

The Watchtower

August 15, 1990

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom

FATE
DOES IT RULE
YOUR LIFE?



In This Issue

Does Belief in Fate Rule Your Life?	3
Should Fate Rule Your Life?	4
Enjoying an Intimate Relationship	8
Loyalty—At What Price?	10
Loyally Working With Jehovah	15
Do Not Neglect Your Mate!	20
Doing God's Work God's Way in Nigeria	24
Do You Remember?	29
Questions From Readers	30

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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Songs to Be Used: 38, 213.

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Does Belief in Fate Rule Your Life?

IN September 1988 disaster struck. The relentless waters in the vast delta of the Ganges and Brahmaputra rivers rose 30 feet and engulfed three fourths of Bangladesh. Thousands drowned. Some 37,000,000 were left homeless. Over 40,000 miles of roads disappeared.

Since such floods have overwhelmed Bangladesh time after time, one newspaper called the country "Delta of Doom." That depiction reflects what many people view as the cause of such staggering disasters: doom, or fate.

Though others may feel that fate does not rule life, fatalistic views indeed span the globe. Why do so many believe in fate, and what is fatalism?

Religion's Role

The word "fate" comes from the Latin *fatum*, meaning "what has been spoken."* Fatalists believe that events are fixed in advance and that humans are powerless to change things. This view has been spread by various religions and has molded the outlook of millions of believers. A glance

* *The Encyclopedia of Religion*, Volume 5, page 290, states: "FATE. Derived from the Latin *fatum* (something spoken, a prophetic declaration, an oracle, a divine determination)."



at the world's three largest religions shows that fate wears a face with diverse expressions—as diverse as the shapes of Hindu temples, Islāmic mosques, and churches of Christendom.

The world's some 900 million Muslims, for instance, hold that fate (*Kismet*) is fixed by divine will.* The Qur'ān declares: "No evil befalls on the earth . . . , but it is in a book before we bring it into existence." "And a soul will not die but with the permission of Allah; the term is fixed."—Surah 57:22; 3:145.

Karma is the law of cause and effect—another face of fate—that affects the lives of the world's nearly 700 million Hindus. It is held that the events that happen in a Hindu's present life are decreed by his actions in a previous incarnation. The *Garuda Purana*, an ancient Hindu writing, says: "It is the works of this self in a prior existence which determine the nature of its organism in the next, as well as the character of the diseases, whether physical or mental, which it is to fall a prey to . . . A man gets in life what he is fated to get."

* "Kismet differs from Fate only in its being referred to an all-powerful Will; all human appeal against either is in vain."—Hastings' *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, Volume V, page 774.

What about the approximately 1,700 million members of Christendom? Granted, some in Christendom may claim to have replaced fate with God, and fatalism with predestination. But the *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics* acknowledges: "It cannot be said that Christianity is . . . entirely free from the belief in Fate." Some denominations still echo the belief of 16th-century reformer Martin Luther, who once stated that man is as "unfree as a block of wood, a rock, a lump of clay, or a pillar of salt."

Tossing Coins and Reading Stars

Though such rigid views have now fallen into the backwaters of the beliefs of mainstream Christendom, one theologian admits that many of its members still accept the belief "in a secularized form." In that form, fate may wear a fleeting smile and be christened fortune. You likely know of many who occasionally toss a coin in an appeal to fortune, or fate. Though they may try to pass this off as a mere custom, they continue to do it,

and, at times, it seems to them to work. For example, *The New York Times* recently reported that a man living in the United States found a heads-up penny (coin) after he bought lottery tickets. He said: "Every time I've ever found a heads-up penny, something's always happened good to me." In this case, he won 25.7 million dollars. Do you think that his belief in fortune, or fate, has lessened?

Some people chuckle about flipping coins. Yet, they may believe that their future is predestined by the movements of the stars—another face of fate. In North America alone, some 1,200 newspapers carry astrology columns. One poll showed that 55 percent of the youths in the United States believe that astrology works.

Yes, whether it is called Kismet, Karma, God, fortune, or the stars, belief in fate spans the globe and has done so for ages. Did you know, for example, that of all the historical persons listed here, only one did not believe in fatalism? Who did not? And how can his view of fate influence yours?

WHO BELIEVED IN FATALISM?

Maskarīputra Gośāla

Indian ascetic,
6th/5th century B.C.E.

Zeno of Citium

Greek philosopher,
4th/3rd century B.C.E.

Publius Vergilius Maro

Roman poet,
1st century B.C.E.

Jesus Christ

Founder of Christianity,
1st century C.E.

Jahm, son of Safwān

Muslim teacher,
8th century C.E.

John Calvin

French theologian and
reformer, 16th century C.E.

Should Fate Rule Your Life?

ON THE list, the only person who did not believe in fatalism was Jesus Christ. What was his view?

The first-century biographical accounts about Jesus (the Bible books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) point up his belief that individuals can influence their fu-

ture, simply meaning what happens to them.

For instance, Jesus said that God will "give good things to those asking him" and that the person who "has endured to the end is the one that will be saved." Similarly, when Jerusalem's inhabitants

ignored the warnings that would have saved their lives, Jesus did not blame their reaction on fate. Instead, he said: "You people did not *want* it."—Matthew 7: 7-11; 23:37, 38; 24:13.

We can also discern Jesus' outlook by what he noted concerning a deadly accident that took place in Jerusalem, saying: "Those eighteen upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, thereby killing them, do you imagine that they were proved greater debtors than all other men inhabiting Jerusalem? No, indeed, I tell you." (Luke 13: 4, 5) Note that Jesus did not ascribe the death of those 18 men to fate, nor did he say they died because of their being more wicked than others. Rather, unlike the Pharisees of his day who tried to harmonize fatalism with belief in man's free will, Jesus taught that man can influence his individual future.

Jesus' apostles likewise taught that salvation is an option attainable to all. The apostle Paul wrote: "You have known the holy writings, which are able to make you *wise for salvation*." And the apostle Peter said: "As newborn infants, form a longing for the unadulterated milk belonging to the word, that through it you may *grow to salvation*." (2 Timothy 3:15; 1 Peter 2:2; see also Acts 10:34, 35; 17:26, 27.) Hastings' *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics* points out that second- and third-century writers, such as Justin, Origen, and Irenaeus, 'knew nothing of unconditional predestination; they taught free will.'

But if so many, including many Jews around them, believed in forms of fatalism, why did Jesus and the early Christians not believe that man's fate is fixed? One reason is that the idea is fraught with problems. To name two: Fatalism runs counter to Jehovah God's qualities; it is refuted by established facts. Furthermore, it can endanger your present and future

life. A closer look will show you how this is so.

Fatalism's Implications and God's Qualities

Back in the third century B.C.E., the philosopher Zeno of Citium taught his pupils in Athens to "accept Fate's decree as in some hidden way the best." One day, however, after Zeno learned that his slave was guilty of stealing, Zeno came face-to-face with the implications of his own philosophy. How so? When he beat the thief, the slave retorted: "But it was fated that I should steal."

Zeno's slave had a point. If you believe that each person's life pattern is determined beforehand, then blaming a man for becoming a thief is like blaming an orange seed for becoming an orange tree. After all, both the man and the seed merely develop according to program. What, though, is the ultimate implication of such reasoning?

Well, if criminals merely follow their fate, then the one who fixed their lot is responsible for their actions. Who would that be? According to fatalists, God himself. Taking this reasoning a giant step further, God must then be the First Cause of all wickedness, violence, and oppression ever committed by man. Do you accept that?

An article in the *Nederlands Theologisch Tijdschrift* (Dutch Journal of Theology) notes that such a fatalistic view "presupposes an image of God that, for Christians at least, is untenable." Why? Because it contradicts the image of God presented by inspired Bible writers. Note, for instance, these quotes from the inspired book of Psalms: "You are not a God taking delight in wickedness." "Anyone loving violence His soul certainly hates." "From oppression and from violence he [God's designated Messianic King] will

redeem their soul." (Psalm 5:4; 11:5; 72: 14) Clearly, fatalism's implications and God's qualities collide head-on.

Fatalism and Facts

But what about natural disasters? Are they not fated to occur and therefore impossible to avert?

What do the facts establish? Note the findings of a study on the cause of natural disasters, as reported by the Dutch newspaper *NRC Handelsblad*: "So far, earthquakes, floods, landslides, and cyclones . . . were always considered freaks of nature. However, closer consideration shows that drastic *human interference* with nature has seriously affected the environment's ability to defend itself against calamities. As a result, natural disasters claim more lives than ever before."—Italics ours.

The floods in Bangladesh mentioned in the previous article are a case in point. Scientists now say that "the destruction of vast forest areas of Nepal, Northern India, and Bangladesh has been a major factor in the floods that have plagued Bangladesh in recent years." (*Voice* magazine) Another report says that deforestation has increased the rate of flooding in Bangladesh from one flood every 50 years to one every 4 years. Similar acts of human interference in other parts of the world have led to equally disastrous results—droughts, forest fires, and landslides. Yes, human acts—not mysterious fate—often cause or aggravate natural disasters.

That being so, human acts should also do the opposite: minimize calamities. Is that the case? Indeed. Consider these facts: UNICEF (*United Nations Children's Fund*) reports that for years hundreds of children in the interior of Bangladesh became blind. Was this caused by unchangeable fate? Not at all. After UNICEF work-

ers convinced mothers there to feed their family not only rice but also fruits and vegetables, the eye disease began losing its grip. By now, this change of diet has saved hundreds of children in Bangladesh from blindness.

Similarly, people who do not smoke live, on an average, from three to four years longer than smokers. Automobile passengers who wear seat belts suffer fewer deadly accidents than those who do not. Obviously, your own actions—not fate—influence your life.

Fatalism's Fatal Consequences

As mentioned, fatalism can also cut short your life. How? In discussing "examples of fatalism of a more grisly sort," *The Encyclopedia of Religion* states: "From World War II we know of suicidal Japanese torpedo attacks and of suicides in SS (Schutzstaffel) quarters during Hitler's regime in response to a notion of destiny (*Schicksal*) supposedly far beyond the value of individual human lives." And more recently, notes the same source, "religiously inspired suicidal attacks on targets conceived as threats to Islam . . . became an almost regular feature in newspaper reports on the Near East." Thousands of young soldiers, say such reports, walked into battle convinced that "if it is not written that one is to die, he will suffer no harm."

Yet, even respected Muslim teachers object to such reckless behavior. For instance, one caliph said: "He who is in the fire should resign himself to the will of God; but he who is not yet in the fire need not throw himself into it." Sadly, masses of soldiers have not acted in accord with the caliph's advice. During nearly eight years of war, Iran suffered an estimated 400,000 deaths—more battle deaths than the United States had during World War II! Clearly, fatalism can shorten your

life. It may even endanger your future life. How?

Since a fatalist believes that the future is as inevitable and fixed as the past, he may easily hatch a perilous character trait. Which trait? The *Encyclopedia of Theology* answers: "The individual . . . feels helpless, an insignificant, expendable factor in social processes which seem to be inescapable. This induces a passivity which gratefully clutches at the superstitious explanation that everything depends on an enigmatic but sovereign fate."

What makes passivity so dangerous? It often leads to a stultifying attitude of defeat. This may hinder the fatalist from taking any initiative or even from reacting to God's marvelous invitation: "Hey there, all you thirsty ones! Come to the water . . . Incline your ear and come to me. Listen, and your soul will keep alive." (Isaiah 55:1-3) If belief in fate underlies a failure to "come" forward and to "listen," it will result in missing out on the opportunity to "keep alive" forever in the coming Paradise restored on earth. What a costly price to pay!

So where do you stand? If you grew up in a community where fatalistic ideas form the basis of people's thinking, you may have accepted the belief without

question. Yet, the objections discussed in this article may have helped you to see that to a large extent your present and future life is shaped by your own actions.

As you have seen, reason, facts, and, above all, the Holy Scriptures show that you must not succumb to an attitude of fatal defeat. Instead, as Jesus urged: "Agonize . . . to enter through the strait door." (Luke 13:24, *The Emphatic Diaglott*, inter-linear reading) What did he mean? Explains one Bible commentator: "The word [agonize] is taken from the Grecian games. In their races . . . they strove, or agonized, or put forth all their powers to gain the victory." Instead of your bowing to defeat in life, Jesus was urging that you strive for nothing less than victory!

Hence, shake off any fate-inspired passivity. Enter the race for life as God's Word urges, and do not let fatalism slow you down. (See 1 Corinthians 9:24-27.) Speed up the pace by swiftly responding to the inspired invitation: "Choose life in order that you may keep alive, you and your offspring." How can you make that choice? "By loving Jehovah your God, by listening to his voice and by sticking to him." Doing so will lead to victory, for Jehovah will prove to be "your life and the length of your days."—Deuteronomy 30:19, 20.

Moses did not
preach fate
but urged:
"Choose life
in order that
you may
keep alive."



Enjoying an Intimate Relationship

FOLLOWING the memorial meal, Jesus has been encouraging his apostles with an informal heart-to-heart talk. It may be past midnight. So Jesus urges: "Get up, let us go from here." However, before they leave, Jesus, moved by his love for them, continues speaking, providing a motivating illustration.

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the cultivator," he begins. The Great Cultivator, Jehovah God, planted this symbolic vine when he anointed Jesus with holy spirit at his baptism in the fall of 29 C.E. But Jesus goes on to show that the vine symbolizes more than just him, observing:

"Every branch in me not bearing fruit he takes away, and every one bearing fruit he cleans, that it may bear more fruit. . . . Just as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it remains in the vine, in the same way neither can you, unless you remain in union with me. I am the vine, you are the branches."

At Pentecost, 51 days later, the apostles and others become branches of the vine when holy spirit is poured out on them. Eventually, 144,000 persons become branches of the figurative grapevine. Along with the vine stem, Jesus Christ, these make up a symbolic vine that produces the fruits of God's Kingdom.

Jesus explains the key to producing fruit: "He that remains in union with me, and I in union with him, this one bears much fruit; because apart from me you can do nothing at all." If, however, a person fails to produce fruit, Jesus says, "he is cast out as a branch and is

dried up; and men gather those branches up and pitch them into the fire and they are burned." On the other hand, Jesus promises: "If you remain in union with me and my sayings remain in you, ask whatever you wish and it will take place for you."

Jesus goes on to show his apostles what glorifies the Father, namely, "that you keep bearing much fruit and prove yourselves my disciples." The fruit God desires from the branches is their manifestation of Christlike qualities, particularly love. Moreover, since Christ was a proclaimer of God's Kingdom, the desired fruit also includes their activity of making disciples as he did.

"Remain in my love," Jesus now urges. Yet, how can his apostles do so? "If you observe my commandments," he says, "you will remain in my love." Continuing, Jesus explains: "This is my commandment, that you love one another just as I have loved you. No one has love greater than this, that someone should surrender his soul in behalf of his friends."

In a few hours, Jesus will demonstrate this surpassing love by giving his life in behalf of his apostles, as well as all others who will exercise faith in him. His example should move his followers to have the same self-sacrificing love for one another. This love will identify them, as Jesus stated earlier: "By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love among yourselves."

Identifying his friends, Jesus says: "You are my friends if you do what I am commanding you. I no longer call you slaves, because a slave does not know

Jesus' Life and Ministry

what his master does. But I have called you friends, because all the things I have heard from my Father I have made known to you."

What a precious relationship to have—to be intimate friends of Jesus! But to continue to enjoy this relationship, his followers must "keep bearing fruit." If they do, Jesus says, "no matter what you ask the Father in my name he [will] give it to you." Surely, that is a grand reward for bearing Kingdom fruit!

After again urging the apostles to "love one another," Jesus explains that the world will hate them. Yet, he comforts them: "If the world hates you, you know that it has hated me before it hated you." Jesus next reveals why the world hates his followers, saying: "Because you are no part of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, on this account the world hates you."

Explaining further the reason for the world's hatred, Jesus continues: "They will do all these things against you on account of my name, because they do not know him [Jehovah God] that sent me." Jesus' miraculous works, in effect, convict those who hate him, as he notes: "If I had not done among them the works that no one else did, they would have no sin; but now they have both seen and hated me as well as my Father." Thus, as Jesus says, the scripture is fulfilled: "They hated me without cause."

As he did earlier, Jesus again comforts them by promising to send the helper, the holy spirit, which is God's powerful active force. "That one will bear witness about me; and you, in turn, are to bear witness." **John 14:31-15:27; 13:3, 35; Galatians 6:16; Psalm 35:19; 69:4.**

- When did Jehovah plant the symbolic vine, and when and how do others become part of the vine?
- Eventually, how many branches does the symbolic vine have?
- What fruit does God desire from the branches?
- How can we be friends of Jesus?
- Why does the world hate Jesus' followers?



LOYALTY AT WHAT PRICE?

"With someone loyal you will act in loyalty."—PSALM 18:25.

FAITHFULNESS, duty, love, obligation, allegiance. What do these words have in common? They are different facets of loyalty. Loyalty is a godly quality that stems from heartfelt devotion. For many people today, however, loyalty means little. Faithfulness to a marriage mate, obligations to older family members, allegiance of an employee to his employer—all are casual and often compro-

1, 2. (a) What is loyalty, and how do its facets affect our lives? (b) Why is it good to turn to Jehovah as our outstanding Example?

mised. And what happens when a conflict of loyalties arises? Recently, in England, when an accountant told the truth about his company's finances to the tax inspectors, he lost his job.

² It is easy merely to speak of loyalty, but true loyalty has to be backed by action that does not involve fearful compromise. As imperfect humans, we often fail in this. So it is good for us to consider the example of one whose loyalty cannot successfully be questioned, Jehovah God himself.



Loyalty Exemplified

³ When Adam sinned, Jehovah clearly expressed his purpose to redeem the human family that was as yet unborn. The basis for this action was his love for his human creation. (John 3:16) In due time, Jesus Christ, the seed of promise foretold at Genesis 3:15, proved to be the ransom sacrifice, and it would have been unthinkable for Jehovah to renege on his expressed purpose. In accepting Jesus' sacrifice, our faith will not lead to disappointment.—Romans 9:33.

⁴ Jehovah's loyalty to Jesus greatly strengthened the Son during his time on earth. Jesus knew that he must face death, and he was firmly resolved to remain loyal to his God to the end. Fuller knowledge of his prehuman existence was revealed to him at his baptism and anointing by holy spirit. On the night of his betrayal, he prayed to be restored to his heavenly Father, to 'the glory that he had alongside Jehovah before the world was.' (John 17:5) How was this going to be possible? Only by Jehovah's not leaving his loyal Son in the grave to see corruption. Jehovah raised him from death to immortality, thus loyally fulfilling the prophetic promise recorded at Psalm 16:10: "You will not leave my soul in Sheol." —Acts 2:24-31; 13:35; Revelation 1:18.

⁵ Following his resurrection, Jesus likewise knew that he could rely on Jehovah's utterance to 'place his enemies as a stool for his feet.' (Psalm 110:1) That time arrived in 1914, at the end of "the appointed times of the nations," with the establishing of the Kingdom in the heavens. The promised ascendancy of Jesus over his

enemies began with the ousting of Satan and his demons from heaven. It will culminate when they are abyssed for a thousand years and "the kings of the earth and their armies" have been destroyed.—Luke 21:24; Revelation 12:7-12; 19:19; 20:1-3.

⁶ The psalmist urged: "Hope in Jehovah and keep his way, and he will exalt you to take possession of the earth." (Psalm 37:34) We can be confident that Jehovah will continue to keep his word, and right through the end of this wicked world, he will save men, women, and children who "keep his way." That phrase in the original Hebrew conveys the thought of both diligence and faithfulness in serving Jehovah. Now, therefore, is not the time to grow weary or to give up privileges of service extended to us. This is the time to exert ourselves in loyal service of our God and his Kingdom. (Isaiah 35:3, 4) There are fine examples to encourage us. Let us consider some of them.

Patriarchs Reflect Loyalty

⁷ When Jehovah purposed to destroy a wicked human society by a deluge of water, he made a covenant with the patriarchal family head Noah for the preservation of his family and the continuation of life on this earth. (Genesis 6:18) Noah was grateful for the prospect of divine protection, but he and his family had to prove worthy of it. How? By doing what Jehovah commanded. They were first confronted with the prodigious task of building the ark. When it was completed, Noah was to fill it with representatives of the animal realm and with enough food to sustain them for a long period. But that was not

3. How has Jehovah proved loyal to his purpose stated at Genesis 3:15?

4. How did Jehovah prove loyal to Jesus, and with what result?

5. What other loyal acts relate to Jehovah's promises to Jesus?

6. What assured hope does God extend to us, and how can we show our appreciation for it?

7, 8. (a) What work assignments did Jehovah extend to Noah and his family? (b) How did Noah's household prove worthy of God's protection during the earth-wide deluge?

all. During the extended time of preparation, Noah was doing all that he could in an unprecedented preaching work, warning of the divine judgment to come.—Genesis, chapters 6 and 7; 2 Peter 2:5.

⁸ The Bible tells us that “Noah proceeded to do according to all that God had commanded him. He did just so.” (Genesis 6:22; 7:5) Noah and his family proved loyal in fulfilling their assignments. Their self-sacrificing spirit meant that their time was spent profitably, but the task was hard and the preaching difficult. By their not producing children before the Flood, Noah’s sons and their wives were helped to concentrate on the assigned work at hand and to coordinate their activity. That cataclysmic Flood brought a just end to a wicked world. Only Noah, his wife, and their three sons and three daughters-in-law survived. We can be glad that they were loyal to God and his directions, as every one of us is directly descended from Noah through either Shem, Ham, or Japheth.—Genesis 5:32; 1 Peter 3:20.

⁹ When Abraham prepared to offer up Isaac as a sacrifice, he was acting in faithful obedience to Jehovah’s command. What a test of his loyalty that was! Yet, Jehovah stayed Abraham’s hand, saying: “Now I do know that you are God-fearing in that you have not withheld your son, your only one, from me.” We do well, though, to reflect on what preceded that. During the three-day trip to Mount Moriah, Abraham surely had enough time to weigh things and to change his mind. What about Isaac, who carried the wood for the sacrifice and who permitted himself to be bound hand and foot? He did not falter in his allegiance to his father, Abraham, nor did he question the role he had

9. (a) How was Jehovah’s test of Abraham a test of his loyalty? (b) How did Isaac display loyalty in this?

to play, even though it appeared that his course of loyalty would cost him his life.—Genesis 22:1-18; Hebrews 11:17.

Christian Loyalty

¹⁰ Jehovah has always acted in true loyalty. “Become imitators of God,” urges the apostle Paul. (Ephesians 5:1, 2) As the patriarchs responded, so Christians were to respond. The early Christians set fine examples in loyal worship, as the following experience shows.

¹¹ Roman emperor Constantius I, father of Emperor Constantine, apparently had deep respect for the followers of Jesus Christ. To test the loyalty of Christians attached to his palace, he told them they could remain in his service only if they agreed to sacrifice to idols. Refusal would lead to their dismissal and vengeance at his hand, they were told. By this simple ploy, Constantius wanted to identify those who would never compromise their loyalty. Those who proved loyal to God and his principles were retained in the emperor’s service, some even becoming trusted counselors. Those disloyal to God’s command were ignominiously dismissed.

¹² Although loyalty must characterize the lives of all Christians, it is specifically mentioned at Titus 1:8 in the list of qualities necessary for a man to be a Christian overseer. William Barclay says that *ho’si-os*, the Greek word here translated as “loyal,” describes “the man who obeys the eternal laws which were and are before any manmade laws.” It is essential that elders take such a loyal stand of obedience to God’s laws. This right example will help the congregation to grow and be strong enough to meet all trials and pressures

10, 11. The early Christians provide what examples of loyalty?

12. How should Christian overseers manifest loyalty, and why is this essential for the congregation’s welfare?

that may threaten it as a body or its members individually. (1 Peter 5:3) Appointed elders have a great responsibility to the flock never to compromise their loyalty to Jehovah, for the congregation is admonished to “imitate their faith.”—Hebrews 13:7.

Loyalty—At What Price?

¹³ “All men have their price” is an axiom attributed to Sir Robert Walpole, a British prime minister of the 18th century. It nicely sums up the fact that throughout history loyalties have often been traded for selfish gain. Consider Bible translator William Tyndale, who mistakenly accepted Henry Phillips as a loyal friend. In 1535 Phillips disloyally betrayed Tyndale to his enemies, leading to Tyndale’s immediate imprisonment and untimely death. One historian says that Phillips, probably an agent of either the English king or the English Catholics, “was well paid for his Judas-work.” The historian was alluding, of course, to Judas Iscariot, who accepted 30 pieces of silver as the price for betraying Jesus Christ. We should not conclude from these examples, however, that the “price” for a person’s loyalty is always money. It is not.

¹⁴ When Potiphar’s wife importuned Joseph to “lie down with [her],” his loyalty to Jehovah was put to the test. What would he do? With a mind already clear on the principles involved, Joseph ran from the house, determined that he could never “commit this great badness and actually sin against God.” The prospect of sexual pleasure could not overcome Joseph’s loyalty to his God, Jehovah.—Genesis 39:7-9.

13. What is meant by the axiom “All men have their price,” and what examples seem to bear this out?

14. How was Joseph’s loyalty to Jehovah put to the test, and with what outcome?



¹⁵ Yet, there are other dangers; ambition can undermine loyalty. That was the motivation behind Absalom’s rebellion against his father, King David. By scheming and intrigue, Absalom sought to ingratiate himself with the people. Eventually, he raised an army to confront his father’s loyal supporters. His death at the hand of Joab brought an end to Absalom’s disloyalty to his father, David, but what a price to pay for attempting to overthrow the theocratic arrangement!—2 Samuel 15:1-12; 18:6-17.

The Loyalty That Has No Price

¹⁶ Though Satan claims that everybody has his price, and this was true of Absalom, it was not true of Joseph, and it has never been true of loyal worshipers of Jehovah. Nevertheless, Satan will make

15. How did Absalom manifest disloyalty, and with what result?

16. What does 2 Corinthians 11:3 reveal about Satan’s motives?

any offer to get us to break our loyalty to our Creator. The apostle Paul expressed his fear that "somehow, as the serpent seduced Eve by its cunning," our thinking might be corrupted, leading us to compromise our loyalty to Jehovah and worship of him.—2 Corinthians 11:3.

¹⁷ It is appropriate that we ask ourselves: 'Is there any price I would accept in exchange for my privilege of loyally worshipping my Creator?' It is a sad fact that, unlike Joseph, some who were Jehovah's dedicated servants asked very little in exchange. Even some elders have traded their priceless privileges of sacred service for the temporary enjoyment of immoral sensual pleasures. Whether elders or not, many of those doing this have irretrievably lost family unity, the love and respect of the congregation, and the approval of Jehovah—the very One who can give strength to maintain loyalty and to resist any temptation from Satan.—Isaiah 12:2; Philippians 4:13.

¹⁸ Others, in ambitious determination to get on in worldly pursuits, have "stabbed themselves all over with many pains," in spite of the Bible's clear warnings. (1 Timothy 6:9, 10) Demas, a Christian men-

17. What have some traded for priceless privileges of service?

18. Why is it important to heed the warning at 1 Timothy 6:9, 10?

How Do You Answer?

- ☐ How have Jehovah and Jesus manifested loyalty?
- ☐ What are some other Biblical examples of loyalty?
- ☐ What may Satan offer us or attempt to do?
- ☐ How can we strengthen ourselves to remain loyal in our worship of Jehovah?

tioned by Paul, lost out on this account, either temporarily or permanently. (2 Timothy 4:10) Loyalty to Jehovah can never be compromised without disastrous results. "God is not one to be mocked. For whatever a man is sowing, this he will also reap."—Galatians 6:7.

¹⁹ Sometimes the bargaining price appears in a very subtle way. For example, a report from the United States says that many families spend about half their waking hours at home watching television, with young people particularly addicted. If a Christian was to feed his mind primarily on television, with its sex and violence, he could soon undermine his Christian principles. That could easily lead to his becoming disloyal, alienated from Jehovah. Such bad association does spoil useful habits. (1 Corinthians 15:33) We must not forget that the Scriptures admonish us to take time to study and meditate on Jehovah's Word. Is excessive time spent relaxing in front of a television screen a fair exchange for time that could be used to acquire knowledge leading to everlasting life as a loyal worshiper of Jehovah? Many coming to a knowledge of the truth today have had to make major adjustments in their thinking in this regard.—1 Timothy 4:15, 16; 2 Timothy 2:15.

²⁰ Takashi is a Japanese businessman living in England. He used to spend three or four hours most evenings watching television with his family. After he and his wife were baptized three years ago, he resolved that personal and family Bible study must take priority. By reducing his television viewing to a mere 15 or 30 minutes a day on the average, he took a fine lead in the family. Though Takashi has to study using two Bibles, one English and the other Japanese, his spiritual

19, 20. (a) What are some of the dangers associated with excessive television viewing? (b) What example has one Witness family set?

growth has been rapid, and he now serves as a ministerial servant in an English-language congregation. His wife is an auxiliary pioneer. "To safeguard the spirituality of our two young boys," he says, "each day I also carefully monitor what my wife and I allow them to see on television." Such self-discipline is rewarding.

²¹ We can be sure of this: Satan knows our weaknesses, perhaps better than we know them ourselves. He will stop at nothing

21. What do we know about Satan's tactics, and how can we safeguard ourselves?

LOYALLY WORKING WITH JEHOVAH

*"O God, you have taught me from my youth on, and until now
I keep telling about your wonderful works."—PSALM 71:17.*

WORK is one of God's gifts to man. To our original parents, Adam and Eve, Jehovah said: "Fill the earth and subdue it." That was a challenging work assignment but one well within their capabilities. The physical and mental effort required would increase their joy of living, beyond anything experienced by the animals that shared their earthly home.—Genesis 1:28.

² Even in our imperfect state, "hard work" resulting in "good" is "the gift of God," as the wise man Solomon wrote. (Ecclesiastes 3:13) Man still needs to occupy

1. Why can we say that work is a gift from Jehovah?

2, 3. (a) What has work become for many today, and why? (b) What opportunity to do a special work do we need to consider?

ing as he tries to get us to compromise or weaken our allegiance to Jehovah. (Compare Matthew 4:8, 9.) How, then, can we safeguard ourselves? By constantly keeping our dedication before us and by taking delight in developing skills as we minister to the spiritual needs of others. As loyal servants of Jehovah, we must keep busy in his service and be guided at all times by his holy Word. This will help us in our firm resolve that no price Satan can ever offer will swerve us from loyalty to God.—Psalm 119:14-16.

his faculties of mind and body. Being out of work is depressing. Yet, not all work is wholesome or worthwhile. For many, work is drudgery, born of necessity to eke out a living.

³ There is, however, a truly rewarding work in which all are invited to share. But there are many opposers and problems to overcome for those who participate in it. Why is it important that we qualify for this work? How do we do so? Before answering these questions, let us consider first:

For Whom Are We Working?

⁴ Jesus Christ said: "My food is for me to do the will of him that sent me and to finish his work." (John 4:34) Loyal working for

4. What kind of work brought joy and satisfaction to Jesus?

Jehovah brought Jesus much joy and satisfaction. It gave him purpose in life, and at the end of his three-and-a-half-year ministry, he could truthfully say to his heavenly Father: "I have glorified you on the earth, having finished the work you have given me to do." (John 17:4) Just as physical food is sustaining, so too is work with a spiritual dimension. Jesus stressed this on another occasion when he admonished: "Work, not for the food that perishes, but for the food that remains for life everlasting." (John 6:27) In contrast, work that is spiritually unproductive leads to frustration and death.

⁵ "My Father has kept working until now, and I keep working." Jesus addressed this remark to the Jews who were criticizing him because on the Sabbath day he cured a man who had been sick for 38 years. (John 5:5-17) Although Jesus was doing Jehovah's work, religious opposers refused to acknowledge that fact and did everything they could to stop him. Why? Because they were from their father, Satan the Devil, the one

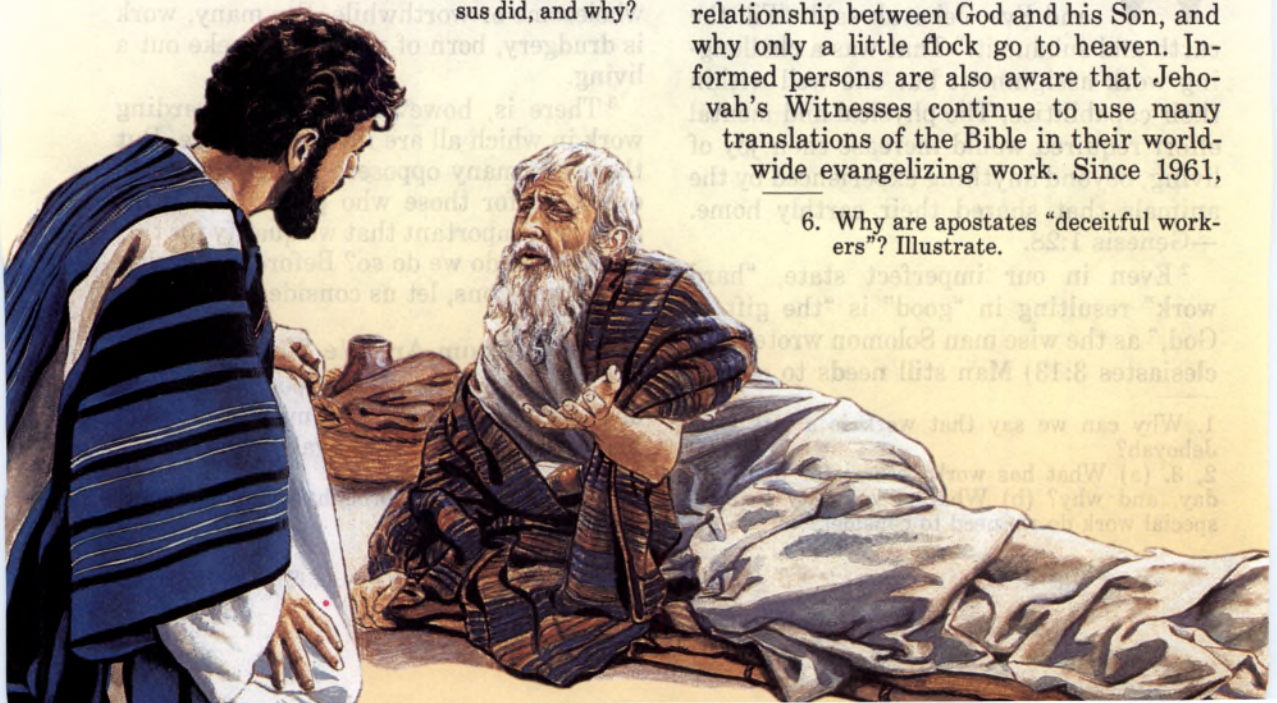
5. Who opposed the good work Jesus did, and why?

who has always opposed Jehovah's work. (John 8:44) Since Satan can 'transform himself into an angel of light,' using "every unrighteous deception," we need spiritual discernment and clear thinking to recognize his works for what they are. Otherwise, we may find ourselves working in opposition to Jehovah.—2 Corinthians 11:14; 2 Thessalonians 2:9, 10.

Opposers at Work

⁶ Some, like certain apostates today, are disloyally working as Satan's agents to undermine the faith of newly associated members of the Christian congregation. (2 Corinthians 11:13) Rather than simply use the Bible as the basis for true teachings, they concentrate on trying to discredit the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*, as if Jehovah's Witnesses were wholly dependent on it for support. But this is not so. For the best part of a century, the Witnesses used primarily the *King James Version*, the Roman Catholic *Douay Version*, or whatever versions were available in their language, to learn the truth about Jehovah and his purposes. And they used these older versions in proclaiming the truth about the condition of the dead, the relationship between God and his Son, and why only a little flock go to heaven. Informed persons are also aware that Jehovah's Witnesses continue to use many translations of the Bible in their worldwide evangelizing work. Since 1961,

6. Why are apostates "deceitful workers"? Illustrate.



however, they have additionally enjoyed the use of the *New World Translation*, with its updated, accurate translation and fine readability.

⁷ Jesus said he would disown many who profess faith in him. He acknowledged that they might prophesy, expel demons, and “perform many powerful works” in his name. Still, he identifies these as works of “lawlessness.” (Matthew 7:21-23) Why? Because they are not doing the will of his heavenly Father and are worthless as far as Jehovah God is concerned. Unusual, even seemingly miraculous, works today can still originate with the archdeceiver, Satan. The apostle John, writing his first general letter over 60 years after Jesus’ death and resurrection, counseled that Christians should “not believe every inspired expression, but test the inspired expressions to see whether they originate with God.” We need to do the same. —1 John 4:1.

Unrewarding Works

⁸ Even if we are not engaging in spiritually counterproductive work, our labors are worthless if they continue to cater to the desires of the fallen flesh. The apostle Peter said that we have spent long enough working out “the will of the nations . . . in deeds of loose conduct, lusts, excesses with wine, revelries, drinking matches, and illegal idolatries.” (1 Peter 4:3, 4) This does not mean, of course, that all who are now dedicated Christians engaged in such activities, but it does mean that the attitude of those who have done so should have changed rapidly as their spiritual vision developed. The world will speak abusively of them because of their conversion; that is

7. (a) Why does Jesus disown many who profess faith in him? (b) Why is it important to heed the counsel at 1 John 4:1?

8. How should we feel about the works of the flesh?

to be expected. Yet, they must change if they are to become loyal workers in Jehovah’s service.—1 Corinthians 6:9-11.

⁹ Jehovah has given us many gifts for our enjoyment, music among them. However, since “the whole world is lying in the power of the wicked one,” Satan the Devil, does this not include the world of music? (1 John 5:19) Yes, music can be a subtle snare, as Sylvana discovered. She had the opportunity to train in France as an opera singer. “I still had a strong desire to serve Jehovah,” she explains. “I was enjoying auxiliary pioneering and was hoping to reconcile these two things in my life. But the first problem I had to face in pursuing my career was immorality. Initially, my associates looked upon me as naive when I would not go along with their immoral talk and example. Later, the corrupt environment began to desensitize me, making me tolerant of things Jehovah hates. One of my teachers kept urging me to make a religion of my singing, and I was taught to be aggressive on the stage and to think I was superior to everyone else. All of this made me very uneasy. Eventually, I had to prepare for a special audition. I prayed to Jehovah to make it clear to me which way I should go. Although I sang well and felt confident, I was not among those chosen. Subsequently, I learned why—the results had secretly been predetermined long before the contest. But I had a clear answer to my prayer and decided to leave the operatic stage to teach singing at home.” This sister later married an elder in a Christian congregation, where both now serve loyally to advance Kingdom interests.

¹⁰ Jesus said: “He that practices vile things hates the light and does not come to

9. What do we learn from the experience of the Witness who began to train as an opera singer?

10. What do you conclude from Jesus’ words at John 3:19-21?

the light, in order that his works may not be reproved." On the other hand, "he that does what is true comes to the light, in order that his works may be made manifest as having been worked in harmony with God." (John 3:19-21) What a blessing to be working in harmony with Jehovah's will and purpose! But to do it successfully, we must always allow our works to be scrutinized in the light of God's Word. We are never too old and it is never too late to change our way of life and to accept the invitation to take up Jehovah's worthwhile service.

Doing "Good Works" Today

¹¹ Work that is worthwhile today must reflect the urgency of our times. Many sincere people agree and busy themselves with works that are often described as "good works," performed for the benefit of mankind in general or for one cause specifically. Yet, how frustrating this kind of work can be! In Britain, CAFOD (Catholic Fund for Overseas Development), reporting on its campaign for famine relief, said: "Three years ago . . . millions of pounds were raised for relief aid. Thousands of lives were saved. Now those lives are at

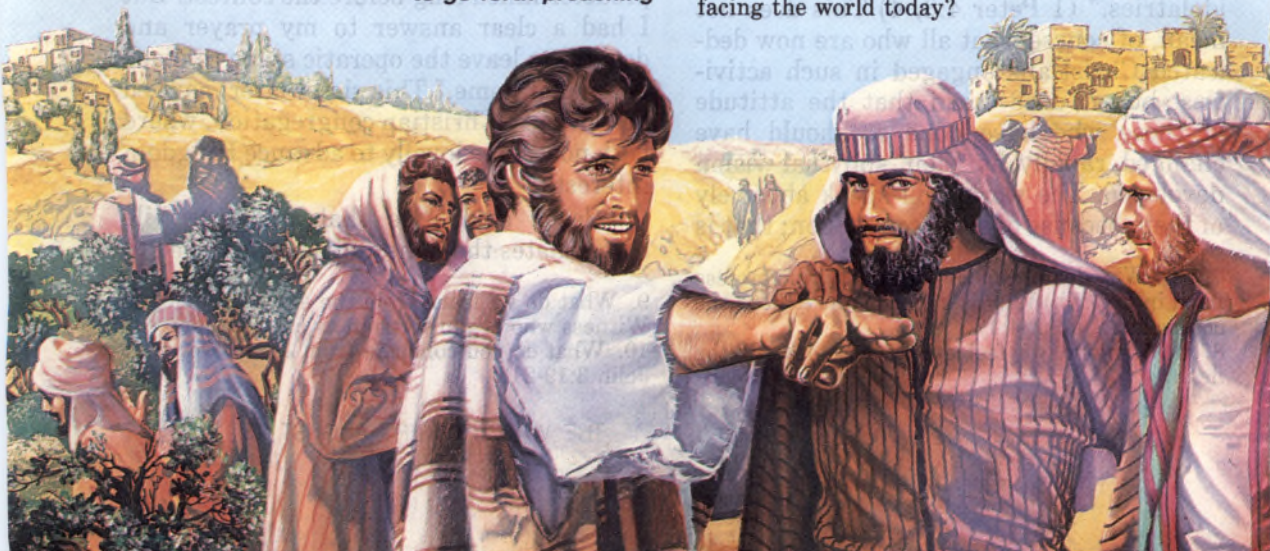
11. What do many pursue as "good works," and why can such lead to frustration?

Jesus commissioned his disciples to go forth preaching

risk once more . . . But why? What went wrong?" Continuing its account, the *CAFOD Journal* explains that long-term problems were never tackled and that "resources desperately needed for human development have been used to fuel the conflict [civil war]." Doubtless, you have heard like sentiments echoed by charities engaged in similar work.

¹² Famine is an urgent problem. Yet, who are identifying today's tragedies of famine and war as fulfilling Jesus Christ's prophecy, pointing to the end of the present system of things? (Matthew 24:3, 7) Who has published evidence linking these events with the ride of the four horsemen vividly portrayed in the Bible book of Revelation, chapter 6? Consistently, Jehovah's Witnesses have loyally done so in this journal. Why? To show that it is beyond the reach of man to fashion any lasting remedy. This does not mean that Christians are indifferent to the world's problems. Far from it. They are compassionate and will do all they can to alleviate suffering. Still, they realistically face the fact that without divine intervention, the world's problems will never be resolved. Like the poor, these problems will remain as long as Satan is permitted to continue as the ruler of this world.—Mark 14:7; John 12:31.

12. What is the only answer to the problems facing the world today?



The Work of Greatest Value

¹³ The most urgent need today is to preach the good news that the Kingdom of Jehovah God will soon replace all worldly governments and bring the relief for which God-fearing persons long. (Daniel 2:44; Matthew 24:14) Jesus Christ made the preaching of the heavenly Kingdom his main purpose in life, though his preaching was limited to the land of Palestine. Today, the extent of this preaching is worldwide, just as Jesus said it would be. (John 14:12; Acts 1:8) To have a share, even a small one, in God's work, is a privilege beyond compare. Men and women, old and young alike, who at one time never dreamed of being preachers of the good news are in the forefront of the evangelizing work being accomplished by Jehovah's Witnesses today. Like Noah and his family, they are loyally doing God's work under commission from Him, and therefore in His strength, as a prelude to the end of this system of things. —Philippians 4:13; Hebrews 11:7.

¹⁴ The witnessing work by Jehovah's Witnesses during these last days is lifesaving for those who listen and who act upon the good news they hear. (Romans 10:11-15) It is also a safeguard for those who preach. By being sincerely interested in helping people who have problems greater than our own, we are less likely to become overly concerned with problems we may have. We realize that this world of declining standards would have us conform to its ways. So filling our minds with God's thoughts during our preaching is more than faith-strengthening; it is in our best interests. As one Witness put it: "If I do not try to change the people I meet, they could change me!" —Compare 2 Peter 2:7-9.

13. What is the most urgent work today, and who are doing it?

14. How is preaching lifesaving and at the same time a safeguard?

Working With the Congregation

¹⁵ When newly interested ones come to the congregation, they come under the care of the Great Shepherd, Jehovah God, and his Fine Shepherd, Jesus Christ. (Psalm 23:1; John 10:11) These heavenly Shepherds are represented here on earth by loyal undershepherds of the flock, men appointed within the congregations. (1 Peter 5:2, 3) To hold such an office is a priceless privilege in these last days. The shepherds' work is a weighty one, including not just taking the lead in teaching in the congregation and in evangelizing but also protecting the flock from spiritual predators and the buffetings of the stormlike atmosphere of the world in which we live. There is no more worthwhile work for which male members of the congregation could be reaching out than that of helping to care for the spiritual welfare of members of the expanding Christian congregation. —1 Timothy 3:1; compare Isaiah 32:1, 2.

¹⁶ We must never forget, however, that such shepherds are human, with differing personalities and failings like the rest of the flock. Whereas one may excel in a certain aspect of shepherding, another's gifts will benefit the congregation from a different angle. Their works as Christian elders complement one another to strengthen the congregation. (1 Corinthians 12:4, 5) Never should a spirit of competition enter in among them. Together they work to safeguard and advance Kingdom interests, "lifting up loyal hands" in prayer to Jehovah, seeking his blessing and guidance on all their deliberations and decisions. —1 Timothy 2:8.

15. What responsibilities devolve upon undershepherds today, and how should male members of the congregation feel in view of 1 Timothy 3:1?

16. In what ways do Christian shepherds complement one another?

¹⁷ The work of preaching is now taking on added urgency as the end of Satan's empire draws near. Having the truth of Jehovah God's Word, as his Witnesses, we have an obligation to spread the good news at every opportunity. The work at hand is more than enough to keep us busy, right up to the end. We must never allow ourselves to be sidetracked by hedonistic, immoral pleasure-seeking or to be weighed down by materialism. We should not get in-

17. (a) What obligation do we have? (b) What things do we need to avoid if we are to discharge our obligation adequately?

What Is Your Answer?

- ☐ From what work did Jesus gain joy and satisfaction?
- ☐ Who are opposed to Jehovah's work, and why?
- ☐ How do worldly "good works" and the preaching of the good news of God's Kingdom compare?

volved in speculative thinking, debating about words, for this can prove to be unprofitable and time-consuming. (2 Timothy 2:14; Titus 1:10; 3:9) When the disciples asked Jesus, "Lord, are you restoring the kingdom to Israel at this time?" Jesus redirected their thinking to the important task at hand, saying: "You will be witnesses of me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the most distant part of the earth." That commission extends to this day.—Acts 1:6-8.

¹⁸ Working with Jehovah, preaching with his worldwide congregation today, brings happiness, contentment, and real purpose to our lives. It is an opportunity for each lover of Jehovah to manifest devotion and loyalty to him. This work in its many aspects will never be repeated. With the prospect of everlasting life clearly ahead, may we loyally continue to "render God sacred service with godly fear and awe," to his praise and for our own salvation.—Hebrews 12:28.

18. Why is working with Jehovah so rewarding?

DO NOT NEGLECT YOUR MATE!

A COUPLE is leaving the Kingdom Hall. The smiling faces of the husband and wife reflect the happiness they enjoy as "one flesh," united in worship of their God, Jehovah. (Matthew 19:6) However, they have not always enjoyed that unity or shared the same belief. There was a time when the wife, Atsuko, attended meetings by herself. She would then go home to an irate husband who yelled at her. Her husband, Kazutaka, was once so angry that he grabbed the dinner

table and, in one thrust, threw the whole supper on the floor.

Just as Jesus foretold, true Christianity has brought division in some households. (Matthew 10:34, 35) Yet, like Kazutaka and Atsuko, some now enjoy religious unity and happiness in their home. Such unity did not just happen, of course. What did the believers do to overcome the opposition and bring about true harmony in the family? Before we look into that, let us see just why some spouses oppose.

Why Did They Oppose?

"As I look back," Atsuko confides, "I realize that I went off to the meetings without ever explaining matters to my husband." Left alone without being informed, Kazutaka became angry.

Flames of opposition may also flare up because of jealousy. One young husband, Shigeo, developed unfounded suspicions about his wife's new associates. "As my wife put on makeup and went off to the meetings, I thought she had another man." "We never really had a chance to talk just between the two of us," admits Masako, his wife. "I never did express my heartfelt desire that he too learn the Christian truth."

Toshiko, a housewife, felt as Shigeo did. "When my husband began to study with Jehovah's Witnesses, I objected because he gradually increased the time he spent with the congregation. I took to the bottle to escape from my feelings while he was gone."

Toshiko's expression hinted at another reason—loneliness. That is how some former opposers felt when their mates regularly went off to their meetings. "Alone in the house, I felt deserted," one husband

recalls. "I felt as if my wife and children were leaving me," says another. Since most men find it hard to say, "I am lonely, please stay home," some turn to opposing the mate's religious practice.

Pressure from friends and relatives may sometimes lead to opposition from a normally understanding mate. It is said that in the Orient a wife is generally "adopted into the family rather than united with her husband." Pressure from relatives can easily produce discord. Takashi's Christian wife declined to take part in worship at the family Buddhist altar. "To complicate matters," Takashi explains, "we lived near my folks. My mother pressured me, so I threatened my wife and used violence."

Misunderstandings, blown out of proportion by poor communication, jealousy, loneliness, or pressure from relatives, can erupt into violence. A man who used to beat his wife admits: "I didn't want to lose my family to a religion." Another says: "I hated coming home to an empty house." Perhaps they reasoned, 'If words can't stop this religious fervor, a few punches will.'

Happily, all the couples mentioned above were later united in worship. Their vexatious experiences are now in the past. But having gone through them, they are in a good position to offer practical suggestions that could help to defuse potentially explosive situations and possibly bring about united worship in families that are still divided in this respect.

Stick to the Truth

When you extend your hand to pull a drowning person out of the water, you must have a firm footing yourself. If you do not, you too might end up in the water.



Likewise, the key to helping your mate is to have a firm hold on the lifesaving truth yourself. "When my opposition was at its worst," says one who formerly opposed, "my wife still took the children by the hand and went to the meetings. If she had slackened, I might have doubted that her faith was genuine."

Kazutaka, who overturned the dinner table, reveals what changed his attitude as he tells the rest of his story: "Finally, I refused to give Atsuko money for transportation. Even so, she went to all the meetings and took the children along. To do so, she sold her personal belongings, little by little. I felt foolish and lost the will to oppose her. Instead, I began to read the magazines that she left out for me to see."

Communicate With Your Mate

"I should have invited my husband to join me and let him know that I wanted us to study the Bible together," says Kazutaka's wife, Atsuko. "He was anxious about me and the family. Good communication would have gone a long way to alleviate his anxiety." Yes, good communication is the key to understanding. The Bible counsels: "There is a frustrating of plans where there is no confidential talk." (Proverbs 15:22) In this context, "confidential talk" with your mate con-

cerning your religious activities must be well-thought-out and engaged in tactfully. "The heart of the wise one causes his mouth to show insight, and to his lips it adds persuasiveness," says the Bible. (Proverbs 16:23) It is equally important to be discreet in choosing the right time to speak.—Ecclesiastes 3:7.

How you speak is perhaps as important as what you say. The apostle Paul admonishes: "Let your utterance be always with graciousness, seasoned with salt, so as to know how you ought to give an answer to each one." (Colossians 4:6) When you speak graciously, in a tasteful manner, your mate will be less inclined to close his or her ears to what you have to say.

Many husbands find it difficult to be taught by their wives. So wives need to be resourceful. Kikuyo made good use of the Watch Tower Society's publications. She says: "As soon as my *Awake!* came in the mail, I would peruse it for items that would interest my husband. Then I prayed for an opportunity to share those with him." She would leave the magazine in the bathroom and check the pages every day to see if he had read an article. When he did not seem to read on, she would change the magazine. Kikuyo's husband is now a ministerial servant and a pioneer.

The Power of Fine Conduct

But what if your mate is not willing to discuss religion with you? Becoming acquainted with other Christians may quench your mate's fiery opposition and move him or her to study the Bible. Masao, now an elder, at one time forbade Jehovah's Witnesses to set foot in his home. He recalls: "I finally agreed to a Bible study with the Witnesses after my wife begged me to help in building the Kingdom Hall. I was touched to see everyone happily working together—without pay."

In Our Next Issue

- **Does the Soul Survive Death?**
- **Trusting in Jehovah Brings Happiness**
- **Are You Qualified to Serve?**

What can you do if your mate refuses to discuss religion with *anybody*? “If any are not obedient to the word,” exhorts the apostle Peter, “they may be won without a word through the conduct of their [mates].” For example, what kind of conduct on the part of a Christian wife can win her husband? “Chaste conduct together with deep respect” that reveals “the secret person of the heart in the incorruptible apparel of the quiet and mild spirit,” says Peter.—1 Peter 3:1-4.

One Christian wife applied this principle when her opposing husband was involved in a scandal. Although it brought him social disgrace and financial ruin, he did not hear one word of complaint from her or from the children. “I knew that their outstanding behavior was due to their Bible study,” the husband admitted. After years of opposition, he started to read the Bible. Other husbands who later became Witnesses observe: “I had been a henpecked husband, but suddenly my wife respected me as head of the house.” “When my business associates came to our house, my wife warmly welcomed them. I liked that.”

Fine conduct of children, too, can soften the heart of opposers. Asked what changed his attitude, a father who had previously opposed his wife said: “When my two-and-a-half-year-old son sensed that I was about to lose my temper, he would cry out in a loud voice and recite: ‘Love is long-suffering and kind.’” (1 Corinthians 13:4-7) This well-taught boy moved his father to investi-

gate the Bible. Many fathers have decided to examine the Bible because their children begged them to study.

Finally, a cheerful approach and a sense of humor can do wonders for your mate’s attitude. One husband told his believing wife to take whatever she wanted and get out, never to come back again. “I want neither my child, nor money, nor material things,” answered his wife. Then she spread out a large *furoshiki* (cloth used in Japan to wrap and carry things) and said: “Nothing is more precious to me than you. You get in the *furoshiki*! I want to take you with me.” The husband stopped opposing, started to study the Bible, and now serves as an elder.

If you stick to the truth, maintain good communication, provide wholesome association, and conduct yourself in a fine manner, you may be able to help your mate to become a believer. “Even if it doesn’t sound as if your mate is becoming a believer,” says a former opposer, “he may be changing at heart.” So do not give up. Take to heart the encouragement of the apostle Paul to all those with unbelieving mates: “Wife, how do you know but that you will save your husband? Or, husband, how do you know but that you will save your wife?”—1 Corinthians 7:16.



DOING GOD'S WORK

GOD'S WAY IN

NIGERIA



IT WAS an impressive sight. Huge piles of steel girders—over 500 tons of them—lay on the Houston, Texas, dock, stretching from one end to the other. A stevedore had the job of checking in the vast quantities for shipment. As he worked, he was amazed to see that all of them were marked “Watchtower.” At last he approached the man who was in charge of the consignment and asked: “Just how tall is this watchtower, anyway?”

The stevedore then learned that the steel would not be made into a literal watchtower. Instead, it was going to be shipped to Igieduma, Nigeria, where it would be used in constructing a new



branch complex for the Watch Tower Society—literally a small city in the heart of the African jungle.

Six years ago the site at Igieduma was primarily dense bush and rubber trees. Now the land is cared for and beautiful; there are flowers, gardens, and even a parkland with deer! Yet, on the grounds stands a printery larger than the entire plot of land that held the previous branch in Lagos. Inside the factory, three printing presses operate, one of which is capable of producing 17,000 magazines per hour. The residence buildings can house more than 400 people. The services building has a large dining room and kitchen



as well as an infirmary and dental office. There are independent water-supply and sewage systems. A computer-controlled powerhouse generates electricity. There is a Kingdom Hall, an office building, and a fire department. You will also find roads and streetlights. No wonder people call the Bethel complex at Igieduma a city. And it was built entirely by unpaid volunteer workers and financed by unsolicited contributions.

Rapid Expansion

While this Bethel is the largest ever in Nigeria, it is not the first. The first was established by Brother William R. Brown,

who with his wife and daughter moved to Lagos in 1930. The several rented rooms where they lived served as headquarters of the Society's West African branch, which then cared for the Kingdom work in Nigeria, Ghana, and Sierra Leone. At the time, there were only seven active proclaimers of the good news in Nigeria.

Bible Brown, as he was widely known, was a dynamic and courageous preacher of the good news. Never content for long in an office chair, he toured the country by car and train, giving public lectures and distributing huge amounts of literature.

As the powerful Kingdom message took root in responsive minds and hearts, more

and more people became zealous Kingdom proclaimers. The decade that followed was like the period in the first century in Jerusalem when “the word of God went on growing, and the number of the disciples



Brother and Sister Brown in front of the branch office in the 1940's

kept multiplying . . . very much.” (Acts 6:7) By 1940 the number of active praisers of Jehovah in Nigeria had skyrocketed from 7 to 1,051!

The ‘little one had become a thousand,’ but this was just the beginning. (Isaiah 60:22) In 1947 the Society sent three Gilead-trained missionaries to Lagos. One of these, Anthony Attwood, is still active in his assignment. He recalls the Bethel of that time: “It was an apartment over a shoe shop. There were three bedrooms, a sitting-room/office, and a dining room. Brother and Sister Brown and their family occupied two bedrooms, and we three missionaries were jammed into the third bedroom. There was only enough room for three single beds and a built-in wardrobe.”

The need for more room prompted a move to a three-story building in 1948. By then the number of publishers in Nigeria had reached 6,825. Eight years later, this

number had tripled, so Bethel was moved again, to Shomolu, Lagos. There, for the first time in Nigeria, the Society built its own Bethel Home, an eight-bedroom building on an acre-and-a-half plot of land. The local government named the street Watch Tower Avenue. In the garden grew many trees, including coconut palms as well as citrus, breadfruit, avocado, and mango trees. But over the next 33 years, buildings were added and expanded. By the mid-1970's, buildings covered almost the whole of the property. It was again necessary to move.

Construction Memories

First, a 76-acre parcel of land was found at Otta, north of Lagos. But problems kept blocking progress. Eventually, it became evident that it was not Jehovah's will that we move there. Next the search for land was extended throughout the southern



▲ Factory reception at new branch

◀ Bethel room

part of the country, and in 1983 the Society obtained a 140-acre piece of land at Igieduma, in Bendel State.

Over the next six years, the pythons and cobras moved out as the brothers and heavy equipment moved in. A major challenge to the work was that it was difficult, or nearly impossible, to purchase most of

the tools and building materials locally. Outside help was needed. So a team of Witnesses in the United States was called on to find, purchase, and ship materials. Terry Dean, the coordinator of this massive operation, relates: "What made the project monumental was that just about everything had to be shipped in. The brothers in Nigeria told us that the only building materials they had were sand, cement, and water!"

It was good that the basic materials were on hand, since the construction work consumed 7,500 tons of cement, 55,000 tons of sand, and 35,000 tons of gravel. Plenty of wood was also available. Nevertheless, over the next five years, 5,000 tons of material was sent from the United States, enough to fill 347 freight containers, which if placed end to end would extend 2.2 miles!

Other branches also generously contributed supplies. England supplied the entire electrical system, including six huge

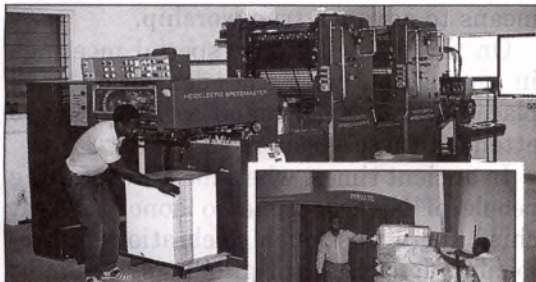
snow shovels—decidedly more useful in Sweden than in Africa!

Of course, local Witnesses also contributed according to their ability. Over 125,000 showed their support for the project by coming to the site during the construc-



▲ Kingdom Hall

◀ Service Department



▲ Two-color offset press

▶ Loading literature



generators to power it. Sweden donated a tower crane, tractors, an excavator, a truck, tools, kitchen equipment, and a telephone exchange. When a hardware store was put up for sale, the Swedish brothers bought it and shipped the entire contents to Nigeria. About the only items from the store they did not send were

tion. Many helped financially. One contribution of 20 cents (U.S.) came from a seven-year-old boy. How did he get the money? His father gave him a piece of yam to cook and eat; instead the boy saved it and planted it during the proper season. Later he harvested his yam, sold it, and contributed the money for the Igieduma project.

Other Witnesses of Jehovah contributed their expertise, even training others to master the skills of construction. Many, up to 500 at a time, contributed hard labor, toiling under torrid sun and in tropical rains to finish the work. Consider, for example, just the work involved in building the wall that surrounds the site. In the seven months that it took to complete this nearly two-mile-long wall, the brothers made and individually mortared into place over 57,000 concrete blocks! One brother joked: "What kept me going was the sight of the vultures circling overhead waiting for me to drop!" In truth, like the

thousands of others who contributed to the success of Igieduma, he was motivated and sustained by Jehovah's holy spirit.

Official Recognition

Government officials cooperated in support of the work. The Office of the President made the concession that all imported building supplies be exempted from customs duty. Local officials waived development and plan-signing fees. Only a token building fee was required. Once, when there was a dispute about land, the *Omo N'oba*, or king, of the entire area stepped in and decreed: "The work must not be stopped because this is God's work."

That this project had divine backing was recognized by others who were not Jehovah's Witnesses. When an American company supplied steel to build the garage, they sent one of their men, a Catholic, to help erect it. During his two-week stay at Igieduma, he soon felt right at home, even calling his fellow workers brother and sister. After returning home, he wrote to our Nigerian office: "I have never enjoyed work so much as when I was there doing God's work in God's way."

Dedication Day

On January 20, 1990, this beautiful Bethel complex was dedicated to Jehovah God, whose spirit was responsible for its completion. Visitors came from all parts of Nigeria, though invitations had to be limited to those who had been baptized at least 35 years or who had spent a minimum of 20 years in full-time service. The sisters were adorned in flowing, colorful dresses with matching head ties, and many of the brothers wore splendid African robes. All told, 4,209 from 29 countries attended the dedication. Among them were at least 80 missionaries, most of whom had come from other West African countries. Included in the program

were reports by five visiting branch representatives, who highlighted the unity of purpose and fellow feeling that exist among Jehovah's people. Written greetings and telegrams came from brothers in 21 countries, including a heart-stirring message from "the 400 brothers and sisters in Moscow, Soviet Union."

Two members of the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses in Brooklyn, New York, were also on hand. Albert Schroeder spoke on the theme "What Is Looked for Is to Be Found Faithful," stressing the need for continued faithfulness on the part of God's people. (1 Corinthians 4:2) The dedication discourse was given by Lyman Swingle, who discussed the construction of the glorious temple of Solomon's day. Though the temple had God's backing and approval, Jehovah made it clear that of far more importance than the building was the loyalty and obedience of his dedicated people. In this way Brother Swingle showed that the beautiful branch complex at Igieduma was not an end in itself but a means to advance true worship.

On the following day, special meetings in connection with the dedication took place in three Nigerian cities. Over 60,000 attended these sessions.

In ancient times, when the Edo-speaking people of Nigeria came to honor a great chief, there was much celebration and rejoicing. Igieduma (originally *ugie dunai*) was the word used to describe the successful conclusion of such a joyful gathering. To Jehovah's people who came on that dedication day to honor the Chief of the Universe, Jehovah God, few words could have been more appropriate. To the 139,150 Kingdom publishers in Nigeria, the word "Igieduma" calls to mind the place from which flows theocratic direction and counsel, as well as the printed material that will help them to continue doing God's work God's way in Nigeria.

Do You Remember?

Have you enjoyed reading the recent issues of *The Watchtower*? Well, see if you can answer the following questions:

□ Since the disobedient angels have been consigned to Tartarus, what has this meant for them? (2 Peter 2:4)

They no longer occupy a place in Jehovah's holy organization and are now cut off from divine illumination. However, they still operate under Satan's direction and continue to maintain close contact with humans, endeavoring to control men, women, and even children. (Revelation 12:12, 17)—4/15, page 14.

□ Why is it essential to "hate what is bad" in Jehovah's eyes? (Psalm 97:10)

Those who hate what is bad will not seek ways to indulge in it. On the other hand, people who do not hate it may physically refrain from it while mentally wishing that they could share in bad things.—4/15, page 21.

□ In Jesus' illustration of the talents, what solemn lesson is set forth for all who profess to be Christ's followers? (Matthew 25:14-30)

They must work to increase the belongings of their heavenly Master by having a full share in the preaching work. Only then can they be assured of having Jesus' commendation and be rewarded. They thus avoid being thrown into the darkness outside and ultimate destruction.—5/1, page 9.

□ What did Jesus mean when he told his disciples to pray: "Do not bring us into temptation"? (Matthew 6:13)

These words should not be construed to mean that Jehovah

tempts us to commit sin. Instead, we, in effect, can ask Jehovah not to allow us to succumb when tempted or pressured to disobey him. We can entreat our Father to guide our steps so that no temptation overtakes us that is too severe for us to bear. (1 Corinthians 10:13)—5/15, page 19.

□ Is it proper for a Christian to receive an injection of a blood fraction, such as immune globulin or albumin?

Responding to God's law, Christians do not accept blood transfusions of the major blood components—plasma, red cells, white cells, or platelets. Some of Jehovah's Witnesses, however, have conscientiously felt able to receive an injection of one of the small protein fractions of the plasma. Interestingly, some of these proteins naturally pass from the bloodstream of a pregnant woman to the separate blood system of her fetus.—6/1, pages 30, 31.

□ What purpose was served by Jesus' washing the feet of the disciples at the last valid Passover?

Jesus was teaching his disciples a lesson in humility. No one should ever seek first place, thinking that he is important. Rather, all should follow Jesus' example and be willing to serve one another without partiality, no matter how unpleasant or menial the task might be. (John 13:12-17)—6/15, page 9.

□ In what sense did the Jews in Berea 'carefully examine' the Scriptures? (Acts 17:11)

It was not that the Bereans doubted Paul and the message

that he brought to them, but they did research to prove that Jesus was the Messiah. That many of them became believers shows that their motive was genuine. (Acts 17:12)—6/15, page 18.

□ What was "the book of the Wars of Jehovah"? (Numbers 21:14)

This was a reliable history of God's wars in behalf of his people. It probably had its beginning with Abraham's victory over the armed invaders of the Promised Land as recorded in Genesis chapter 14. The grand finale of the book will be "the war of the great day of God the Almighty" at Har-Magedon. (Revelation 16:14, 16)—7/1, pages 20, 22.

□ How does God's Word, the Bible, help us to bear pain?

The Bible tells us why Jehovah has permitted pain, and it also assures us that pain will soon end. (Romans 5:12; Revelation 21:1-5)—7/15, pages 4, 5.

□ How can God's people today "reflect like mirrors the glory of Jehovah"? (2 Corinthians 3:18)

God's glory shines by means of "the glorious good news about the Christ, who is the image of God." Jehovah's Witnesses reflect this glory by speaking of the glory of Jehovah and the glory of his Kingdom by his Son. (2 Corinthians 4:4-6)—7/15, pages 15, 16.

□ When should a person be baptized?

Baptism is a step to take when one has made a complete, unreversed, and unconditional dedication to Jehovah through Christ Jesus to do God's will.—8/1, page 14.

Questions From Readers

■ Will some anointed Christians survive the "great tribulation" to live on earth in the new world before being taken to heaven?

Pointedly, the Bible does not say.

Christians have long been interested in the privileges that God might extend to them. (Acts 1:6) That has especially been true in our time since the Kingdom was established. (Matthew 24:3, 24, 34) With the end of this wicked system to come in their time, Christians have wondered whether some spirit-anointed ones might live through "the war of the great day of God" and serve on earth for a time before receiving their heavenly reward. (Revelation 16:14) The Bible does not say that this will occur, yet certain patterns and prophecies have been taken to indicate that it might. Rather than be dogmatic, we can watch to see how God will handle things.

Some Biblical events have parallels later on among God's people. For instance, we know that Jonah was in a large fish for three days and three nights. Some people would view that as simply an example of divine deliverance, but Jesus said that it was a prophetic pattern of how he would be in the grave for a comparable period before his resurrection. (Jonah 1:17; Matthew 12:40) Yes, Jonah's experience was a prophetic type. Understandably, God's servants have looked at prophecies and specific Bible accounts to see whether these might indicate how Jehovah will yet deal with them.

As an example involving Bible prophecy, *The Watch Tower* of December 15, 1928, discussed

Micah 5:2-15. The book of Micah dealt with 'the Assyrian's' desolating of Samaria and the Jews' return from exile in Babylon. (Micah 1:1, 5-7; 4:10) But it also pointed to later developments, such as the Messiah's birth in Bethlehem. (Micah 5:2) Micah prophesied that after their deliverance from "the Assyrian," "the remaining ones of Jacob" would become "like dew from Jehovah" and "like a maned young lion among droves of sheep." (Micah 5:6-8) *The Watch Tower* commented: "This may be taken as an indication that some of the remnant will be on earth even after Armageddon is fought and will then have some more work to do in the name of the Lord and to his praise and glory." Notice the modest, reasonable language used to introduce this possibility: "This *may be taken* as an indication."

What of a Bible account that might parallel such survival on earth? One example that has been presented concerns Noah and his family. Noah has been viewed as typifying Jesus in this time of the end. (Genesis 6:8-10; Matthew 24:37) As Noah led his wife and their three sons and daughters-in-law through the end of that ancient system, Christ will provide leadership for the remnant of his bride class and those who become children of the "Eternal Father," Jesus. Noah's wife survived the Flood and shared in the renewing of true worship on a cleansed earth. A parallel might be the survival into the new world of

a remnant of the bride class.—Isaiah 9:6, 7; 2 Corinthians 11:2; Revelation 21:2, 9.*

Other Biblical accounts have also been viewed as suggesting that some of the anointed might live into the new world. For example, Jeremiah survived the destruction of Jerusalem; "the man" with the secretary's ink-horn remained to see the executional work before he went back to give his report.—Ezekiel 9:4, 8, 11.

Comments about the possibility that some of the anointed might survive into the new world are made with good intentions and in the light of Biblical precedents for trying to understand prophecies or patterns that could have later parallels. If it turns out that none of the anointed are left on earth, there will be no reason for dissatisfaction. We already have accepted that Biblical matters are understood better as time passes. For instance, *The Watchtower* of July 15, 1981, discussed Micah 5:6-9 again and explained that "the remnant of spiritual Israelites have not had to wait until after . . . Har-Magedon in order to be as a 'dew' of refreshment to people." This discussion again offered the *possibility* that the remnant might survive God's great war and for a while "continue to be as a refreshing 'dew' to the 'great crowd' of 'other sheep.'" We can see, though, that the passing of time and the

* Compare: *You May Survive Armageddon Into God's New World*, pages 61, 292, 351; "Your Will Be Done on Earth," page 347; *The Watchtower* of May 1, 1942, page 133. (All published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.)

increase in spiritual light can broaden and alter our understanding of prophecy or of Bible dramas.—Proverbs 4:18.

We do know that the Bible links the 'coming of the Son of man' with 'the gathering of the chosen ones from the four winds.' (Matthew 24:29-31) Also, during "the presence of the Lord" in Kingdom power, anointed ones sleeping in death are raised to life in heaven. (1 Thesalonians 4:15, 16) These sealed ones are there to become part of the Lamb's wife. When does that occur?

In the book of Revelation, immediately after John tells of God's executing the religious harlot, Babylon the Great, he describes "the marriage of the Lamb." A filthy, immoral "woman" is removed from the scene, and we see "the bride, the Lamb's wife" 'arrayed in bright, clean,

fine linen, which stands for the righteous acts of the holy ones.' (Revelation 18:10; 19:2, 7, 8; 21:9) The destruction of Babylon the Great is part of the great tribulation. (Matthew 24:21; Revelation 7:14) So it could be reasoned that some of the bride class will survive the great tribulation as evidence of Jehovah's approval and protection. (Zephaniah 2:3; compare Matthew 24:22.) If they are thus preserved on earth, they could remain here until God chooses to take them to heaven.

However, the presentation in Revelation is not in strict sequential order. And it is not as though the small remnant of anointed ones will be needed to get the new world underway, for they have already trained millions of loyal Christians who will live forever on earth. Accordingly, God could take his anointed

ones to heaven immediately after the destruction of Babylon the Great, setting the stage for "the marriage of the Lamb" to occur. All the holy ones could thus share with Christ in 'shepherding the nations with an iron rod' in the remainder of the great tribulation. (Revelation 2:26, 27; 19:11-21) If that is how God handles things, all the 144,000 would be with Jesus to 'rule as kings with the Christ for the entire one thousand years.'—Revelation 20:4.

It certainly is fine that God's people are keenly interested in peering into how he will direct and reward his servants. (Compare 1 Peter 1:12.) This reflects their confidence that his will is going to be done. Though we cannot and should not be dogmatic about particulars, we can eagerly look forward to what will occur.

ANNUAL MEETING—OCTOBER 6, 1990

THE ANNUAL MEETING of the members of Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania will be held on October 6, 1990, at the Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 2932 Kennedy Boulevard, Jersey City, New Jersey. A preliminary meeting of the members only will convene at 9:30 a.m., followed by the general annual meeting at 10:00 a.m.

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

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

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

How Can I Cope With Peer Pressure?

A letter from a Chicago police officer illustrates the importance of knowing the answer. He writes:

"On January 15, 1990, I was processing an 18-year-old prisoner who was brought back to Chicago from Mississippi on a fugitive warrant. Part of the processing is to take all the prisoner's property. He had in his possession a *Young People Ask* book.

"Did you read this book?" I asked.

"Yes," he replied, "while I was hiding in Mississippi, I worked on a farm, and two of Jehovah's Witnesses gave me this book." Then he started to cry, almost sobbing uncontrollably. Between sobs, he said: "I've read this book many times, and the chapter I keep reading over and over is 'How Can I Cope with Peer Pressure?'" He added: "If I had only had this information three or four years ago, I would not be here today."

"The prisoner was led away, and I read the police report and the confession he gave to the police. In it he said: The leader of my gang told me to go down the street and shoot a rival gang member who was selling cocaine in our territory. I did what I was told. I feared the other members would think I'm not cool. I wanted to be accepted."

