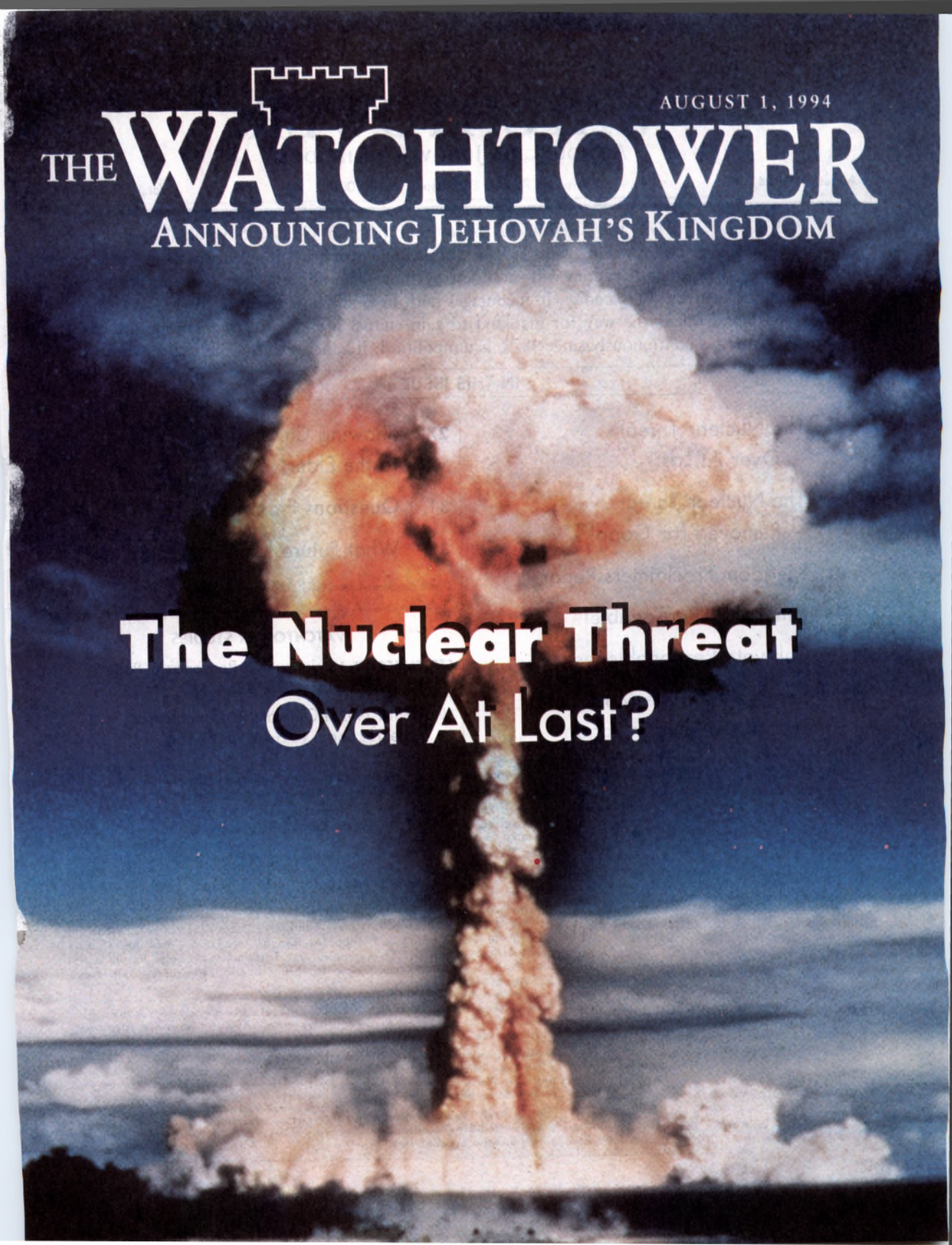
AUGUST 1, 1994

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



The Nuclear Threat

Over At Last?

THE WATCHTOWER®

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

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THE PURPOSE OF *THE WATCHTOWER* is to exalt Jehovah God as Sovereign Lord of the universe. It keeps watch on world events as these 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 God's now-reigning King, Jesus Christ, whose shed blood opens the way for mankind to gain eternal life. *The Watchtower*, published by Jehovah's Witnesses continuously since 1879, is nonpolitical. It adheres to the Bible as its authority.

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The Nuclear Threat
Over At Last?

"PEACE on Earth seems more possible now than at any time since World War II." This optimistic appraisal by a news correspondent at the end of the 1980's was based on the fact that significant disarmament agreements and unexpected political upheavals had finally ended the Cold War. But was the nuclear threat, so characteristic of the former superpower confrontation, also over? Were lasting peace and security actually within grasp?

The Perils of Proliferation

During the Cold War, while relying upon a balance of terror to keep the peace, the superpowers agreed to permit the development of nuclear know-how in pursuit of peaceful ends but to restrict its use in making nuclear weapons. In 1970 the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty took effect; it was later ratified by some 140 nations. Yet, potential nuclear powers, such as Argentina, Brazil, India, and Israel, have refused to sign even to this day.

In 1985, however, another potential nuclear power, North Korea, did sign. So when it announced its withdrawal from the treaty on March 12, 1993, the world logically reacted with uneasiness. The German newsmagazine *Der Spiegel* noted: "The notice of withdrawal from the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty creates a precedent: There is now the threat of a nuclear arms race, starting in Asia, that could become more dangerous than was the bomb rivalry between the superpowers."

With nationalism giving birth to new nations at an amazing rate, the number of nuclear powers will probably increase. (See box.) Journalist Charles Krauthammer warns: "The end of the Soviet threat does not mean the end of nuclear danger. The real danger is proliferation, and proliferation has just begun."

Bombs for Sale

Would-be nuclear powers are eager to gain the prestige and power these weapons offer. One country is said to have bought at least two nuclear warheads from Kazakhstan. This former Soviet republic officially lists the warheads as "missing."

In October 1992 several men were arrested in Frankfurt, Germany, with seven ounces of highly radioactive cesium, enough to poison an entire city's water supply. A week later, seven smugglers were caught in Munich with 4.9 pounds of uranium. The discovery of two nuclear smuggling rings within two weeks startled officials, since only five such cases had been reported worldwide for the entire previous year.

Whether these individuals were intent on selling to terrorist groups or to national governments is unknown. Nevertheless, the possibility of nuclear terrorism is growing. Dr. David Lowry of the European Proliferation Information Centre explains the danger: "All a terrorist needs to do is send a sample of highly enriched uranium to a reputable authority for testing, saying we have

U.S. National Archives photo

so much and here is the proof. It is like a kidnapper sending off the ear of a victim."

Peaceful "Time Bombs" and "Death Traps"

When 1992 began, 420 nuclear reactors were engaged in the peaceful pursuit of producing electricity; another 76 were under construction. But over the years, reactor accidents have led to reports of increased illness, of miscarriages, and of birth defects. A report says that by 1967 incidents at a Soviet plutonium plant had caused the emission of three times as much radioactivity as did the Chernobyl catastrophe.

Of course, this later incident at Chernobyl, Ukraine, in April 1986 is what grabbed the headlines. Grigori Medwedew, deputy chief nuclear engineer at the Chernobyl plant during the 1970's, explains that the "gigantic mass of long-lasting radioactivity" flung into the atmosphere "is comparable to ten Hiroshima bombs as far as long-term effects are concerned."

In his book *Tschernobylskaja chronika,* Medwedew lists 11 serious nuclear reactor incidents in the former Soviet Union by the mid-1980's and another 12 in the United States. The latter included the shocking accident in 1979 at Three Mile Island. Of that event Medwedew notes: "It struck the first serious blow against nuclear energy and dispelled illusions about the safety of nuclear energy plants in the minds of many—but not in the minds of all."

This explains why mishaps still occur. During 1992 they increased in Russia by almost 20 percent. After one of these incidents, in March of that year at the Sosnovy Bore power station in St. Petersburg, Russia, radiation levels rose by 50 percent in northeast England and reached double the maximum permissible level in Estonia and southern Finland. Professor John Urquhart of Newcastle University admits: "I cannot prove that it was Sosnovy Bore which caused the increase—but if it wasn't Sosnovy Bore, what was it?"

Some authorities claim that Chernobyl-style reactors are flawed in their design and are simply too dangerous to operate. Nevertheless, over a dozen are still being used to help fill the huge electricity demands. Some reactor operators have even been accused of turning off safety override systems in order to boost power output. Reports such as this terrify countries like France, which uses nuclear plants to produce 70 percent of its electricity. Another "Chernobyl," and many plants in France might be forced to close permanently.

Even "safe" reactors apparently become unsafe with age. In early 1993, during a routine safety check, over a hundred fractures were found in steel piping in the reactor at Brunsbüttel, one of Germany's oldest. Similar cracks have been found in reactors in France and Switzerland. The first serious accident at a Japanese plant occurred in 1991, age having been a possible contributing factor. This bodes ill for the United States, where some two thirds of the commercial reactors are over a decade old.

NUCLEAR POWERS
12 and Still Counting

DECLARED or DE FACTO: Belarus, Britain, China, France, India, Israel, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Russia, South Africa, Ukraine, United States

POTENTIAL: Algeria, Argentina, Brazil, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, South Korea, Syria, Taiwan

Nuclear reactor accidents can happen anywhere at any time. The more reactors, the greater the threat; the older the reactor, the greater the danger. Not without reason did one newspaper dub them ticking time bombs and radioactive death traps.

Where Should They Dump the Garbage?

People were recently surprised to find a riverside picnic spot in the French Alps blocked off and guarded by police. The newspaper *The European* explained: "Routine checks ordered after the death of a local woman from beryllium poisoning two months ago revealed levels of radioactivity at the picnic site which were 100 times higher than those in the surrounding area."

Beryllium, a remarkably light metal produced by various processes, is used in the aircraft industry and, when irradiated, in nuclear power stations. Evidently a factory producing beryllium had discarded waste from the dangerous irradiating process on or near the picnic area. "Beryllium dust, even when not irradiated," noted *The European,* "is one of the most toxic forms of industrial waste known."

Meanwhile, some 17,000 containers of radioactive waste were reportedly discarded over a period of 30 years into the waters off the coast of Novaya Zemlya, used by the Soviets as a nuclear test site during the early 1950's. Additionally, radioactive sections of nuclear submarines and parts of at least 12 reactors were dumped into this convenient garbage bin.

Whether intentional or not, nuclear pollution is dangerous. Of a submarine that sank off the Norwegian coast in 1989, *Time* warned: "The wreck is already leaking cesium-137, a carcinogenic isotope. So far the leakage is considered too small to affect marine life or human health. But the *Komsomolets* also carried two nuclear torpedoes containing 13 kg [29 pounds] of plutonium with a half-life of 24,000 years and toxicity so high that a speck can kill. Russian experts warned that the plutonium could spill into the water and contaminate vast reaches of ocean as early as 1994."

Of course, disposing of radioactive waste is not a problem unique to France and Russia. The United States has "mountains of hot garbage and no permanent site for storing it," reports *Time.* It says that a million barrels of deadly substances sit in temporary storage with an ever-present "danger of loss, theft and environmental damage from mishandling."

As if to illustrate this danger, a nuclear waste tank at a former weapons plant in Tomsk, Siberia, exploded in April 1993, raising specters of a second Chernobyl.

Obviously, any cries of peace and security sounded on the basis of a supposed end to the nuclear threat are not well-founded. And yet peace and security *are* near. How do we know?

Even the peaceful use of nuclear energy can be dangerous

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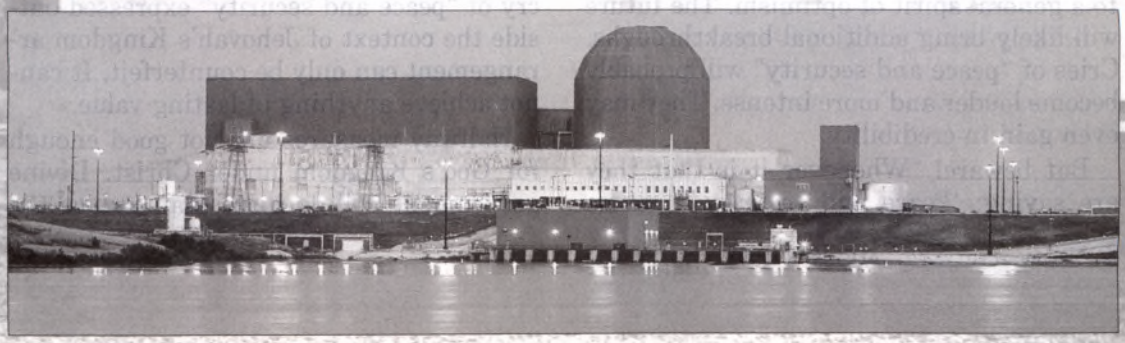


The Nuclear Threat Removed for Good!

LIVING in morbid fear is not what God wants for mankind. As "the happy God," he wants them to enjoy peace and live in security—in short, be happy. (1 Timothy 1:11) In a world full of nuclear threats, this is clearly impossible.

"Peace and Security"—A Counterfeit

It should be obvious that the nuclear threat is far from gone. Still, despite political, economic, and social unrest, the nations seem in the main to be optimistic. A steady endeavor to defuse the danger has been apparent since the UN International Year of Peace in 1986.

The Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists has in the last decade turned its doomsday clock—its method of indicating the probability of nuclear war—from 3 minutes before midnight back to 17 minutes before midnight. In 1989 the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute noted that "hope for peaceful conflict resolution is better founded than in any other year since the end of World War II."

In recent years the United Nations has been strengthened to deal with international trouble spots. Its success, while not total, has been sufficient to contribute to a general spirit of optimism. The future will likely bring additional breakthroughs. Cries of "peace and security" will probably become louder and more intense. They may even gain in credibility.

But beware! "Whenever it is that they are saying: 'Peace and security,'" warns the Bible, "then sudden destruction is to be instantly upon them just as the pang of distress upon a pregnant woman; and they will by no means escape." Thus, cries of "peace and security" will signal God's time "to bring to ruin those [who through pollution, nuclear and otherwise, are] ruining the earth."—1 Thessalonians 5:3, 4; Revelation 11:18.

Note that the Bible does not say that the nations will *achieve* "peace and security." They will apparently be *talking* about it in a unique way, expressing an optimism and a conviction not hitherto felt. The chances of achieving peace and security will *appear* to be closer than ever before. Despite a continuing nuclear threat, the nations will be lulled into a false sense of security.

True Christians, however, will not be deceived. With keen interest they will look beyond human peace and security to something better!

Peace and Security—The Real Thing

According to Psalm 4:8, true peace and security is to be found only within Jehovah God's arrangement: "In peace I will both lie down and sleep, for you yourself alone, O Jehovah, make me dwell in security." Any cry of "peace and security" expressed outside the context of Jehovah's Kingdom arrangement can only be counterfeit. It cannot achieve anything of lasting value.

Halfway measures are not good enough for God's Kingdom under Christ. Divine government will do more than reduce the

U.S. National Archives photo

number of nuclear weapons; it will totally eliminate them and all other weapons of war. Psalm 46:9 promises: "He is making wars to cease to the extremity of the earth. The bow he breaks apart and does cut the spear in pieces; the wagons he burns in the fire."

Likewise, nuclear threats posed by malfunctioning nuclear reactors or by radioactive waste will be things of the past. Otherwise the words would be untrue: "They will actually sit, each one under his vine and under his fig tree, and there will be no one making them tremble; for the very mouth of Jehovah of armies has spoken it." God cannot lie. We have no reason to doubt his words.—Micah 4:4; Titus 1:2.

Would you enjoy having the prospect of living in a world in which the nuclear threat has been removed for good? You can, for God's Word clearly sets down the requirements. By learning about them and by living accordingly, you may one day have the joy of saying with a sigh of relief: "The nuclear threat—over at last!"

Peace will reign in God's new world without any nuclear threats

M. Thonig/H. Armstrong Roberts

KINGDOM PROCLAIMERS REPORT

"A Monument to the Spirit of Cooperation"

NEAR the southernmost tip of Spain towers a huge limestone monolith known as the Rock of Gibraltar. For hundreds of years, this rock has been a silent witness to political controversy and international disagreement. In contrast, the Rock of Gibraltar was recently the backdrop for a manifestation of cooperation and unity rarely seen in the world today.

Just two miles from the Rock lies the town of La Línea, Spain. There the construction of a Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses brought together hundreds of volunteer workers eager to contribute their time and energy. As they labored to erect a suitable place for worship of the Creator, Jehovah God, even the majestic backdrop of the Rock of Gibraltar faded in importance compared with the task at hand.

The Kingdom proclaimers in that part of the world send the following report:

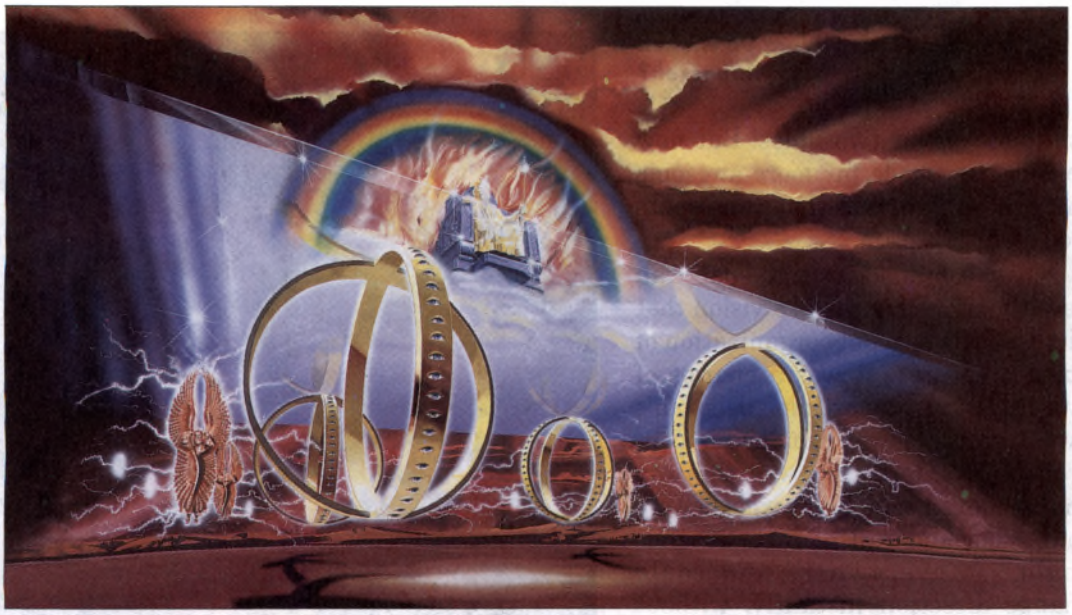
"Nine hundred enthusiastic volunteers worked around the clock, starting Friday afternoon, September 24, 1993. By seven o'clock on Sunday evening, a new sign identifying the building as a Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses had been erected, and the attractive new structure was being used for its very first public meeting.

"Many Witnesses from nearby Gibraltar crossed the border to help their Spanish brothers. 'Political divisions do not put a damper on our international brotherhood,' explained one of the volunteer workers, a native of Gibraltar. He added: 'Several years ago, friends from La Línea came to help us build our Kingdom Hall in Gibraltar, so now we are happy to return the favor.'

"To supplement the unstinting efforts of the two congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses and hundreds of skilled helpers from the Andalusian region, the city of La Línea decided to donate the necessary plot of land. 'Traditionally, Spanish local authorities have always provided land for the building of Catholic churches,' explained the mayor of La Línea during a visit to the construction site. 'Why not do the same for other religious denominations? I am very impressed by the unselfishness of the volunteers, and I feel they deserve our support. We need more of this sort of spirit in today's divided world.'

"He referred to the Kingdom Hall as 'a monument to the spirit of cooperation.' Indeed, the most impressive aspect was neither the architectural design nor the size of the building. Rather, what impressed many in the community was the fact that it was built entirely by volunteers and was erected in only 48 hours!"

It is evident that Jehovah's Witnesses in La Línea and its surrounding areas are proving faithful to the words of Galatians 6:10. There the apostle Paul admonished fellow believers: "Really, then, as long as we have time favorable for it, let us work what is good toward all, but especially toward those related to us in the faith."



JEHOVAH IS REASONABLE!

"The wisdom from above is . . . reasonable."—JAMES 3:17.

WHAT kind of God do you worship? Do you believe him to be a God of inflexible, strict justice, austere and rigid in his temperament? To Protestant reformer John Calvin, God must have seemed that way. Calvin claimed that God has an "eternal and unchangeable plan" regarding each individual, preordaining for each one whether he will live forever in happiness or be tormented eternally in hellfire. Imagine: If this were true, nothing you could ever do, no matter how hard you tried, would change God's long-standing, rigid plan about you and your future. Would you be drawn to such an unreasonable God? —Compare James 4:8.

1. How have some portrayed God as unreasonable, and how do you feel about such a view of God?

2 How relieved we are to learn that the God of the Bible is eminently reasonable! It is not God but humans who tend to be rigid and inflexible, bound by their own imperfections. Human organizations can be as unwieldy as freight trains. When a giant freight train is rolling toward an obstruction on the track, turning is out of the question, and stopping is not much easier. Some trains have so much forward momentum that they take more than a mile to stop after the brakes are applied! Similarly, a supertanker may coast onward for another five miles after the engines are shut off. Even if they are thrown into reverse, it may

2, 3. (a) How might we illustrate the unreasonableness of human institutions and organizations? (b) How does Ezekiel's vision of Jehovah's celestial chariot reveal His adaptability?

still plow on for two miles! But now consider a vehicle far more awesome than these two, one that represents God's organization.

[3] Over 2,600 years ago, Jehovah gave the prophet Ezekiel a vision that pictured His heavenly organization of spirit creatures. It was a chariot of awe-inspiring proportions, Jehovah's own "vehicle" always under his control. Most interesting was the way that it moved. The giant wheels were four-sided and full of eyes, so they could see everywhere and could change direction instantly, without stopping or turning. And this gigantic vehicle did not have to lumber along like a supertanker or a freight train. It could move at the speed of lightning, even making right-angle turns! (Ezekiel 1:1, 14-28) Jehovah is as different from the God that Calvin preached as His chariot is from clumsy man-made machines. He is perfectly adaptable. Appreciating this aspect of Jehovah's personality should help us to remain adaptable and avoid the snare of unreasonableness.

Jehovah—The Most Adaptable Being in the Universe

[4] Jehovah's very name implies his adaptability. "Jehovah" literally means "He Causes to Become." This evidently means that Jehovah causes himself to become the Fulfiller of all his promises. When Moses asked God

4. (a) In what way does Jehovah's very name reveal him to be an adaptable God? (b) What are some of the titles applied to Jehovah God, and why are they fitting?

his name, Jehovah elaborated on its meaning in this way: "I shall prove to be what I shall prove to be." (Exodus 3:14) Rotherham's translation pointedly puts it: "I Will Become whatsoever I please." Jehovah proves to be, or chooses to become, whatever is needed to fulfill his righteous purposes and promises. Thus, he bears an impressive array of titles, such as Creator, Father, Sovereign Lord, Shepherd, Jehovah of armies, Hearer of prayer, Judge, Grand Instructor, Repurchaser. He has caused himself to become all of these and more in order to carry out his loving purposes.—Isaiah 8:13; 30:20; 40:28; 41:14; Psalm 23:1; 65:2; 73:28; 89:26; Judges 11:27; see also *New World Translation,* Appendix 1J.

[5] Does this mean, then, that God's nature or standards change? No; as James 1:17 puts it, "with him there is not a variation of the turning of the shadow." Is there a contradiction here? Not at all. For example, what loving parent does not shift roles to benefit the children? In the course of a single day, a parent may be a counselor, a cook, a housekeeper, a teacher, a disciplinarian, a friend, a mechanic, a nurse—the list goes on and on. The parent does not change personality when assuming these roles; he or she simply adapts to current needs. So it is with Jehovah but on a far grander scale. There is no limit to what he can cause himself to become to benefit his creatures. The depth of his wisdom is staggering indeed!—Romans 11:33.

Reasonableness a Mark of Divine Wisdom

[6] The disciple James used an interesting word to describe the wisdom of this supremely adaptable God. He wrote: "The wisdom from above is . . . reasonable." (James 3:17) The Greek word that he used here (*e·pi·ei·kes′*) is difficult to translate. Translators have used such words as "gentle," "lenient," "forbearing," and "considerate." The *New World Translation* renders it "reasonable," with a footnote indicating that the literal meaning is "yielding."* The word also conveys the sense of not insisting on the letter of the law, not being unduly strict or stern. Scholar William Barclay comments in *New Testament Words:* "The basic and the fundamental thing about *epieikeia* is that it goes back to God. If God stood on his rights, if God applied to us nothing but the rigid standards of the law, where would we be? God is the supreme example of one who is *epieikēs* and who deals with others with *epieikeia.*"

[7] Consider the time when mankind rebelled against Jehovah's sovereignty. How easy it would have been for God to execute those three thankless rebels—Adam, Eve, and Satan! How much heartache he might thereby have spared himself! And who could have argued that he had no right to exact such strict justice? Nonetheless, Jehovah never has his celestial chariotlike organization locked into some rigid, unadaptable standard of justice. So that chariot did not roll inexorably over the human family and all prospects for mankind's happy future. On the contrary, Jehovah maneuvered his chariot with lightninglike swiftness. Immediately after the rebellion, Jehovah God outlined a long-range purpose

5. Why should we not conclude that Jehovah's adaptability implies that his nature or standards change?

6. What are the literal meaning and implications of the Greek word James used in describing divine wisdom?

* Back in 1769, lexicographer John Parkhurst defined the word as "yielding, of a yielding disposition, gentle, mild, patient." Other scholars too have offered "yielding" as a definition.

7. How did Jehovah display reasonableness in the garden of Eden?

that offered mercy and hope to all of Adam's descendants.—Genesis 3:15.

[8] Jehovah's reasonableness does not, however, imply that he might compromise divine principles. Today's churches of Christendom may think that they are being reasonable when they wink at immorality simply to curry favor with their wayward flocks. (Compare 2 Timothy 4:3.) Jehovah never breaks his own laws, nor does he compromise his principles. Rather, he shows a willingness to yield, to adapt to circumstances, so that those principles may be applied both justly and mercifully. He is ever mindful of balancing his exercise of justice and power with his love and reasonable wisdom. Let us consider three ways in which Jehovah demonstrates reasonableness.

"Ready to Forgive"

[9] David wrote: "For you, O Jehovah, are good and ready to forgive; and the loving-kindness to all those calling upon you is abundant." (Psalm 86:5) When the Hebrew Scriptures were translated into Greek, the word for "ready to forgive" was rendered *e·pi·ei·kes',* or "reasonable." Indeed, being ready to forgive and show mercy is perhaps the key way to demonstrate reasonableness.

[10] David himself was well aware of how reasonable Jehovah is in this regard. When David committed adultery with Bath-sheba and arranged to have her husband killed, both he and Bath-sheba were liable to the death penalty. (Deuteronomy 22:22; 2 Samuel 11:2-27) If rigid human judges had handled the case, both might well have lost their lives. But Jehovah showed reasonableness (*e·pi·ei·kes'*), which, as *Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words* puts it, "expresses that considerateness that looks 'humanely and reasonably at the facts of a case.'" The facts that influenced Jehovah's merciful decision likely included the sincere repentance of the wrongdoers and the mercy that David himself had previously shown in behalf of others. (1 Samuel 24:4-6; 25:32-35; 26:7-11; Matthew 5:7; James 2:13) However, in line with Jehovah's description of himself at Exodus 34:4-7, it was reasonable that Jehovah would give David correction. He sent the prophet Nathan to David with a strong message, impressing David with the fact that he had despised the word of Jehovah. David repented and so did not die for his sin. —2 Samuel 12:1-14.

[11] The example of King Manasseh of Judah is more remarkable in this regard, since Manasseh, unlike David, was thoroughly wicked for a long time. Manasseh promoted disgusting religious practices in the land, including human sacrifice. He may also have been responsible for having the faithful prophet Isaiah "sawn asunder." (Hebrews 11:37) To punish Manasseh, Jehovah allowed him to be carried off as a captive to Babylon. However, Manasseh repented in prison and pleaded for mercy. In response to this sincere repentance, Jehovah was "ready to forgive"—even in this extreme case.—2 Chronicles 33:9-13.

Changing Course as New Circumstances Arise

[12] Jehovah's reasonableness also shows in

8. (a) How does Christendom's mistaken view of reasonableness contrast with Jehovah's genuine reasonableness? (b) Why can we say that Jehovah's reasonableness does not imply that he might compromise divine principles?

9, 10. (a) What does being "ready to forgive" have to do with reasonableness? (b) How did David benefit from Jehovah's readiness to forgive, and why?

11. How did Jehovah show a readiness to forgive in the case of Manasseh?

12, 13. (a) In the case of Nineveh, what change of circumstance prompted Jehovah to alter course? (b) How did Jonah prove less reasonable than Jehovah God?

his willingness to alter a contemplated course of action as new circumstances arise. For instance, when the prophet Jonah marched through the streets of ancient Nineveh, his inspired message was quite simple: The mighty city would be destroyed in 40 days. However, circumstances changed —dramatically! The Ninevites repented. —Jonah, chapter 3.

[13] It is instructive to contrast how Jehovah and Jonah reacted to this turn of events. Jehovah in effect altered the course of his celestial chariot. In this instance he adapted, causing himself to become a forgiver of sins instead of a "manly person of war." (Exodus 15:3) Jonah, on the other hand, was far less flexible. Rather than keeping pace with Jehovah's chariot, he acted more like the freight train or the supertanker mentioned earlier. He had proclaimed doom, so doom it must be! Perhaps he felt that any change in course would make him lose face in the eyes of the Ninevites. Patiently, though, Jehovah taught his hardheaded prophet a memorable lesson in reasonableness and mercy.—Jonah, chapter 4.

[14] Jehovah has changed course on other occasions—even over relatively minor matters. For example, once when he commissioned the prophet Ezekiel to act out a prophetic drama, Jehovah's instructions included a directive that Ezekiel cook his food on a fire fueled with human dung. This was just too much for the prophet, who cried out, "Alas, O Sovereign Lord Jehovah!" and begged that he not be made to do something so repugnant to him. Jehovah did not dismiss the prophet's feelings as irrational; rather, He allowed Ezekiel to use cattle dung, a common source of fuel in many lands down to this day.—Ezekiel 4:12-15.

14. Why did Jehovah change his course of action in regard to his prophet Ezekiel?

[15] Is it not heartwarming to contemplate the humility of our God Jehovah? (Psalm 18:35) He is vastly higher than we are; yet he listens patiently to imperfect humans and even alters his course accordingly at times. He allowed Abraham to plead with him at length concerning the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. (Genesis 18:23-33) And He let Moses raise objections to His proposal to destroy the rebellious Israelites and instead make a mighty nation out of Moses. (Exodus 32:7-14; Deuteronomy 9: 14, 19; compare Amos 7:1-6.) He thereby set a perfect example for his human servants, who should show a similar readiness to listen to others when it is reasonable and possible to do so.—Compare James 1:19.

Reasonableness in the Exercise of Authority

[16] Have you ever noticed that as individuals acquire more authority, many seem to become less reasonable? Jehovah, in contrast, has the highest position of authority in the universe, yet he is the ultimate example of reasonableness. He exercises his authority in an unfailingly reasonable way. Unlike many humans, Jehovah is not insecure about his authority, so he does not feel compelled to guard it jealously—as if granting a measure of authority to others might somehow threaten his own. In fact, when there was only one other being in the universe, Jehovah conferred extensive authority upon that one. He made the Logos his "master worker," from then on bringing all things into existence through this beloved Son. (Proverbs 8:22, 29-31; John 1:1-3, 14; Colossians 1:15-17) He later delegated to

15. (a) What examples show that Jehovah has been willing to listen and respond to human beings? (b) What lesson might this teach us?
16. How does Jehovah differ from many humans in the way that he exercises his authority?

him "all authority . . . in heaven and on the earth."—Matthew 28:18; John 5:22.

[17] Similarly, Jehovah entrusts many of his creatures with tasks that he could handle even better himself. For instance, when he told Abraham, "I am quite determined to go down [to Sodom and Gomorrah] that I may see whether they act altogether according to the outcry over it that has come to me," he did not mean that he would go there in person. Rather, Jehovah chose to delegate authority, appointing angels to gather such information for him. He gave them authority to lead this fact-finding mission and to report back to him.—Genesis 18:1-3, 20-22.

[18] On another occasion, when Jehovah decided to execute sentence upon wicked King Ahab, He invited the angels at a heavenly assembly to offer suggestions as to how to "fool" that apostate king into joining the battle that would end his life. Surely, Jehovah, the Source of all wisdom, did not need help to come up with the best course of action! Yet, he dignified the angels with the privilege of proposing solutions and the authority to act upon the one he selected. —1 Kings 22:19-22.

17, 18. (a) Why did Jehovah send angels to Sodom and Gomorrah? (b) Why did Jehovah ask the angels for suggestions on how to fool Ahab?

How Would You Answer?

- ☐ How do Jehovah's name and the vision of his celestial chariot emphasize his adaptability?
- ☐ What is reasonableness, and why is it a mark of divine wisdom?
- ☐ In what ways has Jehovah shown that he is "ready to forgive"?
- ☐ Why has Jehovah chosen to change a contemplated course of action in certain instances?
- ☐ How does Jehovah demonstrate reasonableness in the way that he exercises authority?

[19] Jehovah does not use his authority to exert undue control over others. In this too he shows unparalleled reasonableness. He carefully limits the number of laws that he makes and prohibits his servants from 'going beyond the things written' by adding burdensome laws of their own making. (1 Corinthians 4:6; Acts 15:28; contrast Matthew 23:4.) He never requires blind obedience of his creatures, but usually he provides sufficient information to guide them and puts the choice before them, letting them know the benefits of obeying and the consequences of disobeying. (Deuteronomy 30:19, 20) Rather than coercing people through guilt, shame, or fear, he seeks to reach hearts; he wants people to serve him out of genuine love rather than compulsion. (2 Corinthians 9:7) All such whole-souled service makes God's heart rejoice, so he is not unreasonably "hard to please."—1 Peter 2:18; Proverbs 27:11; compare Micah 6:8.

[20] Is it not remarkable that Jehovah God, who has more power than any being in creation, never exercises that power unreasonably, never uses it to bully others? However, men, so puny in comparison, have a history of domineering one another. (Ecclesiastes 8:9) Clearly, reasonableness is a precious quality, one that moves us to love Jehovah all the more. That, in turn, may motivate us to cultivate this quality ourselves. How can we do so? The following article will take up this matter.

19. (a) Why does Jehovah limit the number of laws that he makes? (b) How does Jehovah show himself reasonable when it comes to what he expects from us?

20. How does Jehovah's reasonableness affect you?

CULTIVATE REASONABLENESS

"Let your reasonableness become known to all men. The Lord is near."
—PHILIPPIANS 4:5.

Jesus readily forgave repentant Peter

"THE reasonable man" —English journalist Sir Alan Patrick Herbert dubbed him a mythical figure. Indeed, it may seem at times that there are no reasonable people left in this strife-torn world. The Bible foretold that in these critical "last days," people would be "fierce," "headstrong," and "not open to any agreement"—in other words, anything but reasonable. (2 Timothy 3:1-5) Nonetheless, true Christians hold reasonableness in high esteem, knowing that it is a mark of divine wisdom. (James 3:17) We do not feel that it is impossible to be reasonable in an unreasonable world. Rather, we implicitly embrace the challenge in the apostle Paul's inspired counsel found at Philippians 4:5: "Let your reasonableness become known to all men."

[2] Note how Paul's words help us to test whether we are reasonable. It is not so much a question of how we see ourselves; it is a question of how others see us, of how we are known. Phillips' translation renders this verse: "Have a reputation for being reasonable." Each of us might well ask, 'How am I known? Do I have a reputation for being reasonable, yielding, and gentle? Or am I known as being rigid, harsh, or headstrong?'

[3] Our reputation in this regard will simply reflect the degree to which we imitate Jesus Christ. (1 Corinthians 11:1) When here on earth, Jesus perfectly reflected his Father's supreme example of reasonableness. (John 14:9) In fact, when Paul wrote of "the mildness and kindness of the Christ," the Greek word he used for kindness (*e·pi·ei·ki´as*) also means "reasonableness" or, literally, "yieldingness." (2 Corinthians 10:1) *The Expositor's Bible*

1. Why is it a challenge to be reasonable in today's world?
2. How do the apostle Paul's words at Philippians 4:5 help us to determine whether we are reasonable?
3. (a) What does the Greek word translated "reasonable" mean, and why is this quality appealing? (b) How might a Christian learn to be more reasonable?

Commentary calls this "one of the great words of character description in the N[ew] T[estament]." It describes a quality so appealing that one scholar renders the word "sweet reasonableness." Let us, therefore, discuss three ways in which Jesus, like his Father, Jehovah, demonstrated reasonableness. We may thus learn how to become more reasonable ourselves. —1 Peter 2:21.

"Ready to Forgive"

[4] Like his Father, Jesus showed reasonableness by being "ready to forgive" over and over again. (Psalm 86:5) Consider the time when Peter, a close companion, denied Jesus three times on the night of Jesus' arrest and trial. Jesus himself had earlier stated: "Whoever disowns me before men, I will also disown him before my Father." (Matthew 10:33) Did Jesus rigidly and mercilessly apply this rule to Peter? No; after His resurrection, Jesus paid Peter a personal visit, no doubt to comfort and reassure this repentant, brokenhearted apostle. (Luke 24:34; 1 Corinthians 15:5) Shortly thereafter, Jesus permitted Peter to have great responsibility. (Acts 2:1-41) Here was sweet reasonableness at its very best! Is it not comforting to think that Jehovah has appointed Jesus as Judge over all mankind? —Isaiah 11:1-4; John 5:22.

When a woman showed extraordinary faith, Jesus saw that it was no time to enforce a general rule

[5] When elders act as judges in the congregation, they endeavor to follow Jesus' reasonable example. They do not want the sheep to fear them as punishers. Rather, they seek to imitate Jesus so that the sheep will feel safe with them as loving shepherds. In judicial cases, they make every effort to be reasonable, ready to forgive. Before handling such a matter, some elders have found it helpful to review the July 1, 1992, *Watchtower* articles "Jehovah, the Impartial 'Judge of All the Earth'" and "Elders, Judge With Righteousness." They thus bear in mind the summary of Jehovah's way of judging: "Firmness where necessary, mercy where possible." It is not an error to

4. How did Jesus show himself "ready to forgive"?

5. (a) What reputation should the elders have among the sheep? (b) What material might elders review before handling judicial cases, and why?

lean toward mercy in judgment when there is a reasonable basis for doing so. (Matthew 12:7) It is a grave error to be harsh or merciless. (Ezekiel 34:4) Elders thus avoid erring by actively seeking the most loving, merciful course possible within the bounds of justice.—Compare Matthew 23:23; James 2:13.

Flexibility in the Face of Changing Circumstances

6 Like Jehovah, Jesus proved himself quick to alter course or adapt to new situations as they arose. On one occasion a Gentile woman begged him to cure her badly demonized daughter. In three different ways, Jesus initially indicated that he was not going to help her—first, by refraining from answering her; second, by stating directly that he was sent forth, not to the Gentiles, but to the Jews; and third, by giving an illustration that kindly made the same point. However, the woman persisted through all of this, giving evidence of extraordinary faith. In the light of this exceptional circumstance, Jesus could see that this was no time to enforce a general rule; it was time to bend in response to higher principles.* Thus, Jesus did exactly what he had three times indicated he would not do. He cured the woman's daughter! —Matthew 15:21-28.

7 Are we likewise known for our willingness to bend when appropriate? Parents frequently need to show such reasonableness. Since each child is unique, methods that work with one may be inappropriate for another. Furthermore, as children grow, their needs change. Should the hour of a curfew be adjusted? Would the family study benefit from a livelier format? When a parent overreacts to some minor transgression, is he or she willing to be humble and set matters right? Parents who are yielding in such ways avoid needlessly irritating their children and alienating them from Jehovah. —Ephesians 6:4.

8 Elders too need to adapt as new circumstances arise, while never compromising specific laws of God. In overseeing the preaching work, are you alert to changes in the territory? As life-styles in the neighborhood change, perhaps evening witnessing, street witnessing, or telephone witnessing should be promoted. Adapting in such ways helps us fulfill our preaching commission more effectively. (Matthew 28:19, 20; 1 Corinthians 9:26) Paul also made a point of adapting to all types of people in his ministry. Do we do the same, for example, by learning enough about local religions and cultures to be able to help people?—1 Corinthians 9:19-23.

9 As these last days grow ever more critical, shepherds may also need to adapt to the bewildering complexity and unpleasantness of some of the problems now facing their flock. (2 Timothy 3:1) Elders, this is no time for rigidity! Surely an elder would not insist on dealing with problems as he has in the past if his methods have become ineffective or if "the faithful and discreet

* The book *New Testament Words* comments: "The man who is *epieikēs* [reasonable] knows that there are times when a thing may be legally completely justified and yet morally completely wrong. The man who is *epieikēs* knows when to relax the law under the compulsion of a force that is higher and greater than law."

6. How did Jesus display reasonableness in dealing with the Gentile woman whose daughter was demonized?
7. In what ways might parents show reasonableness, and why?
8. How might congregation elders take the lead in adapting to the needs of the territory?
9. Why should an elder not insist on always handling problems the way he did in the past?

Parents listen! *Husbands listen!* *Elders listen!*

slave" has seen fit to publish new material on such subjects. (Matthew 24:45; compare Ecclesiastes 7:10; 1 Corinthians 7:31.) One faithful elder sincerely tried to help a depressed sister who was badly in need of a good listener. However, he took a rather dismissive view of her depression and offered her simplistic solutions. Then the Watch Tower Society published some Bible-based information that addressed her very problem. The elder made sure to speak with her again, this time applying the new material and showing empathy for her plight. (Compare 1 Thessalonians 5:14, 15.) What a fine example of reasonableness!

[10] Elders also need to show a yielding attitude toward one another. When the body of elders meets, how important that no one elder dominate the proceedings! (Luke 9:48) The one who is presiding particularly needs restraint in this regard. And when one or two elders disagree with a decision of the overall body of elders, they will not insist on having their own way. Rather, as long as no Scriptural principle is being violated, they will yield, remembering that reasonableness is required of elders. (1 Timothy 3:2, 3) On the other hand, the body of elders should keep in mind that Paul chastised the Corinthian congregation for 'putting up with unreasonable persons' who presented themselves as "superfine apostles." (2 Corinthians 11:5, 19, 20) So they should be willing to counsel a fellow elder who behaves in a stubborn, unreasonable manner, but they themselves should be mild and kind in doing so.—Galatians 6:1.

10. (a) How should elders show a yielding attitude toward one another and toward the body of elders as a whole? (b) How should the elder body view those who show themselves unreasonable?

Reasonableness in the Exercise of Authority

[11] When Jesus walked the earth, his reasonableness truly shone through in the way he wielded his God-granted authority. How

11. What contrast was there between how the Jewish religious leaders in Jesus' day exercised authority and how Jesus did?

different he was from the religious leaders of his day! Consider an example. God's law had ordered that no work, not even the gathering of wood, be done on the Sabbath. (Exodus 20:10; Numbers 15:32-36) The religious leaders wanted to control just how people applied that law. So they took it upon themselves to decree exactly what a person *could* lift on the Sabbath. They ruled: nothing heavier than two dried figs. They even issued a prohibition on sandals shod with nails, claiming that lifting the extra weight of the nails would constitute work! It is said that, all in all, the rabbis added 39 rules to God's law about the Sabbath and then made endless additions to those rules. Jesus, on the other hand, did not seek to control people through shame by laying down endless restrictive rules or by setting rigid, unreachable standards. —Matthew 23:2-4; John 7:47-49.

[12] Are we to assume, then, that Jesus did not firmly uphold God's righteous standards? He certainly did! He understood that laws are most effective when humans take to heart the principles behind those laws. While the Pharisees were caught up in trying to control people with countless rules, Jesus sought to reach hearts. For example, he well knew that there is no yielding when it comes to such divine laws as "flee from fornication." (1 Corinthians 6:18) So Jesus warned people about the thoughts that could lead to immorality. (Matthew 5:28) Such teaching took far more wisdom and discernment than simply laying down rigid, formulaic rules.

[13] Responsible brothers today are equally interested in reaching hearts. Thus, they avoid laying down arbitrary, inflexible rules or turning their personal viewpoints and opinions into law. (Compare Daniel 6: 7-16.) From time to time, kindly reminders on such matters as dress and grooming may be appropriate and timely, but an elder may jeopardize his reputation as a reasonable man if he harps on such matters or tries to impose what are primarily reflections of his personal taste. Really, all in the congregation should avoid trying to control others.—Compare 2 Corinthians 1:24; Philippians 2:12.

[14] Elders may want to examine themselves on another score: 'Am I reasonable in what I expect of others?' Jesus certainly was. He consistently showed his followers that he expected no more than their wholesouled efforts and that he valued these highly. He praised the poor widow for giving her coins of small value. (Mark 12: 42, 43) He rebuked his disciples when they criticized Mary's costly contribution, saying: "Let her alone. . . . She did what she could." (Mark 14:6, 8) He was reasonable even when his followers failed him. For instance, even though he urged his three closest apostles to stay awake and keep watch with him on the night of his arrest, they let him down by falling asleep repeatedly. Yet, he remarked sympathetically: "The spirit, of course, is eager, but the flesh is weak." —Mark 14:34-38.

[15] True, Jesus encouraged his followers to 'exert themselves vigorously.' (Luke 13:24) But never did he pressure them into doing so! He inspired them, set an example, took

12. Why can we say that Jesus did not waver when it came to Jehovah's righteous standards?
13. (a) Why should elders avoid creating inflexible laws and rules? (b) What are some areas wherein it is important to respect the conscience of the individual?

14. How did Jesus show that he was reasonable as to what he expected of others?
15, 16. (a) Why should elders be careful not to pressure or browbeat the flock? (b) How did one faithful sister come to adjust what she expected of others?

the lead, and sought to reach their hearts. He trusted in the power of Jehovah's spirit to do the rest. Elders today should likewise encourage the flock to serve Jehovah wholeheartedly but should avoid browbeating them with guilt or shame, implying that what they currently do in service to Jehovah is in some way insufficient or unacceptable. A rigid, driving "do more, do more, do more!" approach may dishearten those who are doing all they can. How sad it would be if an elder built a reputation for being "hard to please"—a far cry from reasonableness!—1 Peter 2:18.

[16] All of us should be reasonable in what we expect of others! One sister, after she and her husband left their missionary assignment to care for her ailing mother, wrote: "These times are truly difficult for us publishers out here in the congregations. Having been in circuit and district work, sheltered from many such pressures, we were suddenly and painfully made aware of this. I used to say to myself, for instance, 'Why doesn't that sister offer the correct literature this month? Doesn't she read the *Kingdom Ministry?*' Now I know why. For some it is all they can do to get out [in service]." How much better it is to commend our brothers for what they do than to judge them for what they do not do!

[17] Consider a final example of how Jesus wields his authority in a reasonable way. Like his Father, Jesus does not jealously guard his authority. He too is a master delegator, appointing his faithful slave class to care for "all his belongings" here on the earth. (Matthew 24:45-47) And he does not fear listening to the ideas of others. He often asked his listeners: "What do you think?" (Matthew 17:25; 18:12; 21:28; 22:42) So it should be among all of Christ's followers today. No amount of authority should render them unwilling to listen. Parents, listen! Husbands, listen! Elders, listen!

[18] Decidedly, each of us wants to "have a reputation for being reasonable." (Philippians 4:5, *Phillips*) But how do we know if we have such a reputation? Well, when Jesus was curious as to what people were saying about him, he asked his trusted associates. (Matthew 16:13) Why not follow his example? You could ask someone you can count on for candor whether you have a reputation for being a reasonable, yielding person. Surely there is much all of us can do to imitate more closely Jesus' perfect example of reasonableness! Especially if we wield a measure of authority over others, let us always follow the example of Jehovah and Jesus, always wielding it in a reasonable way, ever ready to forgive, bend, or yield when appropriate. Indeed, may every one of us strive to "be reasonable"!—Titus 3:2.

How Would You Answer?

- ☐ Why should Christians want to be reasonable?
- ☐ How can elders imitate Jesus in being ready to forgive?
- ☐ Why should we strive to be flexible as Jesus was?
- ☐ How can we demonstrate reasonableness in the way we exercise authority?
- ☐ How might we examine ourselves as to whether we are really reasonable?

17. How did Jesus set an example for us as to reasonableness?

18. (a) How might we find out if we have a reputation for reasonableness? (b) What might all of us do well to resolve?

SERVING WITH THE MOST PROGRESSIVE ORGANIZATION

AS TOLD BY ROBERT HATZFELD

Today a great many people turn on the television by remote control to watch the evening news in living color, hardly considering it anything extraordinary. Yet, it seems only yesterday that I was a wide-eyed 12-year-old boy watching on a movie screen a bigger-than-life image of a man, and he was talking!

NOT exactly big news, you might think. But it certainly seemed like a modern-day miracle to me back in 1915, in the early days of silent black-and-white film. A stately bearded man appeared on screen and said: "The Photo-Drama of Creation is presented by the I.B.S.A., the International Bible Students Association." For the next two hours, the Bible's story unfolded before our eyes. Its Scriptural message was clear and refreshing. Yet, it was the motion-picture film, interspersed with color slides, and the synchronized speech that really caught my attention.

I did not realize it then, but my youthful enthusiasm for that landmark technology was a prelude to a lifelong career with the most progressive organization on earth.

Early Days

In 1891 my father came from Dillenburg, Germany, to the German community in Allegheny, Pennsylvania, U.S.A. Later he met a girl in a German family there, and they married. I was born on July 7, 1903, and was raised speaking both German and English. Just before World War I started in 1914, a tuberculosis epidemic snatched away both my parents and left me an orphan. My grandfather died of a stroke about the same time.

My aunt, Minna Boemer, kindly took me into her family. "I have five kids," she said. "Might as well have one more." Though I missed my parents, Aunt Minna gave me a good home.

My aunt was a longtime member of the Allegheny Congregation of Bible Students (as Jehovah's Witnesses were called in those days). Prior to 1909, Brother C. T. Russell, then president of the Watch Tower Society, also attended that congregation. Aunt Minna took me to the meetings. Although our family did not make a concerted effort to study or preach back then, whatever we heard at the meetings, we shared informally with people we knew.

It was during this period that the "Photo-Drama" filled me with wonder. Since I was

mechanically inclined, the new photographic techniques and sound/picture synchronization fascinated me, as did the time-lapse photography. Observing the opening of the flowers was thrilling!

In 1916 we were saddened by the death of Brother Russell. Since we lived right in Allegheny, we attended his funeral at Carnegie Hall. This was the hall where Brother Russell had debated E. L. Eaton in 1903. I had heard stories about this Methodist Episcopalian minister who challenged C. T. Russell to a six-day debate, hoping to discredit Brother Russell's Bible scholarship. Instead, it was said, Russell 'turned the hose on hell.' Sara Kaelin, a well-known colporteur in Pittsburgh, knew the Russells personally. At the funeral she saw Maria Russell place some flowers in the casket with the note, "To My Beloved Husband." Though she had separated from him some years earlier, Maria still recognized him as her husband.

As the years went by, I had many opportunities to acquire technical abilities useful to my future career. The uncle who was my guardian was a building contractor. During my school vacations, he put me to work with his electricians, converting old mansions from gas to electricity. In 1918 the students in our school built amateur radiotelegraph equipment. We met in the evenings to study and perform field experiments with electricity and magnetism. In 1926 a friend and I decided to pursue a boyhood dream—to work on ships and travel the world. We enrolled in the Radio Corporation of America school for radiotelegraph operators.

A New Life at Bethel

The radio school we attended was in New York City, so I traveled across the river to Brooklyn for meetings of the Bible Students, which were held in the rented auditorium of the old Masonic Temple. Back then, there was only one congregation for the whole New York metropolitan area. When brothers from Bethel (the home of the headquarters family of the Bible Students) learned that I was studying for a commercial radio license, they said: "Why go to sea? We have a radio station right here and need an operator." They invited me to come down to the office for an interview. I knew nothing about Bethel except that it was the headquarters of the Bible Students.

The brothers interviewed me and recommended that I finish my schooling, obtain a license, and then come to Bethel. Upon being graduated, instead of boarding a ship bound for the high seas, I packed up my few clothes and hopped on a subway bound for Bethel. Though I was dedicated to Jehovah and had shared in the preaching work for years, I was not baptized until December 1926, two weeks after arriving at Bethel. That was not uncommon at that time.

With 150 members, Bethel was overcrowded in those days. We had four men in each room. I soon got acquainted with most of them, since all of us ate, worked, and

In Our Next Issue

What Hope for the Blind?

Why Do the Witnesses Keep Calling?

Maintaining Harmony Between Elders and Ministerial Servants

slept in one complex, and of course, all of us attended the only congregation in New York City. The new Bethel Home was completed at 124 Columbia Heights in 1927, and we were able to live two to a room.

Also in 1927 the new factory at 117 Adams Street opened up. I helped move equipment from the old factory at 55 Concord Street. In addition to the radio equipment, at the factory there were elevators, printing presses, laundry equipment, oil burners—if it had a wire, I worked on it.

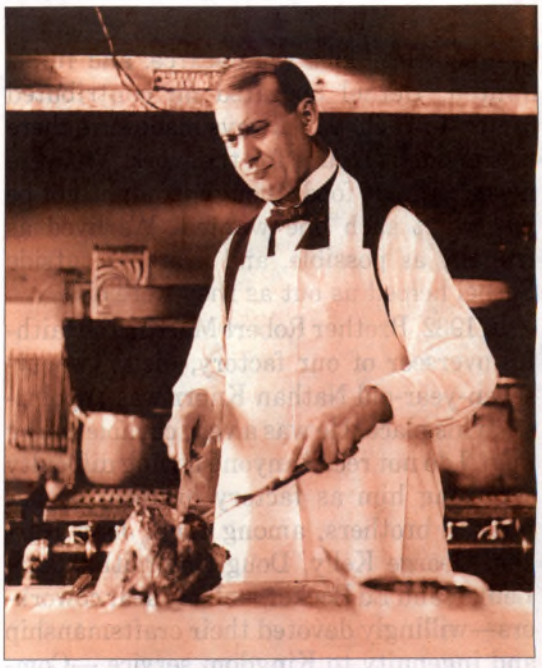
Bethel was more than a factory, though. Behind every book, every tract, every magazine, was a crowd of humble, hardworking servants. They were not out to make their mark on the world. Rather, they wanted just to get the Lord's work done—and there was plenty to do!

Association With Brother Rutherford

I greatly benefited from the privilege of working with Joseph F. Rutherford, the Society's second president. He was a big man, over six feet tall, not fat, but well built. Many of the younger brothers at Bethel were somewhat intimidated by him until they got to know him. He was constantly studying, preparing written material.

Brother Rutherford had a good sense of humor. There were a couple of older sisters in the Bethel family who had been around since Brother Russell's time. They were quite straight-faced and believed that it was not proper to laugh out loud even if something was funny. Sometimes at the dinner table Brother Rutherford would tell a story that would make everyone laugh, which irritated these two sisters. However, he also often led serious mealtime Bible discussions.

Brother Rutherford was a good cook and enjoyed preparing meals for friends. One time the Bethel cooks splintered some chicken bones when cutting up chickens. He strode into the kitchen and showed them the right way to cut up a chicken. He had no use for splinters in his food!



Brother Rutherford enjoyed preparing meals for friends

I was often around Brother Rutherford in informal settings, such as at our radio station, WBBR, or in his study on Staten Island. He was such a kindly man and practiced what he preached. He did not expect anything of others that he would not do himself. Unlike responsible individuals in many other religious organizations, Brother Rutherford was of the highest spiritual and moral character. He clearly lived for Jehovah's Kingdom.

Difficult Financial Times

A few years after I arrived at Bethel, the world entered the Great Depression. Financial markets collapsed, as did the prices of

commodities. Jobs were scarce, and funds limited. Bethel operated on contributed funds, and Jehovah always made sure there was enough to care for the work. We were never without food, though it might not be just what each one wanted. We lived as frugally as possible, and brothers outside Bethel helped us out as they were able.

In 1932, Brother Robert Martin, the faithful overseer of our factory, died. Twenty-seven-year-old Nathan Knorr was appointed in his place. He was a very capable young man. I do not recall anyone having difficulty accepting him as factory overseer. Other faithful brothers, among them John Kurzen, George Kelly, Doug Galbraith, Ralph Leffler, and Ed Becker—all my dear coworkers—willingly devoted their craftsmanship and ingenuity to Kingdom service.—Compare Exodus 35:34, 35.

Working With the Radio

To the very core, our organization was dedicated to spreading the good news by whatever means available. The whole world needed to know about the Kingdom, but we were just a few thousand. Radio technology was in its infancy following World War I. However, discerning brothers felt that this method of communication was what Jehovah had provided at that time. So in 1923 they set about building the radio station WBBR on Staten Island, one of the five boroughs of New York City.

At times I was the only operator of our station. I lived there on Staten Island but would make the three-hour ferry and train ride to the factory in Brooklyn to do electrical or mechanical work. To make our radio station essentially self-contained, we installed a diesel generating plant. On Staten Island we also had our own water wells and a garden that supplied food for the small staff there, as well as for the Bethel family in Brooklyn.

Until more help came along later, the responsibilities of the radio work greatly limited my meeting attendance and field service. There was no time at all for social functions or weekend trips other than our annual vacation. Someone once asked me: "With such a demanding schedule, didn't you ever consider leaving Bethel?" Honestly, I had to say: "No." It has been a privilege and joy to live and work alongside so many devoted brothers and sisters. And there was always work needing to be done, some new project to do.

We produced and broadcast stirring radio dramas. With no special-effects records available, we had to devise our own methods. We made a machine that could recreate the sound of a nice breeze or a raging storm. The sound of halves of coconut shells striking padded planks became pounding horsehoofs on stone streets. Each drama was a spectacular undertaking. And people listened. In those days of few distractions, many people sat and paid attention.

In the 1920's and early 1930's, the Society made radio history, repeatedly tying together the largest number of stations for a single program. Thus the Kingdom news reached millions worldwide.

The Phonograph

In the mid-1930's and early 1940's, we designed and built transcription machines, phonographs, and other sound equipment. With a special lathe, we cut master records out of mirror-smooth discs of beeswax. Then we examined each master record very carefully under a microscope to make sure it was flawless. If there were any defects, the recording session had to be repeated and another lathe cut made. We

Robert Hatzfeld at the controls of radio station WBBR

then sent the beeswax master to a record company, who produced the phonograph and transcription records.

One thrilling event that I remember very well was Brother Rutherford's lecture in 1933 entitled "Effect of Holy Year on Peace and Prosperity." The pope had declared that year to be a "holy year," and by radio broadcast and phonograph, we exposed it and showed that nothing holy would come of it. As it turned out, Hitler took power that year with the backing of the Catholic Church, so any hopes for peace vanished.

In the United States, the Catholic Action organization was formed to carry out what the church wanted. They placed their own men on editorial boards of major newspapers, magazines, and book publishers. They dabbled in politics and threatened to boycott any station carrying our Bible lectures. Many Witnesses were mobbed by Catholic Action groups, especially in nearby New Jersey. Those were exciting days!

Joyful Work in the Field

By the mid-1950's, the growing ranks of Kingdom publishers were reaching more people right at the doors of their homes. This proved to be far more effective than the radio in helping individuals understand Bible truth. So in 1957 it was decided to sell WBBR and direct our resources to the expanding missionary work in other lands.

In 1955, I was assigned to the Bedford Congregation in Brooklyn, where I regularly conducted the *Watchtower* Study. The Society also sent me out as a traveling speaker to upstate New York, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, and New Jersey. When assigned to the Bedford Congregation, I said to myself, 'I'm over 50 years old. I'd better share as much as I can in the field service right now. Later I might have lumbago and not enjoy it so much.'

After working all those years on the technical part of broadcasting Kingdom seed by radio, I found it a real pleasure to plant and water seeds of Bible truth directly with individuals. I really enjoyed working with the congregation. Different ones adopted me, making me feel right at home. Some of those little children, now grown, still call me grandpa. For 30 years we had fine times together in the field ministry, until problems with my legs and feet left me unable to walk the stairs or travel on the subway. In 1985, I transferred to the Brooklyn Heights Congregation, which meets right at Bethel.

As Jehovah's organization enjoyed great expansion, I was personally privileged to see his blessing in foreign fields as I attended large conventions of Jehovah's Witnesses in distant lands. I was able to travel the world after all! Starting in the 1950's, some of us Bethelites got to see the sights of London, Paris, Rome, Nuremberg, and Copenhagen. We traveled by converted bombers, boat, and train. The trips were scenic, of course, but the most thrilling sights of

A recent photograph of Brother Hatzfeld

all were the throngs of our warm, welcoming brothers. Later decades brought journeys to the Orient, Western Europe again, and most recently Eastern Europe. The wonderful conventions in Poland, Germany, and Czechoslovakia were overwhelming. How our theocratic family has grown since I first became part of it!

Divine Guidance

What seemed like small steps taken by the organization later turned out to be giant strides. When we were working on innovative projects, just tools to help us do the witness work, who could have foreseen the tremendous growth? We have moved forward in faith, responding to Jehovah's leading.

This progressive organization has not been afraid to utilize the latest technology available or to create its own to help care for the worldwide field. Among the methods used for advancing the Kingdom proclamation have been the house-to-house preaching, the use of radio networks, phonograph witnessing, and a program of conducting Bible studies in people's homes. Establishing our own printing operations in the early days and now utilizing computerized phototypesetting and offset printing in many languages is no small accomplishment. The Watchtower Bible School of Gilead, the Theocratic Ministry School, and regular conventions have all played a part in bringing glory to Jehovah God and his Son. It has been my privilege to observe personally and to participate in all these events.

It is clear to me that Jehovah's spirit-directed organization on earth receives guidance on what is to be done and how. His whole universal organization, visible and invisible, works together.

I have never regretted giving up my plans as a young man to sail the seas. Why, the most exciting, meaningful developments in the world happen right here within Jehovah's organization! So my journey on the road toward "the upward call" has been marked with many, many joys and blessings and no regrets.—Philippians 3:13, 14.

I always tell young people to remember 1914—that is, Psalm 19:14, which says: "Let the sayings of my mouth and the meditation of my heart become pleasurable before you, O Jehovah my Rock and my Redeemer." We want to please Jehovah in everything and pray as David did: "Make me know your own ways, O Jehovah; teach me your own paths. Make me walk in your truth and teach me, for you are my God of salvation. In you I have hoped all day long." (Psalm 25:4, 5) There is a lot of meaning in those words. Remembering them can help keep us on the right track, going in the right direction, in step with Jehovah's progressive organization.

Showing Christian Love to the Elderly

SAMUEL JOHNSON, an 18th-century author, told the tale of a young man who, when visiting friends, forgot where he had put his hat. This caused no comment. "But if the same inattention is discovered in an old man," Johnson went on, "people will shrug up their shoulders and say, 'His memory is going.'"

Johnson's story demonstrates that the elderly, perhaps like other minority groups, are subject to unjust typecasting. While caring for the needs of the aged is a challenge, benefits accrue to all parties involved. What are the challenges and the rewards, and why does this subject affect more and more people?

According to statistics, 6 percent of the world's population is 65 years of age or older, and in developed countries the percentage is twice as great. In the European Community, which designated 1993 as "European Year of Older People and Solidarity Between Generations," 1 person in 3 is over 50. There, as in most industrialized lands, declining birthrates and increasing life expectancy are making the population distribution top-heavy. Looking after those of advanced years under such circumstances is clearly a monumental task. How different things used to be in the Oriental past!

"Depositaries of Knowledge"

The *Handwörterbuch des Biblischen Altertums für gebildete Bibelleser* (Handbook of Biblical Antiquity for Educated Readers of the Bible) points out that in Oriental antiquity "the elderly were viewed as preservers of the traditional values of wisdom and higher knowledge, for which reason younger ones were admonished to seek their company and learn from them." *Smith's Bible Dictionary* explains: "In *private* life [the aged] were looked up to as the depositaries of knowledge . . . [The young] allowed them to give their opinion first."

Reverence for the aged was reflected in the Mosaic Law at Leviticus 19:32: "Before gray hair you should rise up, and you must show consideration for the person of an old man." So the aged occupied a position of privilege within society and were looked upon as valuable assets. This is obviously the way Ruth the Moabitess viewed her Israelite mother-in-law, Naomi.

Ruth firmly decided to accompany Naomi from Moab to Israel, thereafter listening carefully to Naomi's advice. Once they were in Bethlehem, it was Naomi who observed that Jehovah's hand was directing affairs and who then instructed Ruth how to behave. (Ruth 2:20; 3:3, 4, 18) Ruth's life was shaped in a theocratic manner as she learned from the experienced Naomi. Her mother-in-law proved to be a depositary of knowledge.

In a similar fashion, younger Christian women today can benefit by associating with older women in the congregation.

Perhaps a sister is contemplating marriage or is struggling with a stubborn personal problem. How wise it would be to seek the counsel and support of a mature elderly sister who has experience in the matter!

Furthermore, a body of elders can benefit by tapping the experience of aged ones in their midst. We can learn from Lot's failure to do this. A quarrel involving herders of the livestock of Abraham and Lot called for a decision that would affect everyone. Lot made an unwise choice. How much better it would have been to have asked for Abraham's counsel first! Lot would have received mature direction and could have spared his family the misery that resulted from his quick choice. (Genesis 13:7-13; 14:12; 19:4, 5, 9, 26, 29) Do you listen carefully to what mature elders say before reaching your own judgment on a question?

Countless aged ones have lasting zeal for Jehovah's work, as did Simeon and Anna in the first century. (Luke 2:25, 36, 37) It is a mark of respect and a reflection of a caring attitude toward such elderly ones to involve them in congregation activities as much as their strength allows, even well into old age. Perhaps a youth needs help to prepare an assignment for the Theocratic Ministry School. An astute elder might conclude that the ideal mentor would be an aged member of the congregation, one with mellowed wisdom, a benevolent manner, and available time.

However, tending to the special needs of the aged involves more. Many are troubled by loneliness, fear of crime, and financial difficulties. Furthermore, once the elderly become infirm, these problems are compounded by failing health and disappointment at their own diminishing vigor. They then need much more attention. How should individuals and the congregation as a whole react?

"Practice Godly Devotion"

During the first century, Paul wrote under inspiration at 1 Timothy 5:4, 16: "If any widow has children or grandchildren, let these learn first to practice godly devotion in their own household and to keep paying a due compensation to their parents and grandparents, for this is acceptable in God's sight. If any believing woman has widows, let her relieve them, and let the congregation not be under the burden. Then it can relieve those who are actually widows." Looking after the aged was a family matter. If an older member of the congregation was in need after exhausting avenues within his family, responsibility rested on the congregation. These principles have not changed.

What has helped Christians to show Christian love toward the elderly by practicing godly devotion in their own household? Observe the following comments by a number of Witnesses who have some experience in caring for those of advanced years.

Regular Attention to Spiritual Needs

"Considering the daily text together was an invaluable aid," recalls Felix, who helped his wife care for her parents. "Personal experiences and aspirations were interwoven with the principles of Jehovah." Indeed, in rising to the challenge of minding elderly relatives, a prime factor is the giving of due attention to their spiritual edification. This is logical in view of Jesus' words at Matthew 5:3: "Happy are those conscious of their spiritual need." The daily text can be augmented by a Bible-reading program, by discussion of Bible-based publications, and by prayer. "It seems the elderly like a degree of regularity," remarks Peter.

Yes, regularity is essential in spiritual matters. Not only in spiritual things but also in everyday life do older ones appreciate routine. Even those with slight infirmi-

ties can be warmly encouraged to "get out of bed and dress properly each day," remarks Ursula. Of course, we want to avoid the impression of dictating to the aged. Doris admits that her well-meaning efforts often went sadly astray. "I made all sorts of mistakes. One day I asked my father to change his shirt daily. My mother then reminded me: 'He is still my husband!' "

The elderly were young once, but for younger ones to put themselves in the shoes of the aged is a formidable task. Yet, that is the key to understanding their special needs. Advancing age brings frustration. Gerhard explains: "My father-in-law got annoyed with himself because he could no longer do everything he used to. Coming to grips with the situation was extremely painful. His personality changed."

Under changing circumstances, it is not uncommon for an older person to vent pent-up frustration by criticizing others, especially those looking after him. The reason is simple. Their loving attention reminds him of his own failing vigor. How should you react to this unfair criticism or complaint?

Remember, such negative feelings do not reflect Jehovah's view of your efforts. Continue doing good, and maintain a clean conscience, even if you reap occasional unjust comments. (Compare 1 Peter 2:19.) The local congregation can offer much support.

What the Congregation Can Do

Many congregations have reason to be deeply grateful for the past efforts of our dear elderly brothers and sisters. It was they who perhaps laid the foundation for the congregation, building it up from just a few publishers decades ago. Where would the congregation be without their past zealous activity and, perhaps, current financial support?

When increased care becomes essential in the case of an aged publisher, relatives need not stand alone with the responsibility. Others can assist by running errands, cooking, cleaning, taking the aged one for walks, offering transport to Christian meetings, or simply conversing with him at the Kingdom Hall. All can join in, though efficiency and routine are best achieved where efforts are coordinated.

Coordination is something elders can bear in mind when organizing shepherding calls. Some congregations are exemplary in this regard, the elders ensuring that regular shepherding visits are made to aged and frail ones, even those who are being well looked after by their families. However, it appears that other congregations should be more aware of their obligation toward the elderly.

One faithful brother, well into his 80's, was looked after by his daughter and his son-in-law, who left Bethel to do so. Yet, visits by other members of the congregation were still important to him. "When I used to visit the sick," the brother lamented, "I prayed with them. But no one has ever prayed with me." The loving attention of relatives does not absolve elders from the obligation to 'shepherd the flock of God in their care.' (1 Peter 5:2) Furthermore, those caring for elderly ones need to be upbuilt and encouraged to carry on with their fine work.

"Old and Satisfied"

Alexander von Humboldt, a 19th-century German scientist, was well along in years when a young lady asked him whether he did not find growing old rather tedious. "You're quite right," replied the learned man. "But it is the only way of living for a long time." In the same vein, many brothers and sisters today set a fine example of

accepting the adversities of old age in return for the honor of leading a long life. They reflect the attitude shown by Abraham, Isaac, David, and Job, who were "old and satisfied."—Genesis 25:8; 35:29; 1 Chronicles 23:1; Job 42:17.

Advancing age brings the challenge of accepting help gracefully and of expressing gratitude sincerely. Wisdom requires that each recognize the limits of his strength. However, that does not condemn an aging person to inactivity. Maria is well over 90 years of age, but she still attends congregation meetings and gives comments there. How does she do it? "I cannot read anymore, but I listen to *The Watchtower* on cassette. I forget quite a lot, but I usually manage to give a comment." Like Maria, keeping occupied with matters that are upbuilding helps a person to remain active and to retain the Christian personality.

Under God's Kingdom, old age will be no more. At that time those who grew old in this system and perhaps even died will have fond memories of the care and attention shown to them. As such elderly ones regain life and vigor, they will surely feel intense love for Jehovah and deep gratitude toward those who stuck with them during their trials in this old system.—Compare Luke 22:28.

What about those who look after the aged now? Very soon, when the Kingdom takes full control of the earth, they will look back with joy and relief that they did not sidestep their obligation but practiced godly devotion by showing Christian love to the elderly.—1 Timothy 5:4.

The Elderly Will Appreciate Your Visits

Much good can be accomplished by planning a call, perhaps of 15 minutes, on an aged one after preaching activity. But it is best not to leave such visits to chance, as the following experience shows.

Brigitte and Hannelore were preaching together, engaging an elderly man in conversation at his door. The sisters spoke to him for five minutes before discovering that he too was a Witness of Jehovah, a member of the same congregation. How embarrassing! But the experience ended on a positive note. Hannelore made immediate plans to visit the brother and to assist him in attending congregation meetings.

Do you know the name and address of each older publisher living in the territory where you preach? Could you arrange to make a brief call? It would likely be appreciated very much.

QUESTIONS FROM READERS

We enjoyed studying prophecies of Daniel as treated in "The Watchtower." Why, though, did the dates for the three and a half times of Revelation 11:3 differ from the "Revelation Climax" book?

Yes, *The Watchtower* of November 1, 1993, did offer a minor adjustment as to the dating of the modern fulfillment of Revelation 11:3. Why?

Let us first look at Revelation 11:2, the end of which mentions "forty-two months." We continue in verse 3: "I will cause my two witnesses to prophesy a thousand two hundred and sixty days dressed in sackcloth." When does that apply?

Well, Jehovah's Witnesses have long recognized that this prophecy found its fulfillment with spirit-anointed Christians after the end of "the appointed times of the nations" (the Gentile Times) in 1914. (Luke 21:24; 2 Corinthians 1:21, 22) Commenting on this, *Revelation—Its Grand Climax At Hand!** (1988) says on page 164: "There was a marked period of three and a half years when the hard experiences of God's people matched the events prophesied here—starting from the outbreak of the first world war in the latter part of 1914 and continuing to the early part of 1918."

Note that the dating offered was "the outbreak of the first world war in the latter part of 1914 [till] the early part of 1918." This matches the dating often presented, such as in *"Then Is Finished the Mystery of God,"* pages 261-4, (1969).*

However, *The Watchtower* focused on prophecies in Daniel, a book that twice mentions a period comparable to that mentioned later in Revelation —3 1/2 years, or 42 months. To be specific, Daniel 7:25 says that God's holy ones would be harassed "for a time, and times and half a time," or 3 1/2 times. Later, Daniel 12:7 foretells "an appointed time, appointed times and a half," or 3 1/2 times, that would be climaxed with "a finishing of the dashing of the power of the holy people."

So we have prophecies dealing with a comparable period at Daniel 7:25, Daniel 12:7, and Revelation 11:2, 3, as well as at Revelation 13:5. Our publications have shown that all of these found fulfillment in the 1914-18 period. But in treating each of these prophecies separately, the dates for the beginning and for the end varied a little.

However, *The Watchtower* of November 1, 1993, asked: "How were all these parallel prophecies fulfilled?" Yes, the prophecies of 3 1/2 times mentioned at Daniel 7:25, Daniel 12:7, and Revelation 11:3 were recognized as "parallel prophecies." Hence, they would correspond as to their beginning and their end.

As to the ending, the magazine showed how the harassment of God's anointed ones (Daniel 7:25) climaxed in June 1918 when J. F. Rutherford and other directors of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society were "sentenced on false charges to a long term in prison." That event certainly was "a finishing of the dashing of the power of the holy people," as noted at Daniel 12:7.

Counting back from June 1918 leads us to December 1914 for the beginning of the 3 1/2 times. In that closing month of 1914, God's anointed ones on earth learned the theme scripture for the coming year: "'Are ye able to drink of My cup?' —Matthew 20:20-23." The article announcing it warned: "Who knows but that there may be some special trial, cup of suffering or ignominy, for the loyal followers of the Lamb during 1915!" As Daniel 7:25 foretold for this period of 3 1/2 times, 'harassment arose and continued against the holy ones themselves of the Supreme One.' Nations were embroiled in World War I, making it easier for them to carry out unjustified harassment. The conclusion is: All three parallel prophecies—Daniel 7:25, 12:7, and Revelation 11:3—found fulfillment in the 3 1/2 years, or 42 months, from December 1914 to June 1918.

This explains the slight refinement in dating the fulfillment of Revelation 11:3. This adjustment is something we can bear in mind as we study and use the *Revelation Climax* book in the future.

* Published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.

What Future for Our Young?

THE nuclear threat—whether from terrorists' bombs or from accidents at nuclear plants—looms over all. You may well worry particularly about young ones, including your own children or grandchildren. How saddening to realize that a nuclear threat endangers the health and future of any child.

But take heart. There is reason for you to be optimistic about the future of young ones. The basis for hope centers, not on human efforts to protect our young, but on a future resting in the hands of our Creator.

When God's Son, Jesus, taught in the Middle East, he demonstrated concern for young ones. (Mark 9:36, 37, 42; 10:13-16) The Bible shows that similar concern will be reflected when God finally ends the nuclear threat and establishes a global paradise. Our young can enjoy that, and you can too.