion that his eyes brimmed over with tears. What is so remarkable is that Jesus had previously brought two others back to life. And on this occasion he fully intended to do the same with Lazarus. (John 11: 11, 23, 25) Yet, he “gave way to tears.” Restoring humans to life, then, is not a mere procedure for Jesus. His tender and deep feelings

The joy of those who witness the resurrection will be like the joy of the widow of Nain when Jesus resurrected her dead son

as manifested on this occasion clearly indicate his intense desire to undo the ravages of death.

Since Jesus is ‘the exact representation of Jehovah God’s very being,’ we rightly expect no less of our heavenly Father. (Hebrews 1:3) Of Jehovah’s own willingness to perform the resurrection, the faithful man Job said: “If an able-bodied man dies can he live again? . . . You will call, and I myself shall answer you. For the work of your hands *you will have a yearning.*” (Job 14: 14, 15) The original-language word that is rendered “you will have a yearning” denotes earnest longing and desire. (Genesis 31:30; Psalm 84:2) Clearly, Jehovah must keenly anticipate the resurrection.

Can we really believe the resurrection promise? Well, there is no doubt that Jehovah and his Son are both willing and able to fulfill it. What does this mean for you? You have the prospect of being reunited with dead loved ones right here on earth under peaceful conditions!

That is now Roberta’s hope (as mentioned in the previous article). Several years after her mother died, Jehovah’s Witnesses helped her to make a careful study of the Bible. She recalls: “After learning about the resurrection hope, I cried. It was wonderful to know that I will see my mother again.” If your heart similarly yearns to see a loved one again, no doubt you will want to learn more about this marvelous prospect. The certainty of this hope is discussed in greater detail on pages 18-28 of this magazine.



The Illustration of the Talents

JESUS continues the discussion with his apostles on the Mount of Olives by telling them another illustration, the second in a series of three. A few days earlier, while he was at Jericho, he told the illustration of the minas to show that the Kingdom was yet a long time in the future. The illustration he relates now, while having a number of similar features, describes in its fulfillment activities during Christ's presence in Kingdom power. It illustrates that his disciples must work while still on earth to increase "his belongings."

Jesus begins: "For it [that is, circumstances connected with the Kingdom] is just as when a man, about to travel abroad, summoned slaves of his and committed to them his belongings." Jesus is the man who, before traveling abroad to heaven, commits to his slaves—disciples in line for the heavenly Kingdom—his belongings. These belongings are not physical possessions but represent a cultivated field into which he has built a potential for bringing forth more disciples.

Jesus entrusts his belongings to his slaves shortly before ascending to heaven. How so? By instructing them to keep on working in the cultivated field by preaching the Kingdom message to the most distant parts of the earth. As Jesus says: "To one he gave five talents, to another two, to still another one, to each one according to his own ability, and he went abroad."

The eight talents—Christ's belongings—are thus distributed according to



the abilities, or spiritual possibilities, of the slaves. The slaves stand for classes of disciples. In the first century, the class that received the five talents evidently included the apostles. Jesus goes on to relate that the slaves who received the five and the two talents both doubled them by their Kingdom preaching and making of disciples. However, the slave who received the one talent hid it in the ground.

"After a long time," Jesus continues, "the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them." It was not until the 20th century, some 1,900 years later, that Christ returned to settle accounts, so it was, indeed, "after a long time." Then Jesus explains:

"The one that had received five talents came forward and brought five additional talents, saying, 'Master, you committed five talents to me; see, I gained five talents more.' His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave! You were faithful over a few things. I will appoint you over many things. Enter into the joy of your master.'" The slave that received two talents likewise doubled his talents, and he received the same commendation and reward.

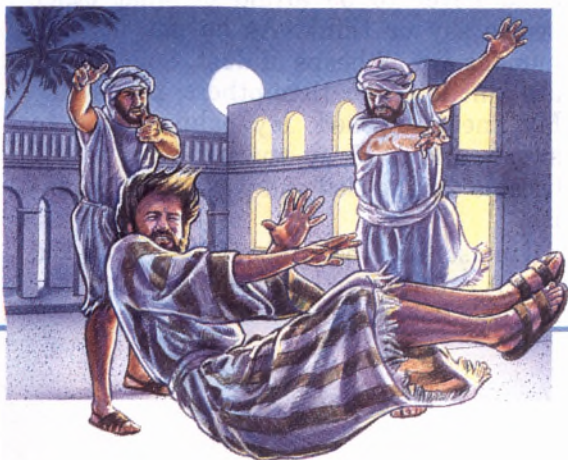
How, though, do these faithful slaves enter into the joy of their Master? Well,

the joy of their Master, Jesus Christ, was that of receiving possession of the Kingdom when he went abroad to his Father in heaven. As for the faithful slaves in modern times, they have great joy in being entrusted with further Kingdom responsibilities, and as they finish their earthly course, they will have the culminating joy of being resurrected to the heavenly Kingdom. But what about the third slave?

"Master, I knew you to be an exacting man," this slave complains. "So I grew afraid and went off and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours." The slave deliberately refused to work in the cultivated field by preaching and making disciples. So the master calls him "wicked and sluggish" and pronounces the judgment: "Take away the talent from him . . . And throw the good-for-nothing slave out into the darkness outside. There is where his weeping and the gnashing of his teeth will be." Those of this evil slave class, being cast outside, are deprived of any spiritual joy.

This sets forth a solemn lesson for *all* who profess to be followers of Christ. They must work for the increase of the belongings of their heavenly Master by having a full share in the preaching work if they are to enjoy his commendation and reward and if they are to avoid being thrown into the darkness outside and ultimate destruction. Are you diligent to use your abilities in this regard?

Matthew 25:14-30.



- ♦ What lesson does this next illustration teach?
- ♦ Who are the slaves, and what are the belongings with which they are entrusted?
- ♦ When does the master come to settle accounts, and what does he find?
- ♦ What is the joy the faithful slave enters into, and what happens to the wicked slave?

COPING WITH MY WEAKNESSES

As told by Thomas Addison

WHEN I was a boy, a harmless bird on the pathway would send me scurrying off on a wide detour. When relatives or friends came to visit, they would find an uncommunicative child hiding behind his mother's skirt. My normal reaction to visitors was to retreat to the bedroom as quickly as possible. I became tongue-tied in the presence of anyone in authority, especially schoolteachers.

What enabled me to change? How did such a painfully shy youngster become able to speak in recent years to audiences of thousands at large conventions?

Parental 'Bending of the Twig'

My parents—especially Father, a lean, energetic Scotsman—found me a difficult child to understand. Orphaned at 13 years of age, he was a real diamond in the rough. He learned to fend for himself from an early age. Mother, on the other



hand, was a farmer's daughter and was mildness personified. My training from infancy was kind and firm, yet not overly protective.

At six years of age, in 1945, I made my debut in the Theocratic Ministry School. My first talk was by the light of a kerosene lantern in a small Australian congregation of just three families. Well in advance, Father helped me prepare, explaining the advantages of extemporaneous speaking. He also emphasized never to be afraid of what other people say or think. As he put it: "We humans are all heaps of dust. Some heaps are a little larger than others, that's all." My knees knocked, my palms began to sweat, and halfway through the talk, I became tongue-tied and was unable to finish.

I must have been about ten years old when Father took me and my younger brother Robert onto the main street of

town, right out in front of the local cinema. There we held up the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines in full view of our fellow school students. The magazines felt as heavy as lead, and sometimes they would end up behind my back! I would desperately try to shrink into an inconspicuous position.

However, as I watched Father's bold example, I was tremendously encouraged. He always said that to shrink back was to give in to Satan and fear of men. Another test came at school. World War II had not long ended, and nationalism in Australia was still strong. My sister Ellerie and I would remain seated during school assembly when the national anthem was played. I found it a real test to stand out as different, but again my parents' constant support and encouragement helped me not to compromise.

Father's Fine Example

Considering Father's background and disposition, he was really very patient with me. He began working in coal mines in England when he was a lad of only 13. In his early 20's, he emigrated to Australia to seek a better life. But the financial depression of the 1930's had set in, and he accepted work under appalling conditions to provide for his family.

Father was disillusioned with conditions generally and with politics in particular, so when he read the Watch Tower Society's books and their fearless exposé of political, commercial, and religious hypocrisy, it struck a responsive chord in him. It was not long before he made his dedication to serve Jehovah, shortly after Mother had done so. Despite suffering a collapsed lung in a mine cave-in and having no particular work skill, Father took our family to serve in places where there was a spiritual need. His reliance on Jehovah left a deep impression on me.

I recall, for instance, moving to a small coal-mining town where the only Witnesses were two elderly sisters, both with unbelieving husbands. Housing was difficult to obtain, but finally we were able to rent an old house miles out of town. Our only means of travel was by foot or by bicycle. Then, early one morning, while we three children were away staying with friends, the house burned to the ground. Our parents escaped with their lives, but nothing else was saved. We had no insurance and no money.

Father was reminiscing about this not long before his death in 1982. He said: "Do you remember, son, how at first the situation looked grim, but Jehovah stood by us? Why, after the fire, the brothers in Perth sent furniture, clothing, and money. Because of their generosity, we were better off than before the fire!" At first I thought Father presumed a little when he spoke so much of Jehovah's help in our lives. However, the frequent experiences of what he called divine help became too numerous to explain in any other way.

Mother's Positive Thinking

One of my big problems has always been negative thinking. Mother often asked: "Why do you always see the dark side of life?" Her own example of looking on the bright side was an incentive for me to keep making an effort to think more positively.

Recently, Mother spoke of an incident in a small farming town soon after we moved there. A remark by the local doctor amused her. He had assumed that our parents were well-to-do, observing their neat dress and well-groomed appearance. The truth was that our home consisted of a large barn, with partitions constructed of burlap bags. There was no electricity, gas, or running water. One day a bull tried

to break through the front door. You can guess where I was: under the bed!

Mother carried our water from a well 200 yards away, using a pair of four-gallon drums attached to a yoke across her shoulders. She had the knack of seeing the funny side of inconveniences and, with a little prompting from Father, viewed any difficult situation as a challenge to be overcome instead of as an obstacle. She would point out that even though we did not have much in a material way, we enjoyed many positive blessings.

For example, we spent many happy days traveling to distant territories to preach, camping under the stars, cooking bacon and eggs on an open fire, and singing Kingdom songs as we traveled. Father would provide the music on his accordion. Yes, in these ways we were indeed rich. In some country towns, we rented small halls and advertised public talks, which we presented on Sunday afternoons.

Sometimes, because of Father's recurring health problems, Mother needed to do secular work to supplement his income. For years she nursed her own mother and grandfather and finally our father before they died. This she did without complaint. Though I still had periodic bouts of depression and often had a negative attitude, Mother's example and gentle prodgings gave me the desire to keep on trying.

Coping With Depression

In my late teens, all the childhood frailties that I thought had subsided came back with a vengeance. Questions about life perplexed me. I began to wonder, 'Do all individuals have an equal opportunity to know and serve Jehovah?' For example, what about a child born in India or China? Surely his opportunity to get to know Jehovah would be much more limited than that of a child favored by being raised by

Witness parents. This seemed unfair! Also, genetics and environment, over which a child has no control, must play a major role. In so many ways, life seemed unjust. I wrangled with my parents for hours over such questions. I also worried about my appearance. There were many things I did not like about myself.

As I mulled over these matters, it made me depressed, sometimes for weeks on end. My personal appearance suffered. A number of times, I secretly contemplated suicide. There were times I derived a sense of satisfaction from basking in self-pity. I saw myself as a misunderstood martyr. I became withdrawn and once, without warning, suddenly experienced a frightening sensation. Everything around me seemed unreal, as if I were looking out through a foggy window.

This episode jolted me into the realization that self-pity is potentially dangerous. In prayer to Jehovah, I resolved to make a determined effort not to give in to self-pity again. I began to concentrate on positive, Scriptural thoughts. From that time on, I read with more than the usual attention every article in the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines that highlighted personality traits and then filed them away in a folder. I also took careful note of points made in the *Kingdom Ministry* on how to converse with others.

My first goal was to try to converse for as long as possible with one person at each Christian meeting. At the outset, each such conversation lasted only about a minute. As a result, many times I came home feeling despondent. However, with persistence my ability to converse slowly improved.

I also began to do a lot of personal research on the perplexing questions I had. Additionally, I gave attention to my physical diet and found that by taking a nutritional supplement, my disposition

and stamina improved. Later I learned that other factors could trigger depression. For example, I sometimes became so intense about a particular interest that I would reach an emotional high. This invariably led to a low, resulting in loss of energy and then depression. The answer was to learn to be persistently interested in a matter but not excitedly intense. Even to this day, I have to be on guard.

The next step was to grasp the goal my parents had always held before us children, namely, the full-time ministry. My sister's determination to hold on to this privilege of pioneering for more than 35 years remains a positive stimulus for me.

Coping With My Son's Problem

After some years as a single pioneer, I married a fellow pioneer, Josefa. She has been a fine complement to me in every way. In time, three children were born to us. Craig, our oldest, was born in 1972 with severe cerebral palsy. His condition has been a real challenge, since he is unable to do anything for himself except awkwardly spoon his food. Of course, we love him dearly, so I pursued all avenues to help him become more independent. I made a variety of walking aids for him. We consulted many specialists but had limited success. It has brought home to me that some circumstances in this life must be accepted.

During the first 12 years of his life, Craig would suddenly stop eating and drinking. This was accompanied by involuntary retching. Neurological damage was thought to be the cause. He would begin literally to fade away before our eyes. Prayer helped us to cope, and prescribed medication has helped control the problem. Happily, Craig seemed to rally just in the nick of time, and once again he would delight us with his captivating smile and endless repertoire of songs.

Josefa found adjusting to this heart-rending situation very difficult at first. But her love and patience in caring for Craig's every need eventually won out. This has meant that we have been able to continue to move to wherever the need for Christian help is greater. With Josefa's support and practical help, I was able to work part-time for a number of years, allowing me to auxiliary pioneer as well as support our family.

Need to Think Positively

When Craig is depressed because of repeated illness or the frustration of his limitations, we strengthen him with one of my favorite scriptures: "We are not the sort that shrink back." (Hebrews 10:39) He knows it by heart, and it always has an encouraging effect on him.

Since Craig was quite young, he has had a particular love for field service. By using a special wheelchair, he is often able to join us. He particularly enjoys coming with us when, from time to time, I serve other congregations in substitute circuit work. His limited comments at the group study and his constant talking about Bible stories at the special school that he attended, had an impact that we who have no handicaps did not make. Craig has thus reminded me that regardless of our limitations, Jehovah can use us to further his will and purpose.

Some time ago I had the privilege of being an instructor at the Kingdom Ministry School. After all my years in the ministry, I was still quite nervous at the start. But soon, by relying on Jehovah, my nerves calmed down, and once again I felt Jehovah's sustaining power.

Looking back on about 50 years of life now, I am convinced that only Jehovah could lovingly train an individual such as me, making a spiritual man of him.

The WASHINGTON CODEX of the Gospels

IN DECEMBER 1906, Charles L. Freer, a wealthy American industrialist and art collector, purchased some old manuscripts from an Arab dealer named Ali, in Giza, Egypt. Ali said that they had come from the White Monastery near Sohâg, but it seems more likely that they were found in the ruins of the Monastery of the Vinedresser, near the third pyramid of Giza in the Nile Delta.

Freer was handed three manuscripts and "a blackened, decayed lump of parchment as hard and brittle on the exterior as glue." This measured some 6.5 inches long, 4.5 inches wide, and 1.5 inches thick and was sold with the manuscripts simply because it was associated with them, not for any supposed value of its own. It was a painstaking, delicate operation to separate the coagulated mass of fragmentary leaves, but eventually 84 of them were revealed, all from a fifth or sixth century C.E. codex of Paul's letters.

One of the remaining three manuscripts was of the books Deuteronomy and Joshua. Another was of the Psalms, from the Greek Septuagint translation. The third and most important of all, however, was a manuscript of the four Gospels.

This latter manuscript consists of 187 leaves of fine parchment, mostly sheepskin, written in slanting Greek uncials (capitals). Punctuation is rare, but there are frequently small spaces between phrases. The edges of the manuscript were all



badly decayed, but most of the writing has been preserved. It was later presented to the Freer Gallery of Art of the Smithsonian Institution, in Washington, D.C. Called the Washington Codex of the Gospels, it was given the identifying letter "W."

The parchment has been dated to the late fourth or early fifth century C.E., so that it ranks not far behind the important trio of the Sinaitic, Vatican, and Alexandrine manuscripts. The Gospels (complete except for two lost leaves) are in the so-called Western order of Matthew, John, Luke, and Mark.

The reading of the manuscript discloses an unusual mixture of text types, each represented by large, continuous sections. It appears to have been copied from surviving fragments of several manuscripts, each with a different type of text. Professor H. A. Sanders suggested that this might go back to the sudden persecution of Christians by Emperor Diocletian in the year 303 C.E., by whose edict all copies of the Scriptures were ordered to be publicly burned. We know from historical records that some manuscripts were hidden at that



Courtesy of Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution

time. It seems that an unknown person decades later copied surviving parts of different manuscripts to produce the text of the Washington Codex. Later, the first quire of John (John 1:1 to 5:11) was lost at some time and had to be rewritten in the seventh century C.E.

There are some interesting variations in the text and an unusual, but discounted, addition to Mark chapter 16 that probably originated as a marginal note. The manuscript's special value lies in its affiliation with the old Latin and Syriac versions. Blots caused by candle tallow dropping onto the parchment indicate that it was well-used.

Despite persecution and opposition and the ravages of time, the Bible has been wonderfully preserved for us in many manuscript forms. Truly, "the saying of Jehovah endures forever."—1 Peter 1:25; Isaiah 40:8.

What Is "Needed"?

THIS W Codex of the Gospels has played a part in the translation of a comment by Jesus to Martha, sister of his close friend Lazarus. When Jesus visited the family, Martha thought it most important to get Jesus a fine meal, but he kindly suggested she follow the example of her sister Mary, who sat down at his feet to listen to him. He said: "A few things, though, are needed, or just one. For her part, Mary chose the good portion, and it will not be taken away from her."—Luke 10:42.

These words translate the Greek text of 1881 prepared by Westcott and Hort, the basis for the *New World Translation*. A footnote to the 1984 Reference Edition of this Bible shows that this reading was from the

Sinaitic (Ⲱ) and Vatican (B) manuscripts, both representative of the same text type. But the Alexandrine (A) manuscript reads: "One thing, though, is necessary. For her part . . ." As the footnote points out, Codex W, as well as the Chester Beatty papyrus (P⁴⁵) and the Bodmer papyrus (P⁷⁵), both of the third century C.E., agrees with this latter rendering. But all these manuscripts came to light long after Westcott and Hort published their text in the year 1881, so that they had no opportunity to consider this alternative rendering. Whichever version of the text we choose to recognize today, however, Jesus clearly tells us to put spiritual things first in our lives—advice we do well to follow.

**Scenes From
the Promised Land**

ON FROM
TABOR
TO VICTORY!



Pictorial Archive (Near Eastern History) Est.

IMAGINE being in a tower looking down on a place where the paths of history crossed! You could actually witness history in the making.

The Biblical site of Megiddo might best fit that description, for it was astride vital trade and military routes. Yet, across the Valley of Jezreel rises Mount Tabor, which also looked down on the Via Maris, the famous route to cities of the Fertile Crescent.*

If you look at Tabor from almost anywhere in the region, you cannot help but be impressed. (Compare Jeremiah 46:18.) Tabor rises in splendid isolation from its surroundings, its cone shape being recognizable from all directions. It towers over the plain running before it on the south, the fertile Jezreel Valley, which connects the coast with the Jordan Valley.

From the gently rounded summit of Tabor, you can look south toward the city of Jezreel, which may call to mind Jehu's furious ride up to Ahab's royal residence and Jezebel's ignominious end. (1 Kings

21:1; 2 Kings 9:16-33) Nearby is Megiddo. Westward you can see Mount Carmel, where Elijah held the fire test. (1 Kings, chapter 18) From Tabor you can also see where the river Kishon flows toward the sea, and some five miles west northwest in the hills of lower Galilee is Nazareth.

But what Bible account does the mention of Tabor call to your mind? Likely that of Deborah and Barak. During their time, the Canaanites under King Jabin of Hazor had oppressed Israel for 20 years. Then the prophetess Deborah spurred Barak to action. He, in turn, roused up ten thousand Israelites, mainly of the tribes of Naphtali and Zebulun in Galilee, and had them assemble on Tabor. They were poorly armed, for there was not a shield or a lance in Israel.—Judges 5:7-17.

An awesome military machine came against them. Jabin's general Sisera brought heavily armed Canaanite warriors to the Valley of Jezreel. They must have looked somewhat like the armed men shown in the wall carving from Egypt illustrated on the next page, top right. The war equipment of Egypt influenced that used in Canaan, including the most terrifying part of Sisera's weaponry—900 war chariots!

Those Canaanite chariots would have been veritable mobile firing platforms. The driver might have wrapped the reins around his waist so that his hands were free for handling weapons. Or he might have concentrated on his charging horses while a companion employed the weaponry. The chariots had iron scythes extending from the wheel hubs. To Barak's men looking down from Tabor, the massed chariots must

* See the map and the large, clear photograph of Tabor in the 1990 Calendar of Jehovah's Witnesses.

have seemed frighteningly unstoppable, invincible.

Yet, Jehovah had promised Barak: "I shall certainly draw to you at the torrent valley of Kishon Sisera . . . and his war chariots and his crowd." At the right moment, the valiant Israelites poured down the side of Tabor.—Judges 4: 1-14.

Of more value than the mere advantage of surprise was the help Israel received from their powerful God in heaven. Deborah later sang: "From heaven did the stars fight, from their orbits they fought against Sisera. The torrent of Kishon washed them away . . . You went treading down strength, O my soul." (Judges 5:20, 21) Yes, though the lightly equipped but courageous Israelites put the armed Canaanites to flight, God determined the real outcome. He caused a sudden overwhelming torrent in the dry riverbed, immobilizing the frightful chariots.

Below you see part of the river Kishon. In the rainy season, it can overflow its banks and turn the area into a marsh. Picture the Canaanite war chariots trying to escape through such mud. The raging waters carried off some fleeing soldiers or chariots, or both. Israel's victory even overtook General



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Sisera, who had abandoned his chariot, escaping on foot from the scene of battle. After he took refuge in the tent of the woman Jael, she picked a choice time and put this enemy to death.—Judges 4:17-22.

Thus, a vital and triumphant chapter in Israel's history unfolded before Deborah and any others who might have been watching from the prominence of Mount Tabor.



Pictorial Archive (Near Eastern History) Est.





Your View of the Soul Affects Your Life

"The man came to be a living soul."—GENESIS 2:7.

NEARLY all religions teach that man has an immortal soul. The *New Catholic Encyclopedia* says that the soul is "created by God and infused into the body at conception." It also says that the doctrine of the immortal soul "is one of the cornerstones" of Christendom's churches. Similarly, "the Moslem concept," states *The New Encyclopædia Britannica*, "holds that the soul comes into existence at the same time as the body; thereafter, it has a life of its own, its union with the body being a temporary condition."

² Such religions believe that the soul

1, 2. What do most religions believe regarding man and the soul?

leaves the body at the instant of death and lives on eternally, its destiny being heavenly bliss, a temporary stay in purgatory, or eternal torment in a fiery hell. Death is viewed as the doorway to eternal life in the spirit realm. As one writer said in the book *We Believe in Immortality*: "I view Death as a great and glorious adventure. I view Death as a divine promotion."

³ Hindus, Buddhists, and others believe in transmigration. This includes the belief that at death the soul is reincarnated, reborn as another human or another living thing. If a person had been good, it is said that his soul would be reborn as a person

3. What is the belief of various Eastern religions?

of higher station. But if he had been bad, he would be reborn as a person of lower station or even as an animal or an insect.

⁴ However, what if humans do not have an immortal soul? What if death is not “a divine promotion,” not the immediate doorway to eternal spirit life or to re-incarnation for all who die? Then the immortal-soul belief would lead one in the wrong direction. The book *Official Catholic Teachings* says that the church insists on the immortal-soul belief because not believing it “would render meaningless or unintelligible her prayers, her funeral rites and the religious acts offered for the dead.” So one’s course of life, worship, and eternal future are involved.—Proverbs 14:12; Matthew 15:9.

⁵ It is important to know the truth about this belief. Jesus said: “Those worshiping [God] must worship with spirit and truth.” (John 4:24) The truth about the human soul is found in God’s Word, the Bible. The inspired Scriptures contain God’s revelation of his purposes, so we can be confident that it tells us the truth. (1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:16, 17) Jesus said in prayer to God: “Your word is truth.”—John 17:17.

Created With an Immortal Soul?

⁶ Genesis 2:7 tells us: “Jehovah God proceeded to form the man out of dust from the ground and to blow into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man came to be a living soul.” The account does not say that God implanted in man an immortal soul. It says that when God’s power energized Adam’s body, he “came to be a living soul.” So man *is* a soul. He does not *have* a soul.

4, 5. Why is it important to know the truth about the soul?

6. What does the Genesis account clearly tell us about man’s creation?

⁷ God created Adam to live on earth, not in heaven. Earth was not to be a mere testing ground to see if Adam qualified for heaven. God formed the earth “to be inhabited,” and Adam was its first human inhabitant. (Isaiah 45:18; 1 Corinthians 15:45) Later, when God created Eve as a wife for Adam, God’s purpose for them was that they should populate the earth and turn it into a paradise as humankind’s eternal home.—Genesis 1:26-31; Psalm 37:29.

⁸ Nowhere does the Bible say that part of Adam was immortal. On the contrary, his existence was conditional, based on obedience to God’s law. If he broke that law, what then? Eternal life in the spirit realm? Not at all. Instead, he would “positively die.” (Genesis 2:17) He would go back where he came from: “Dust you are and to dust you will return.” (Genesis 2:7; 3:19) Adam had no existence before he was created, and he would have none after he died. So he had only two choices: (1) obedience and life or (2) disobedience and death. If Adam had not sinned, he would have lived on earth forever. He would never have gone to heaven.

⁹ Adam disobeyed, and he died. (Genesis 5:5) Death was his punishment. It was not a doorway to a “glorious adventure” but a doorway to nonexistence. Thus, death is not a friend but is what the Bible calls it, an “enemy.” (1 Corinthians 15:26) If Adam had had an immortal soul that would go to heaven if he was obedient, then death would have been a blessing. But it was not. It was a curse. And with Adam’s sin, the curse of death spread to all humans because all are his offspring.—Romans 5:12.

7. Why were humans put on earth?

8. (a) On what was Adam’s existence conditional? (b) If Adam had not sinned, where would he have continued to live?

9. What does the Bible correctly call death, and why?



They are all souls

¹⁰ Further, if Adam had been created with an immortal soul that would be tormented forever in a fiery hell if he sinned, why was he not warned about this? Why was he only told that he would die and return to dust? How unfair it would have been to condemn Adam to an eternity of torture for disobedience, yet not warn him about it! However, with God "there is no injustice." (Deuteronomy 32:4) There was no need to warn Adam about a fiery hell for the immortal souls of the wicked. Such a hell did not exist, nor did immortal souls exist. (Jeremiah 19:5; 32:35) There is no eternal torment in the dust of the ground.

Bible's Use of "Soul"

¹¹ In the Hebrew Scriptures, the English word "soul" comes from the Hebrew word *ne'phesh*, which appears over 750 times. Its equivalent in the Greek Scriptures is *psy-khe'*, which appears over 100 times. The *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures* consistently renders these words as "soul." Other Bibles may use a

variety of words. Some of the ways the *King James Version* translates *ne'phesh* are: appetite, beast, body, breath, creature, dead (body), desire, heart, life, man, mind, person, self, soul, thing. And it translates *psy-khe'* as: heart, life, mind, soul.

¹² The Bible calls sea creatures *ne'phesh*: "Every living soul that is in the waters." (Leviticus 11:10) The word can refer to land animals: "Let the earth put forth living souls according to their kinds, domestic animal and moving animal and wild beast." (Genesis 1:24) Hundreds of times *ne'phesh* means people. "All the souls who issued out of Jacob's upper thigh came to be seventy souls." (Exodus 1:5) An example of *psy-khe'* being used this way is 1 Peter 3:20. It tells of Noah's ark, "in which a few people, that is, eight souls, were carried safely through the water."

¹³ The Bible uses the word "soul" in many other ways. Genesis 9:5 says: "Your blood of your souls shall I ask back." Here the soul is said to have blood. Exodus 12:16 says: "Only what every soul needs to eat, that alone may be done for you." In this case the soul is said to eat. Deuteronomy 24:7 speaks of a man "kidnapping a soul of his brothers." Surely it was not an immortal soul that was kidnapped. Psalm 119:28 says: "My soul has been sleepless from grief." So the soul can even lose sleep. The Bible also shows that the soul is mortal. It dies. "That soul must be cut off from his people." (Leviticus 7:20) "He may not come toward any dead soul." (Numbers 6:6) "Our souls are to die." (Joshua 2:14) "Any soul that does not listen to that Prophet will be completely destroyed." (Acts 3:23) "Every living soul died."—Revelation 16:3.

10. What serious problem arises in believing that Adam had an immortal soul?

11. (a) In the Bible the English word "soul" comes from what Hebrew and Greek words? (b) How does the *King James Version* render the Hebrew and Greek words for "soul"?

12. How does the Bible use the Hebrew and Greek words for "soul"?

13. In what ways does the Bible use the word "soul"?

¹⁴ Clearly, the Bible's use of *ne'phesh* and *psy-khe'* shows that the soul is the person or, in the case of animals, the creature. It is not some immortal part of an individual. Indeed, *ne'phesh* is even used of God himself: "Anyone loving violence His soul certainly hates."—Psalm 11:5.

Many Scholars Agree

¹⁵ Many scholars agree that the Bible does not speak of an immortal soul. *The Concise Jewish Encyclopedia* states: "The Bible does not state a doctrine of the immortality of the soul, nor does this clearly emerge in early rabbinical literature." *The Jewish Encyclopedia* says: "The belief that the soul continues its existence after the dissolution of the body is a matter of philosophical or theological speculation rather than of simple faith, and is accordingly nowhere expressly taught in Holy Scripture." *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* notes: "The *nephesh* . . . does not continue to exist independently of the body, but dies with it. . . . No biblical text authorizes the statement that the 'soul' is separated from the body at the moment of death."

¹⁶ Also, the *Expository Dictionary of Bible Words* says: "'Soul' in the O[ld] T[estament], then, does not indicate some immaterial part of human beings that continues after death. [*Ne'phesh*] essentially means life as it is uniquely experienced by personal beings. . . . The basic meaning of [*psy-khe'*] is established by its O[ld] T[estament] counterpart, rather than its meaning in Greek culture." And *The Eerdmans Bible Dictionary* states that in the Bible, the word soul "does not designate a

part of a human being, but rather the whole person. . . . In this sense *human beings do not have souls—they are souls.*" —Italics ours.

¹⁷ Even the *New Catholic Encyclopedia* acknowledges: "The Biblical words for soul usually mean total person." It adds: "There is no dichotomy [division] of body and soul in the O[ld] T[estament]. . . . The term [*ne'phesh*], though translated by our word soul, never means soul as distinct from the body or the individual person. . . . The term [*psy-khe'*] is the N[ew] T[estament] word corresponding with [*ne'phesh*]. . . . The notion of the soul surviving after death is not readily discernible in the Bible." And Georges Auzou, French Catholic Professor of Sacred Scripture, writes in his book *La Parole de Dieu* (The Word of God): "The concept of 'soul,' meaning a purely spiritual, immaterial reality, separate from the 'body,' . . . does not exist in the Bible."

¹⁸ Thus, *The Encyclopedia Americana* observes: "The Old Testament concept of man is that of a unity, not a union of soul and body. Although the Hebrew word [*ne'phesh*] is frequently translated as 'soul,' it would be inaccurate to read into it a Greek meaning. . . . [*Ne'phesh*] is never conceived of as operating separately from the body. In the New Testament the Greek word [*psy-khe'*] is often translated as 'soul' but again should not be readily understood to have the meaning the word had for the Greek philosophers. . . . The Bible does not provide a clear description of how a person survives after death." It adds: "Theologians have had to resort to the discussions of philosophers for an adequate means of

14. What does the Bible clearly show that the soul is?

15. How do several scholarly works express themselves about the immortal-soul teaching?

16. How do some authorities express themselves about the soul?

17. What do two Catholic sources acknowledge about "soul"?

18. (a) How does an encyclopedia comment on the Bible's use of the word "soul"? (b) Where did theologians get the idea of something surviving the death of the body?

describing survival of the individual after death.”

Not the Bible but Philosophy

¹⁹ It is true that theologians adopted the ideas of pagan philosophers to formulate the immortal-soul doctrine. The French *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique de la Bible* (Encyclopedic Dictionary of the Bible) says: “The concept of immortality is a product of Greek thinking.” *The Jewish Encyclopedia* affirms: “The belief in the immortality of the soul came to the Jews from contact with Greek thought and chiefly through the philosophy of Plato, its principal exponent,” who lived in the fourth century before Christ. Plato believed: “The soul is immortal and imperishable, and our souls will truly exist in another world!”—*The Dialogues of Plato*.

²⁰ When did this pagan philosophy infiltrate Christianity? *The New Encyclopædia Britannica* says: “From the middle of the 2nd century AD Christians who had some training in Greek philosophy began to feel the need to express their faith in its terms, both for their own intellectual satisfaction and in order to convert educated pagans. The philosophy that suited them best was Platonism.” So, as the *Britannica* says, “the early Christian philosophers adopted the Greek concept of the soul’s immortality.” Even Pope John Paul II acknowledged that the immortal-soul doctrine incorporates “theories of certain schools of Greek philosophy.” But accepting theories of Greek philosophy meant that Christendom had abandoned the simple truth expressed at Genesis 2:7: “Man came to be a living soul.”

²¹ The immortal-soul teaching, however,

19. How is Greek philosophy connected to the immortal-soul belief?

20. When and how did pagan philosophy infiltrate Christianity?

21. How far back does the belief in an immortal soul go?

goes back much further than Plato. In the book *The Religion of Babylonia and Assyria*, by Morris Jastrow, we read: “The problem of immortality . . . engaged the serious attention of the Babylonian theologians. . . . Death was a passage to another kind of life.” Also, the book *Egyptian Religion*, by Siegfried Morenz, states: “The early Egyptians regarded life after death simply as a continuation of life on earth.” *The Jewish Encyclopedia* notes the connection with these ancient religions and Plato when it says that Plato was led to the immortal-soul idea “through Orphic and Eleusinian mysteries in which Babylonian and Egyptian views were strangely blended.”

²² Thus, the immortal-soul idea is ancient. In fact, its roots go back to the dawn of human history! After Adam was told that he would die if he disobeyed God, an opposite view was expressed to Adam’s wife, Eve. She was told: “You positively will not die.” Here the seeds of the immortal-soul doctrine were sown. And ever since then, one culture after another

22. Why can it be said that the seeds of the immortal-soul doctrine were really sown at the dawn of human history?

Questions for Review

- ☐ What do most religions believe regarding the soul?
- ☐ How does the Bible show that man was not created with an immortal soul?
- ☐ What is clear from the Bible’s use of the Hebrew and Greek words for “soul”?
- ☐ What do many scholars say about the Bible’s view of the soul?
- ☐ How far back in history does the immortal-soul doctrine go?

has adopted the pagan view that 'you will not really die but will continue to live on.' This includes Christendom, which took its followers into apostasy in opposition to God's purposes and will.—Genesis 3:1-5; Matthew 7:15-23; 13:36-43; Acts 20:29, 30; 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 7.

²³ Who was it that led humans to believe that lie? Jesus identified him when he said to the religious leaders of his day: "You are from your father the Devil, and you wish to do the desires of your father. . . . When he speaks the lie, he speaks according to his own disposition, because he is a liar and the father of the lie." (John 8:44) Yes, it is Satan who developed the immortal-soul idea to turn people away from true

23. Who developed the immortal-soul teaching, and why?

worship. So one's course of life and hope for the future are put on the wrong path by believing doctrines that grew out of the first lie recorded in the Bible, though at that time Eve no doubt understood the serpent to mean merely that she would not die at all in the flesh.

²⁴ The Bible does not teach that humans have an immortal soul. Why, then, does it speak about the hope of eternal life? Furthermore, does not the Bible, at 1 Corinthians 15:53, say: "This which is mortal must put on immortality"? And did Jesus not go to heaven after his resurrection, and did he not teach that others could also go to heaven? These and other questions will be examined in our next article.

24. What questions may properly be asked regarding eternal life and immortality?

Exercise Faith for Everlasting Life

"Have faith to the preserving alive of the soul."—HEBREWS 10:39.

NOWHERE does the Bible say that humans have an immortal soul that survives the body at death and lives on forever in the spirit realm. Even the *New Catholic Encyclopedia* acknowledges: "The notion of the soul surviving after death is not readily discernible in the Bible. . . . The soul in the O[ld] T[estament] means not a part of man, but

1. What does a Catholic encyclopedia acknowledge about the Bible's use of the word "soul"?

the whole man—man as a living being. Similarly, in the N[ew] T[estament] it signifies human life: the life of an individual." So humans do not *have* souls, they *are* souls.

² As the previous article pointed out, the immortal-soul belief is a pagan concept that can be traced back to early historical

2. (a) Where did the immortal-soul belief originate? (b) What is the truth about man's condition after death?

times. Its author is the one who contradicted God's clear declaration that man would "positively die" for disobedience. (Genesis 2:17) It was the opposer, Satan the Devil, who said: "You positively will not die." (Genesis 3:4) And that was a lie. (John 8:44) Later, Satan promoted the doctrine of the immortality of the human soul. But the truth about man's condition after death is as noted in God's inspired Word at Ecclesiastes 9:5: "The dead . . . are conscious of nothing at all."—See also Romans 5:12.

The Hope of Everlasting Life

³ While the Bible clearly shows that there is no such thing as an immortal soul, it does have much to say about everlasting life. The hope of endless life was a fundamental teaching of Jesus. He said: "This means *everlasting life*, their taking in knowledge of you, the only true God, and of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ." (John 17:3) Regarding those who exercise faith in God and Christ, Jesus stated: "I give them *everlasting life*." (John 10:28) With absolute confidence, he said: "He that believes has *everlasting life*. . . . He will *live forever*." (John 6:47, 51) And he also declared: "God loved the world so much that he gave his only-begotten Son, in order that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have *everlasting life*."—John 3:16.

⁴ Since there is no immortal soul that survives death, how will the Bible's promise of everlasting life be realized? Jesus gave more information about this when he visited Martha and Mary after their brother Lazarus had died. He said to Martha: "I am the resurrection and the life. He that exercises faith in me, even though

he dies, will come to life." He asked Martha: "Do you believe this?" She answered: "Yes, Lord; I have believed that you are the Christ the Son of God."—John 11:25-27.

⁵ To demonstrate that he, as the Son of God, was empowered to raise the dead back to life, Jesus went to the tomb of Lazarus. Lazarus had been dead four days, and his body had started to decompose. Nevertheless, "[Jesus] cried out with a loud voice: 'Lazarus, come on out!' The man that had been dead came out with his feet and hands bound with wrappings, and his countenance was bound about with a cloth. Jesus said to them: 'Loose him and let him go.'" (John 11:43, 44) The dead Lazarus had been brought back to life!

⁶ Lazarus was not brought back from heaven or anywhere else in the spirit realm. He had not gone to the spirit realm when he died but had been unconscious in the grave, where all the dead are. (Psalm 146:4; John 3:13; Acts 2:34) It would not make sense to think that the immortal soul of Lazarus was enjoying heavenly bliss and then that soul was snatched from heaven to be reunited with his imperfect body on earth to live once more in a world filled with suffering, sickness, and death. But since he was not in heaven, his restoration to life was welcomed, for it meant additional years of existence for him and a reuniting with his loved ones. Later, he would die again.

⁷ When Jesus raised a young girl who had been dead, her parents "were beside themselves with great ecstasy." (Mark 5:42) Yet, that girl also eventually died again. When Jesus raised the dead son of the widow of Nain, "fear seized them all, and they began

5, 6. What did Jesus' raising of Lazarus back to life demonstrate?

7, 8. (a) On what other occasions did Jesus raise the dead? (b) Why did Jesus perform those miracles of restoring people to life?

3. Regarding what hope does the Bible have much to say?

4. What did Jesus say about the hope for the future?



to glorify God.” (Luke 7:16) But that man also eventually died. Regarding these miracles, *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* affirms: “Those who were raised by Christ in his earthly ministry had to die, as these raisings did not confer immortality.”

⁸ Why did Jesus raise these ones from the dead? Not to confer everlasting life at that time, but to demonstrate that he was the Messiah and to show what God had empowered him to do. It built faith in the hope of the resurrection and eternal life under the future rule of God’s heavenly

Kingdom in the hands of Christ.—Matthew 6:9, 10; John 11:41, 42.

⁹ Martha knew about that hope from her association with Jesus, for she had previously said to him regarding Lazarus: "I know he will rise in the resurrection *on the last day*." (John 11:24) She knew that the resurrection would be, not on *his* (Lazarus') last day, but in the future, "on the last day"—Judgment Day, when the dead would be raised under God's Kingdom rule. The apostle Paul knew that too, for he said: "[God] has set a day in which he purposes to judge the inhabited earth in righteousness." (Acts 17:31) Paul also said: "There is going to be a resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous." (Acts 24:15) He did not say that the resurrection was already taking place but that it was "going to be" in the future—under Kingdom rule.

¹⁰ In the book *Immortality of the Soul or Resurrection of the Dead?* French Protestant professor Oscar Cullmann writes: "There is a radical difference between the Christian expectation of the resurrection of the dead and the Greek belief in the immortality of the soul. . . . Although Christianity later established a link between these two beliefs, and today the average Christian confuses them completely, I see no reason to hide what I and the majority of scholars consider to be the truth. . . . The life and thought of the New Testament are entirely dominated by faith in the resurrection. . . . The whole man, who is really dead, is brought back to life by a new creative act of God."

9. How did Martha and Paul correctly understand Jesus' teaching about the resurrection hope?

10. What comment does a French professor make about Christendom's beliefs about resurrection as compared to the Bible's clear teaching?

Resurrection—To Where?

¹¹ When God created humans, he gave them the earth as their eternal home and purposed to fill this planet with a righteous race of people. (Genesis 1:26-28; Psalm 115:16) The Bible speaks of Jehovah as "the Former of the earth and the Maker of it, He the One who firmly established it, who did not create it simply for nothing, who formed it even to be inhabited."—Isaiah 45:18.

¹² In spite of thousands of years of imperfection and death since man's rebellion, it is still God's purpose that the earth be man's eternal home: "The righteous themselves will possess the earth, and they will reside forever upon it." (Psalm 37:29) "Happy are the mild-tempered ones, since they will inherit the earth." (Matthew 5:5) Thus, when Jesus brought dead ones back to life, he raised them right here on earth, and they were immediately recognized by others as the individuals that had been dead. This affirmed that under Kingdom rule the dead will be brought back to life on earth to have the opportunity to live forever on it. (Revelation 20:12, 13) That will fulfill God's purpose for humans and for the earth.—Isaiah 46:9-11; 55:11; Titus 1:1, 2.

¹³ However, since Christendom's churches believe in the soul's immortality, this presents them with a dilemma: How can they reconcile the resurrection of "the whole man," as demonstrated by Jesus, with their belief in an immortal soul already existing in heaven or in hell? *The Catholic Encyclopedia* asserts: "The Fourth Lateran Council teaches that all men,

11, 12. (a) What is God's purpose for humans and this earth? (b) How did Jesus demonstrate that God's purpose for the earth has not changed?

13. What dilemma confronts Christendom's churches, and how do they attempt to solve it?

whether elect or reprobate, 'will rise again with their own bodies which they now bear about with them.'" It adds: "As the body is the partner of the soul's crimes, and the companion of her virtues, the justice of God seems to demand that the body be the sharer in the soul's punishment and reward." According to this belief, the body will be reunited with the soul in heaven or in hell. For how long? "The risen bodies of both saints and sinners shall be invested with immortality," that source claims.

¹⁴ In the book *The Future Life*, by Jesuit J. C. Sasia, we read: "The life of heaven therefore shall be one of pleasures also through the glorified senses [of the body reunited with the soul]." Regarding bodies reunited with their souls in hell, that source claims: "In hell, after the resurrection [of the body], every sense of the human body shall have its own peculiar punishment . . . The sense of feeling or touch will be especially tormented, because it is particularly by the sins of the flesh that the reprobates have offended God. . . . Their association with their bodies will be to them a cause of additional torments and miseries."

¹⁵ Thus, accepting the pagan concept of the immortality of the soul paved the way for Christendom to accept also the pagan concept of the excruciating torture of souls—and even bodies—in hell forever. Yet, regarding the ancient practice of burning children as sacrifices to false gods, Jehovah stated: "They . . . burn their sons in the fire as whole burnt offerings to the Baal, something that I had not commanded or spoken of, *and that had not come up into my heart.*" (Jeremiah 19:5) So it is blasphemous to teach that God tor-

tures people for eternity, when his own Word clearly shows that unrepentant wrongdoers will be destroyed, put out of existence. "Any soul that does not listen to that Prophet [Jesus] will be completely destroyed."—Acts 3:23; see also Matthew 10:28; Luke 17:27; John 3:16; 2 Peter 2:12; Jude 5.

Immortality

¹⁶ However, does the Bible not teach that humans would be taken to heaven to live immortal lives there? Yes, it does. But this has nothing to do with immortal human souls. Immortality results from a person's being resurrected as a spirit creation (as was Jesus) and not from his having an immortal soul that has survived death. The future reward of immortality was held out to some faithful, Christlike humans and was to be realized only when Christ came into Kingdom power in heaven, not immediately after Christ's ascension to heaven in the first century.—Psalm 110:1; 1 Corinthians 15:53, 54.

¹⁷ Furthermore, that hope was held out to relatively few of the human family. Jesus called these a "little flock." (Luke 12:32) This group, 144,000 in number, is resurrected to heavenly life as immortal spirit creatures to rule over the earth with Christ in his heavenly Kingdom. (2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 7:4; 14:1, 4; 20:4) The earth they rule over will be inhabited, in time, by perfected humans, no doubt thousands of millions of them. Many of those humans will be the ones who come back to earth in the "resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous." (Acts 24:15) Yet, there will be others who gain life in the new world aside from those.

14. How does a Jesuit writer try to clarify Christendom's view of the resurrection of the body?

15. Why is it blasphemous to teach that God tortures people in hell forever?

16. What does the Bible teach about immortality?

17. How many will attain immortality, and what part do they play in God's purpose for the earth?

resurrected from the dead. Who are these others?

"Never Die at All"

¹⁸ While the sure hope for dead people is the resurrection, there is another marvelous hope in our time. It has to do with what Jesus went on to tell Martha. After saying: "He that exercises faith in me, even though he dies, will come to life [in the resurrection]," Jesus added, "*and everyone that is living and exercises faith in me will never die at all.*" (John 11: 25, 26) In this latter statement, Jesus foretold an astounding thing: A time would come when people living would no longer need to die! But when would that be?

¹⁹ Now—our day—is the time for that promise to be realized! All the evidence shows that we are very near the end of this evil world. (Matthew 24:3-14; 2 Timothy 3:1-5, 13) Thus, people who today exercise faith in God and in his Son have the thrilling hope of surviving this system's end and continuing alive into God's new world—never dying at all! These are spoken of at Revelation 7:9, 14 as "a great crowd, which no man was able to number, out of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues . . . [who] come out of the great tribulation," preserved by God because of their exercising faith. Jesus spoke of the coming dissolution of this present evil system as a "great tribulation such as has not occurred since the world's beginning until now, no, nor will occur again."—Matthew 24:21; see also Proverbs 2:21, 22; Psalm 37:10, 11, 34.

18. In addition to the hope of the resurrection for dead people, what astounding thing did Jesus foretell?

19. (a) During what time period would the hope of never dying be realized? (b) How does the Bible describe those who have the hope of never dying?

²⁰ Throughout the world, millions of the great crowd who want to live forever on earth are already exercising faith in God's promises and in the one whom he has authorized to be "the resurrection and the life," Jesus Christ. And they have dedicated themselves to God, symbolizing this by water baptism. (Matthew 28:19, 20) They acknowledge that they owe salvation entirely to "God, who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb," Jesus Christ.—Revelation 7:10.

²¹ Those of the great crowd who survive this world's end will not need a resurrection from the dead because they "will never die at all"! Are you taking steps to be one of this group? If so, what an amazing, unique privilege is open to you—that of surviving the end of Satan's evil system and being ushered into a righteous new era that will bring you perfect health and everlasting life on a paradise earth! (Luke 23:43; Revelation 21:4, 5) By learning what is God's will and persevering in doing it, you may demonstrate that you 'are not of the sort that shrink back to destruction.' You too may "have faith to the preserving alive of the soul."—Hebrews 10:39; 1 John 2:15-17; Revelation 7:15.

20, 21. How are millions today exercising faith in God and Christ, and what will many of them not need?

Questions for Review

- ☐ What is the true hope for the dead?
- ☐ Why is Christendom's belief in the resurrection of the body an insult to God?
- ☐ What does the Bible teach about immortality?
- ☐ What astounding hope can people have today?

"We Now Have Our Own Kingdom Hall"

MUCH has been published about quickly built Kingdom Halls in countries such as Great Britain, Canada, and the United States. Less known, however, is the fact that quickly built places of worship for Jehovah's Witnesses have been constructed for decades in the so-called developing countries.

In African lands the local Witnesses often construct temporary facilities for district conventions in a matter of weeks. These have served not only as places for meetings and shelter from the torrid tropical sun but also as lodgings for the delegates. Similar experiences can be told about Central America.

For example, in Guatemala City, Guatemala, a \$200 contribution was sent to the Vivibien Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses. When a local Witness offered a plot of land in a rural area, the Witnesses decided to use the contribution to build a modest structure that could be used for their meetings.

Bamboo was to be used for the enclosure to a height of five feet; above that was open ventilation space. It was determined that the structure should be 13 feet by 20 feet in size. When the congregation elders visited the site, to their surprise they found in front of the plot of land several groves of bamboo, 20 feet to 30 feet high and from 3 inches to 5 inches in diameter. "Why not build it next Saturday?" they said.

On the following Wednesday night, construction plans were formulated. Thursday saw one brother buying the galvanized iron roofing, another the lumber, and another the nails. By Thursday afternoon the lumber was precut to size, and they began making the A-frame-type

trusses with contributed iron plates. By Friday night the trusses were ready.

Early on Saturday morning, a truck hauled the trusses and other lumber, the roofing, and nails to the village. Four vehicles transported about 50 men, women, and children to the village. By 8:00 a.m. all had arrived.

Holes chiseled in hard volcanic rock received the main uprights. Previously, the Witnesses bought from the owner of the bamboo grove 50 bamboo stalks for 12 cents each—a total investment of \$6. Quickly, machetes cut down the bamboo. These were hand-sawed into five-foot lengths and split down the center.

While the trusses were being put in place, other hands were nailing the split bamboo vertically onto horizontal cross strips, one half on the outside and one half on the inside, so that the attractive rounded bamboo would adorn both the inside walls as well as the exterior. Next, the roofing was put on while others began to bring stone and dirt to level off the dirt floor. Before dark the 12-hour structure was completed, and the brothers returned to their home in the city with joyful hearts.

Later, pine needles were strewed over the dirt floor, and some folding chairs and a few bamboo benches made from the unused bamboo stalks were set up. Now the Kingdom Hall was ready for the first meeting.

In many lands of the tropics—Africa, Pacific and Caribbean islands, Asia, Mexico, Central and South America—where perhaps a million of Jehovah's Witnesses live, such simple structures have brought joy to the local Witnesses because they could say: "We now have our own Kingdom Hall."

Questions From Readers

■ Did Jehovah God speak to Adam directly, or did he speak through the Word, the only-begotten Son of God?

The Bible does not give us an explicit answer to this question. While God could have spoken directly to his perfect human son in Eden, likely He communicated with Adam through the Word.

The Bible often speaks of God's doing things when he actually did them through one or more angels. For instance, Genesis 1:1 tells us: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Were that all the Bible said about the origin of the universe, we would conclude that God created it directly, as if with his own hands. The Christian Greek Scriptures, however, enlarge our understanding. We read: "By means of [the Son of God] all other things were created in the heavens and upon the earth, the things visible and the things invisible . . . All other things have been created through him and for him." (Colossians 1: 16, 17) Other texts confirm the Son's role in creating the universe. (John 1:3, 10; Hebrews 1: 1, 2) Still, his role was as a workman subordinate to Jehovah, who originated, empowered, and directed creation.—Psalm 19:1.

God said to the first man: "From every tree of the garden you may eat to satisfaction." (Genesis 2:16, 17) Jehovah did not need some mechanical or electronic device, such as a megaphone or a shortwave radio. As *The Watchtower* of August 1, 1989, said: "The man saw no one doing the speaking. The voice came from the invisible, the unseen realm, and it was addressing him. It was the voice of the man's Maker, his Creator! . . . The man needed no modern scientific radio receiver to hear the divine voice. God conversed with him directly."

Did God speak through an angel, perhaps the Logos, who became Jesus? That is quite possible. While not being dogmatic, C. T. Russell wrote: "Jesus perhaps was the Representative of God in the Garden of Eden with Adam." (*The Watch Tower*, February 1, 1915) God's firstborn Son long served in the exalted capacity of his Father's "Word," or Spokesman, to angels and men. (John 1:1; 12:49, 50; Revelation 1:1, 2) So even if the Genesis account conveys the impression that God spoke directly to solitary Adam, that does not rule out His speaking through an angel, including the Word, Jehovah's heavenly Son. Especially would this be so considering that Jehovah used the Logos to create man in the first place, and this one 'was fond of the things involving the sons of men.'—Proverbs 8: 22, 31; John 1:3.

Consider, for example, the occasion when Moses went up on Mount Sinai. Exodus 19:21-24 relates: "Jehovah now said to Moses . . . At this Moses said to Jehovah . . . However, Jehovah said to him." Then the account of the giving of the Ten Commandments is introduced this way: "God proceeded to speak all these words." (Exodus 20:1) Does that sound as if God personally spoke the words of the Law? Such an impression could find support in that we are told that God spoke to Moses "face to face."—Exodus 33:11.

Still, we have further revelation on this. The apostle Paul wrote about the Law: "It was transmitted through angels by the hand of a mediator." (Galatians 3:19) Lat-

er, Paul specifically contrasted the instructions God provided in the Law and what Christians received through Jesus: "If the word *spoken* through angels proved to be firm, and every transgression and disobedient act received a retribution . . . , how shall we escape if we have neglected a salvation of such greatness in that it began to be spoken through our Lord [Jesus] and was verified for us by those who heard him." (Hebrews 2:2, 3) So God did not speak the words of the Law with his own personal voice, nor did he use the Logos. Rather, he chose to use other angels.

What is the basic point, though? Often when we read of God speaking to humans, we note that he did so through obedient spirit creatures who spoke for him. (Compare Genesis 18:2, 3, 33; 19:1; Exodus 3:2-4; Judges 6:11, 12, 20-22.) Jesus' designation as the Word suggests that he was one whom God often used to communicate with his other creatures. Did that include God's perfect son Adam? Most likely.—Luke 3:38.

It is true that when the Logos was later on earth, the Father three times spoke audibly so that this "last Adam" could hear. (1 Corinthians 15:45; Matthew 3: 16, 17; 17:1-5; John 12:28-30) On these occasions, why should God speak to or about his precious Son through an intervening angel? More logically, Jehovah would speak directly; his perfect Son, and even imperfect humans nearby, heard God's own voice. So when the perfect man Adam was created, his loving Father could have dealt directly with this perfect new creation. However, in view of the foregoing, it is likely that he used the Word.

Kingdom Proclaimers Report

□ THE apostle John said: "Let us love, neither in word nor with the tongue, but in deed and truth." (1 John 3:18) Jesus said that 'we should love our neighbor as ourselves.' (Matthew 22:39) Showing love in deed recommends the truth, as the following experience from Britain shows.

When Pauline visited her mother, who had multiple sclerosis, there was never anyone else there. But on this occasion, as she entered the house, she could hear the washing machine running and someone upstairs using a vacuum cleaner. "What's happening, who's here?" she asked her mother. Her mother explained that Jehovah's Witnesses had come to her door, saw her plight, and stopped to help. After they had done the housework and prepared a meal, they sat down and said: "Are you ready?" "Ready for what?" inquired Pauline. Her mother explained that she had agreed to a Bible study. Pauline was hesitant about staying, but as she had come a long way, she asked if it would be all right for her to join in the study. She enjoyed it so much that she arranged to come the same day every week so that she could attend regularly. Eventually, a friend accompanied her, and now both are baptized. As a result of this original study, ten members of the same family are now Jehovah's Witnesses! Yes, help "in deed"!

Pastor in New Guinea Responds to the Truth

□ In Jesus' day some priests accepted the teaching of Jesus. Honesthearted clergymen today also do so, as shown by



an experience from the highlands of New Guinea, reported by a circuit overseer. He relates: "A well-educated young man, a Pentecostal pastor, was building a small church quite close to the Kingdom Hall. A brother from that congregation witnessed to him, and he seemed friendly. Shortly after this, I visited the congregation and stayed with the brother just down the road from the pastor's house. The first evening after I arrived, this young man came to our door with his Bible, along with a large group from his congregation. All wanted to hear the Kingdom message. He asked many questions, and the discussion went on well into the night. Each evening of my visit, he and the other interested ones came to have more of their questions answered. I invited him to the circuit assembly the following week, and he attended

in company with the brother who had first witnessed to him. This man continued his Bible study, has left the Pentecostal Church, and is now a regular publisher of the good news."

Truly, it is God's will "that all sorts of men should be saved and come to an accurate knowledge of truth."—1 Timothy 2:4.

In Our Next Issue

■ **Armageddon—When?**

■ **"Teach Us How to Pray"**

■ **Remember Your Grand Creator in Your Youth**

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