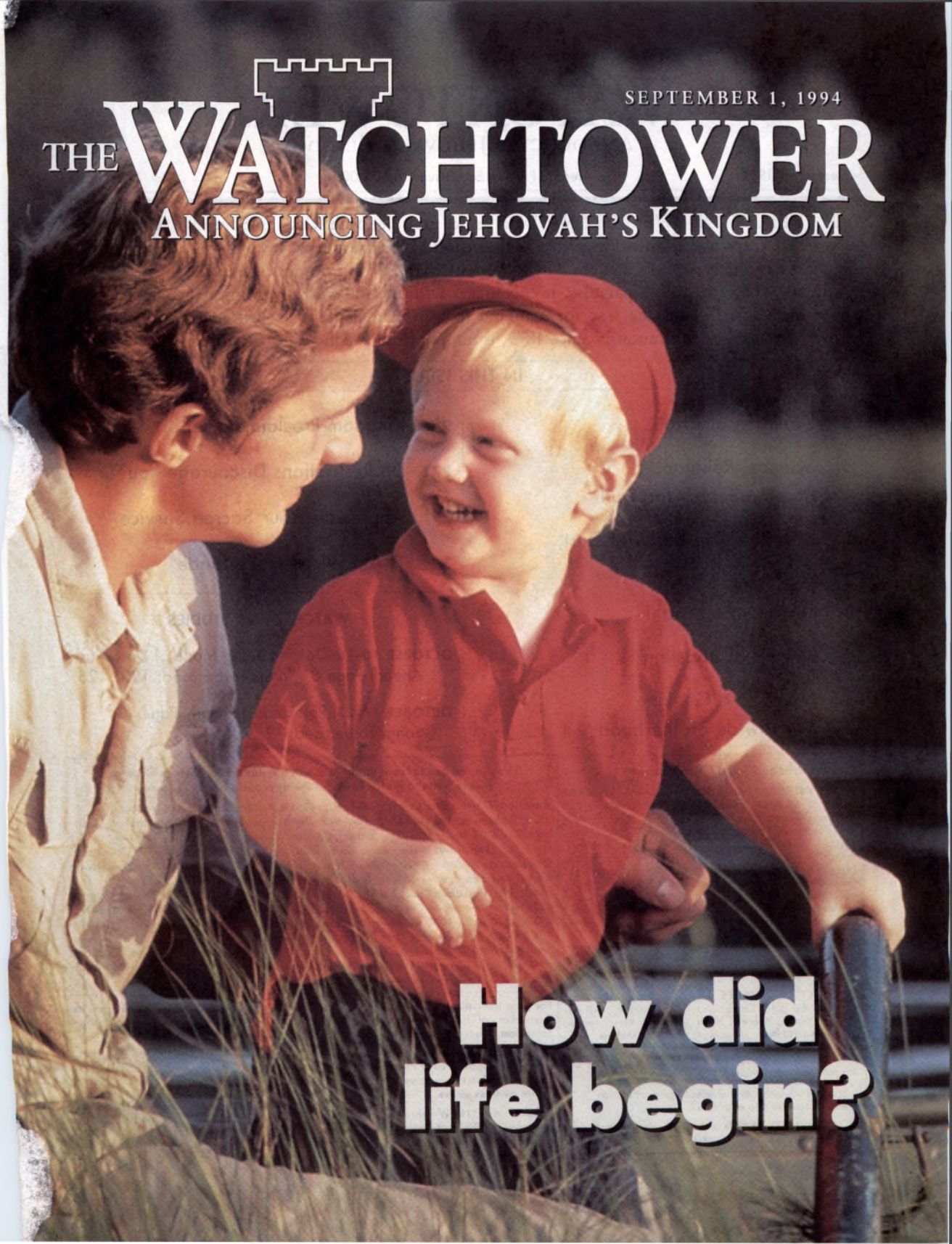
SEPTEMBER 1, 1994

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



How did life begin?

THE WATCHTOWER®

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

September 1, 1994 | Average Printing Each Issue: 16,100,000 | Vol. 115, No. 17

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 Bible translation used is the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures—With References*, unless otherwise indicated.

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Publication of "The Watchtower" is part of a worldwide Bible educational work supported by voluntary donations.

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The Watchtower (ISSN 0043-1087) is published semimonthly by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201-2483. Second-class postage paid at Brooklyn, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. **Postmaster:** Send address changes to Watchtower, **Wallkill, N.Y. 12589.**

Printed in U.S.A.

EVOLUTION ON TRIAL

Committed evolutionists are now clamoring for a full reexamination of organic origins

IMAGINE that you are a jurist in a criminal trial. The defendant avows his innocence, and witnesses come forward to testify in his behalf. While listening to their testimony, however, you note that each witness contradicts the others. Then, when the defense witnesses are called back to the stand, their stories change. As a jurist, would you give weight to their testimony? Would you be inclined to acquit the accused? Likely not, for any inconsistencies in the defense erode the credibility of the defendant.

Such is the case with the theory of evolution. A host of witnesses have come forth to tell a variety of stories about the origin of life, defending the theory of evolution. But would their testimony hold up in court? Do those who uphold the theory speak in agreement?

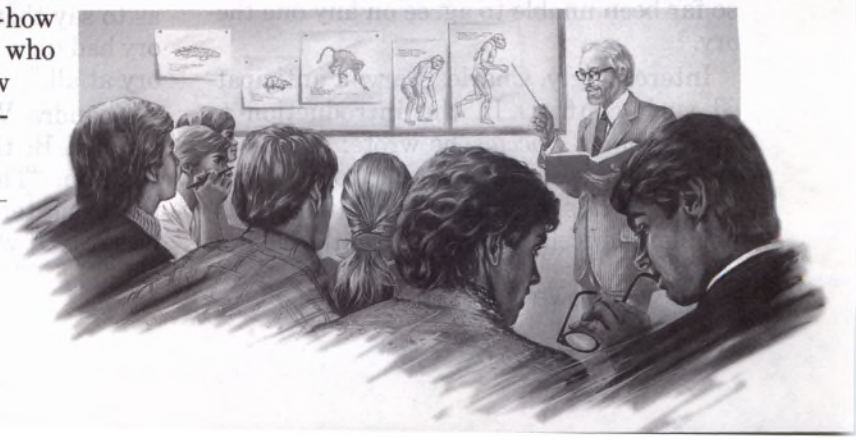
Conflicting Testimony

How did life begin? Perhaps no other question has stirred more speculation and ignited more debate. Yet, the controversy is not simply over evolution versus creation; much of the conflict takes place among the evolutionists themselves. Virtually every detail of evolution—how it happened, where it started, who or what started it, and how long the process took—is hotly disputed.

For years evolutionists claimed that life began in a warm pool of organic "soup." Some now believe that foam in the ocean could have bred life. Undersea geysers are another proposed site of life's origin. Some postulate that living organisms arrived on earthbound meteors. Or perhaps, say others, asteroids smashed into earth and changed the atmosphere, stirring up life in the process. "Plow a big iron asteroid into earth," says one researcher, "and you will certainly get interesting things happening."

The nature of life's beginning is also being reconsidered. "Life did not arise under calm, benign conditions, as once assumed," suggests *Time* magazine, "but under the hellish skies of a planet racked by volcanic eruptions and menaced by comets and asteroids." For life to evolve amid such chaos, some scientists now say, the whole process must have occurred within a narrower time frame than previously thought.

Scientists also have differing views about where God—"if he exists"—fits into the picture. Some say that life evolved without the intervention of a Creator,



The dogmatic statements of some can be intimidating

while others suggest that God started the process and let evolution take over.

After life began, how did evolution occur? Even here, stories conflict. In 1958, a century after *The Origin of Species* was published, evolutionist Sir Julian Huxley stated: "Darwin's great discovery, the universal principle of natural selection, is firmly and finally established as the sole agency of major evolutionary change." Twenty-four years later, though, evolutionist Michael Ruse wrote: "A growing number of biologists . . . argues that any evolutionary theory based on Darwinian principles—particularly any theory that sees natural selection as *the* key to evolutionary change—is misleadingly incomplete."

Time magazine, while saying that there are "many solid facts" backing the evolution theory, nonetheless concedes that evolution is a complex tale with "many holes and no shortage of competing theories on how to fill in the missing pieces." Far from suggesting that the case is closed, some of the most committed evolutionists are now clamoring for a full reexamination of organic origins.

Thus, the case for evolution—particularly for the beginning of life according to evolution—is not based upon consistent testimony. Scientist T. H. Janabi observes that those who advocate evolution "have developed and abandoned many erroneous theories over the years and scientists have so far been unable to agree on any one theory."

Interestingly, Charles Darwin anticipated such conflict. In the introduction to *The Origin of Species,* he wrote: "I am well aware that scarcely a single point is discussed in this volume on which facts cannot be adduced, often apparently leading to conclusions directly opposite to those at which I have arrived."

Indeed, such conflicting testimony raises questions as to the credibility of the evolution theory.

Is Evolution the Intellectual Choice?

From its beginning, notes the book *Milestones of History,* the evolution theory "appealed to many people because it seemed more truly scientific than the theory of special creations."

Moreover, the dogmatic statements of some evolutionists can be intimidating. For example, scientist H. S. Shelton asserts that the concept of special creation is "too foolish for serious consideration." Biologist Richard Dawkins bluntly states: "If you meet somebody who claims not to believe in evolution, that person is ignorant, stupid or insane." Similarly, Professor René Dubos says: "Most enlightened persons now accept as a fact that everything in the cosmos—from heavenly bodies to human beings—has developed and continues to develop through evolutionary processes."

From these statements it would seem that anyone with a measure of intelligence would readily accept evolution. After all, to do so would mean that one is "enlightened" rather than "stupid." Yet, there are highly educated men and women who do not advocate the theory of evolution. "I found many scientists with private doubts," writes Francis Hitching in his book *The Neck of the Giraffe,* "and a handful who went so far as to say that Darwinian evolutionary theory had turned out not to be a scientific theory at all."

Chandra Wickramasinghe, a highly acclaimed British scientist, takes a similar position. "There's no evidence for any of the basic tenets of Darwinian evolution," he says. "It was a social force that took over

the world in 1860, and I think it has been a disaster for science ever since."

T. H. Janabi investigated the arguments put forth by evolutionists. "I found that the situation is quite different from that which we are led to believe," he says. "The evidence is too scarce and too fragmented to support such a complex theory as that of the origin of life."

Thus, those who object to the evolution theory should not simply be brushed aside as "ignorant, stupid or insane." Regarding opinions that challenge evolution, even the staunch evolutionist George Gaylord Simpson had to admit: "It would certainly be a mistake merely to dismiss these views with a smile or to ridicule them. Their proponents were (and are) profound and able students."

A Matter of Faith

Some think that belief in evolution is based upon fact, while belief in creation is based upon faith. It is true that no man has seen God. (John 1:18; compare 2 Corinthians 5:7.) Yet, the theory of evolution holds no advantage in this regard, since it is founded upon events that no humans have ever witnessed or duplicated.

For example, scientists have never observed mutations—even beneficial ones—that produce new life-forms; yet they are sure that this is precisely how new species arrived. They have not witnessed the spontaneous generation of life; yet they insist that this is how life began.

Such lack of evidence causes T. H. Janabi to call the evolution theory "a mere 'faith.'" Physicist Fred Hoyle calls it "the Gospel according to Darwin." Dr. Evan Shute takes it further. "I suspect that the creationist has less mystery to explain away than the wholehearted evolutionist," he says.

Other experts agree. "When I contemplate the nature of man," admits astronomer Robert Jastrow, "the emergence of this extraordinary being out of chemicals dissolved in a pool of warm water seems as much a miracle as the Biblical account of his origin."

Why, then, do many still reject the idea that life was created?

SCIENCE, RELIGION, AND THE SEARCH FOR TRUTH

"The fact that many false religions have spread . . . had some weight with me."—Charles Darwin

DURING the early 19th century, science and religion enjoyed a compatible relationship. "Even in scientific papers," says the book *Darwin: Before and After,* "writers felt no hesitation in speaking of God in a manner that was evidently natural and sincere."

Darwin's *Origin of Species* helped to change that. Science and evolution came to form a liaison that left religion —and God—out of the picture. "In the

evolutionary pattern of thought," says Sir Julian Huxley, "there is no longer either need or room for the supernatural."

Today the evolution theory is claimed to be an indispensable foundation of science. A key reason for the relationship is identified by physicist Fred Hoyle: "Orthodox scientists are more concerned with preventing a return to the religious excesses of the past than in looking forward to the truth." What kind of excesses have made religion so distasteful to science?

Religion Gives Creation a Bad Name

In a supposed attempt to uphold the Bible, the "creationists"—mostly allied with fundamentalist Protestants—have insisted that the earth and the universe are less than 10,000 years old. This extreme view has invited the ridicule of geologists, astronomers, and physicists, for it contradicts their findings.

But what does the Bible really say? "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." (Genesis 1:1) The time involved is not specified. The "first day" of creation is not even mentioned until Genesis 1:3-5. "The heavens and the earth" already existed when this first "day" began. Therefore, could the heavens and the earth be billions of years old, as scientists claim? They may very well be. The Bible simply does not specify the time covered.

Another excess of religion is the way some interpret the six 'days' of creation. Some fundamentalists insist that these days are literal, restricting earthly creation to a period of 144 hours. This provokes skepticism in scientists, for they feel that this claim conflicts with clear scientific observations.

However, it is the fundamentalist interpretation of the Bible—not the Bible itself—that is at odds with science. The Bible does not say that each creative "day" was 24 hours long; indeed, it includes all these 'days' in the much longer "day that Jehovah God made earth and heaven," showing that not all Biblical 'days' contained just 24 hours. (Genesis 2:4) Some could have been many thousands of years in length.*

Thus, the idea of creation has been given a bad name by creationists and fundamentalists. Their teachings on the age of the universe and the length of the creative 'days' are in harmony neither with reasonable science nor with the Bible. However, there are also other excesses that have made religion distasteful to scientists.

Abuse of Power

Throughout history, religion has been responsible for much injustice. During the Middle Ages, for example, the creation doctrine was twisted to justify the church's

* See *Awake!*, November 8, 1982, pages 6-9, and *Insight on the Scriptures*, Volume 1, page 545, published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc. For more information on creationism and its conflicts with science and the Bible, see *Awake!* issues of March 8, 1983, pages 12-15, and March 22, 1983, pages 12-15.

IGNORANT OF THE EVIDENCE?

"EVEN Jehovah's Witnesses have learned a good deal of biology," wrote lawyer Norman Macbeth in his 1971 book *Darwin Retried—An Appeal to Reason*. Upon reading an *Awake!* article on the subject of evolution, Macbeth notes: "I was amazed to find that it contained some shrewd criticism of Darwinism." Noting the extensive research and judicious quotes from authorities on the subject, the author concluded: "It is no longer correct for Simpson to say: '. . . those who do not believe in it [evolution] are, almost to a man, obviously ignorant of the scientific evidence.' "

The future of mankind has not been left to blind chance

support of Europe's autocracy. The implication was that humans were placed in their status, wealthy or poor, by divine decree. *The Intelligent Universe* explains: "Younger sons of the wealthy were told it was 'God's system' for them to receive little or nothing of the family estate, and the working man was constantly being urged to remain content with 'the station to which it had pleased God to call him.'"

Little wonder that many fear returning to "the religious excesses of the past"! Rather than fill man's spiritual need, religion has often preyed upon it. (Ezekiel 34:2) Comments an editorial in the magazine *India Today:* "With the kind of record it has established through the ages, it is a wonder that religion has retained any credibility at all. . . . In the name of the Supreme Creator, . . . human beings have perpetrated the most abominable atrocities against their fellow creatures."

The appalling record of false religion had no small influence on Darwin's thinking. "I gradually came to disbelieve in Christianity as a divine revelation," he wrote. "The fact that many false religions have spread over large portions of the earth like wildfire had some weight with me."

The Triumph of True Religion

Religious hypocrisy is not new to this world. Jesus said to the power-hungry religious leaders of his day: "You appear like good men on the outside—but inside you are a mass of pretence and wickedness." —Matthew 23:28, *Phillips.*

Genuine Christianity, however, is "no part of the world." (John 17:16) Its followers do not participate in corrupt religion and politics; nor are they misled by philosophies that deny the existence of a Creator. "The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God," wrote the apostle Paul.—1 Corinthians 3:19.

Yet, this does not mean that real Christians are scientifically naive. On the contrary, followers of true religion are intrigued by science. "Raise your eyes high up and see," the ancient prophet Isaiah was told. "Who has created these things?" (Isaiah 40:26) Similarly, to understand the Creator better, Job was invited to explore the wonders of nature and the universe. —Job, chapters 38-41.

Yes, those who believe in a Creator view the creation with respectful awe. (Psalm 139:14) Furthermore, they trust what the Creator, Jehovah God, says about a wonderful hope for the future. (Revelation 21:1-4) Through a study of the Bible, millions are learning that neither the origin of man nor his future depends on blind chance. Jehovah had a purpose in making man, and that purpose will be realized—to the blessing of all obedient humans. We invite you to investigate the matter for yourself.

DESPITE BEING MADE OF DUST, PUSH AHEAD!

"He himself well knows the formation of us, remembering that we are dust."
—PSALM 103:14.

IN A physical way, we are dust. "Jehovah God proceeded to form the man out of dust from the ground and to blow into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man came to be a living soul." (Genesis 2:7) This simple description of man's creation is in harmony with scientific truth. All the elements of which the human body is composed are to be found in the "dust from the ground." A chemist once claimed that an adult human body is 65 percent oxygen, 18 percent carbon, 10 percent hydrogen, 3 percent nitrogen, 1.5 percent calcium, and 1 percent phosphorus, with the remainder being made up of other elements. Whether these estimates are wholly accurate is unimportant. The fact remains: "We are dust"!

[2] Who, apart from Jehovah, could create such intricate creatures out of nothing more than dust? God's works are perfect and without blemish, so his choosing to create man in this way is certainly no cause for complaint. Indeed, that the Grand Creator was able to create man from the dust of the earth in a fear-inspiring and wonderful way increases our appreciation for His unlimited power, skill, and practical wisdom.—Deuteronomy 32:4, footnote; Psalm 139:14.

1. Is the Bible scientifically correct in saying that humans are made of dust? Explain.
2. What response does the way God created humans produce in you, and why?

A Change of Circumstances

[3] Creatures of dust have limitations. God never intended, however, that these be burdensome or overly restrictive. They were not meant to cause discouragement or to result in unhappiness. Still, as the context of David's words at Psalm 103:14 indicates, limitations to which humans are subject can cause discouragement and result in unhappiness. Why? When Adam and Eve disobeyed God, they brought about a changed situation for their future family.

3, 4. (a) In creating man out of dust, what did God not intend? (b) To what was David referring at Psalm 103:14, and how does the context help us reach this conclusion?

Being made of dust then took on new connotations.*

4 David was speaking, not about the natural limitations that even perfect humans made of dust would have had, but about human frailties caused by inherited imperfection. Otherwise he would not have said of Jehovah: "Him who is forgiving all your error, who is healing all your maladies, who is reclaiming your life from the very pit, [who] has not done to us even according to our sins; nor according to our errors has he brought upon us what we deserve." (Psalm 103:2-4, 10) Despite being made of dust, had perfect humans remained faithful, they would never have erred, sinned, so as to need forgiveness; nor would they have had maladies requiring healing. Above all, they would never have had to descend into the pit of death from which they could be reclaimed only by means of a resurrection.

5 Being imperfect, all of us have experienced the things of which David spoke. We are constantly aware of our limitations due to imperfection. We are saddened when they at times seem to impair our relationship with Jehovah or with our Christian brothers. We regret that our imperfections and the pressures of Satan's world occasionally push us into despondency. Since Satan's rule is rapidly drawing to a close, his world is exerting ever greater pressure on people in general and on Christians in particular.—Revelation 12:12.

* The Bible commentary *Herders Bibelkommentar*, commenting on Psalm 103:14, notes: "He well knows that he created humans from the dust of the ground, and he knows the weaknesses and the transient nature of their life, which weigh heavily upon them *since the original sin.*"—Italics ours.

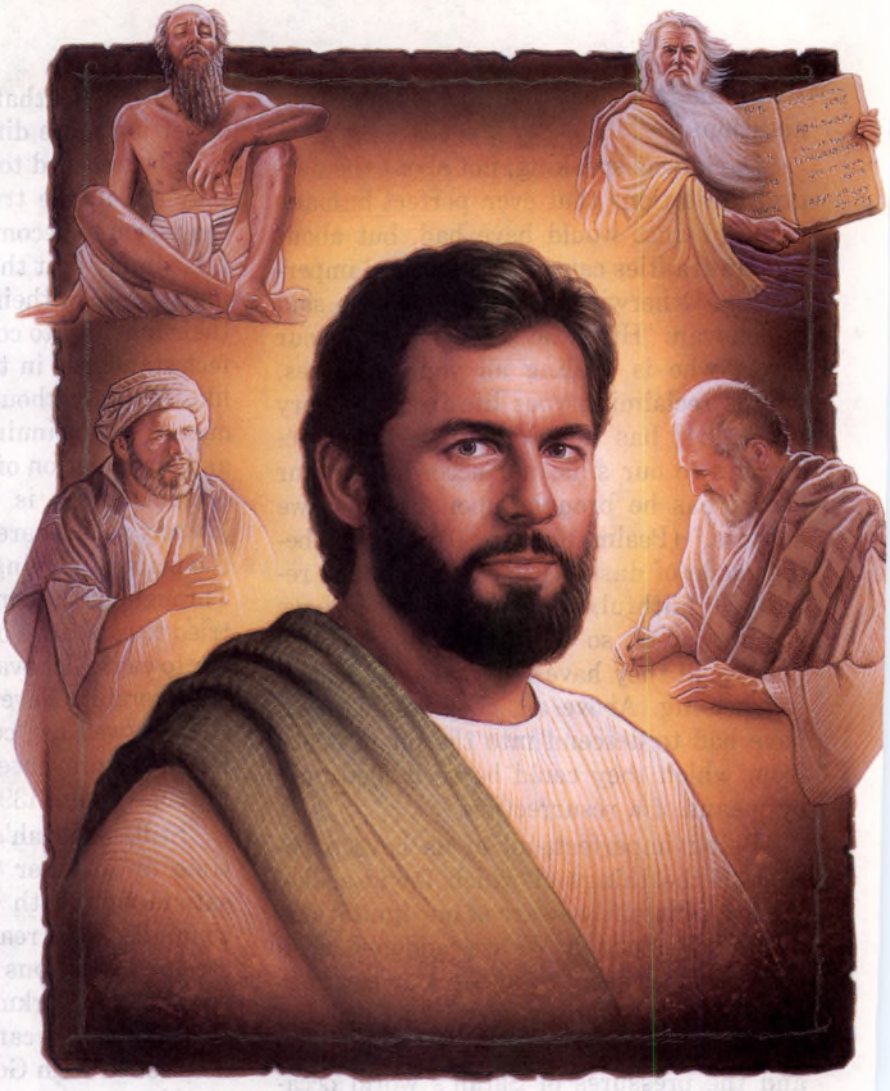
5. Why is it not difficult for us to understand David's words?

6 Do you feel that leading a Christian life is getting more difficult? Some Christians have been heard to remark that the longer they are in the truth the more imperfect they seem to become. More likely, however, it is simply that they have become increasingly aware of their own imperfections and their inability to conform to Jehovah's perfect standards in the way that they would like. Actually, though, this is likely a consequence of continuing to grow in knowledge and appreciation of Jehovah's righteous requirements. It is vital that we never allow any such awareness to discourage us to the point of playing into the Devil's hands. Throughout the centuries he has repeatedly tried to capitalize on discouragement in order to cause Jehovah's servants to abandon true worship. Nevertheless, genuine love of God, as well as "complete hatred" for the Devil, has prevented most of them from doing so.—Psalm 139:21, 22; Proverbs 27:11.

7 Still, Jehovah's servants may at one time or another feel discouraged. Dissatisfaction with our own achievements could also be a reason. Physical factors or strained relations with family members, friends, or workmates may be involved. Faithful Job became so discouraged that he pleaded with God: "O that in Sheol you would conceal me, that you would keep me secret until your anger turns back, that you would set a time limit for me and remember me!" Now, if difficult circumstances could push Job, "a man blameless and upright, fearing God and turning aside from bad," to have bouts of discouragement, it is small wonder that the same thing can happen to us.—Job 1:8, 13-19; 2:7-9, 11-13; 14:13.

6. Why may some Christians feel discouraged, and how may Satan take advantage of this kind of feeling?

7. In what respect may we at times be like Job?



Christians imitate the faith of fellow worshipers, but they follow the Perfecter of their faith, Jesus

[8] How consoling to know that Jehovah looks into hearts and does not overlook good motives! He will never cast off those who strive in all sincerity to please him. Occasional discouragement, in fact, may be a positive sign, indicating that we are not taking our service to Jehovah lightly. Viewed from this standpoint, the one who never struggles with discouragement may not be as spiritually aware of his weaknesses as others are of theirs. Remember: "Let him that thinks he is standing beware that he does not fall."—1 Corinthians 10:12; 1 Samuel 16:7; 1 Kings 8:39; 1 Chronicles 28:9.

They Too Were Made of Dust

[9] Hebrews chapter 11 lists a number of pre-Christian witnesses of Jehovah who exercised strong faith. Christians of the first century and those of modern times have done likewise. The lessons to be learned from them are invaluable. (Compare Hebrews 13:7.) For example, whose faith could Christians better imitate than that of Moses? He was called upon to proclaim messages of judgment to the most powerful world ruler of his time, Pharaoh of Egypt. Today, Jehovah's Witnesses must declare similar judgment messages against false

8. Why can occasional discouragement be a positive sign?

9, 10. (a) Whose faith do Christians do well to imitate? (b) How did Moses react to his assignment?

religion and other organizations that are in opposition to Christ's established Kingdom.—Revelation 16:1-15.

[10] Fulfilling this commission is no easy assignment, as Moses showed. "Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh and that I have to bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt?" he asked. We can understand his feelings of inadequacy. He also worried about how fellow Israelites would react: "Suppose they do not believe me and do not listen to my voice?" Jehovah then explained to him how he could prove his authorization, but Moses had another problem. He said: "Excuse me, Jehovah, but I am not a fluent speaker, neither since yesterday nor since before that nor since your speaking to your servant, for I am slow of mouth."—Exodus 3:11; 4:1, 10.

[11] Occasionally, we may feel as Moses did. Although recognizing our theocratic obligations, we may wonder how we can ever fulfill them. 'Who am I that I should approach people, some of higher social, economic, or educational rank, and presume to educate them in the ways of God? How will my spiritual brothers react when I make comments at Christian meetings or offer presentations from the platform in the Theocratic Ministry School? Will they not see my inadequacies?' But remember, Jehovah was with Moses and equipped him for his assignment because Moses exercised faith. (Exodus 3:12; 4:2-5, 11, 12) If we imitate the faith of Moses, Jehovah will be with us and equip us for our work as well.

[12] Anyone who feels frustrated or discouraged because of sins or shortcomings can certainly relate to David when he said: "My transgressions I myself know, and my sin is in front of me constantly." Pleading with Jehovah, David also said: "Conceal your face from my sins, and wipe out even all my errors." Never, though, did he allow discouragement to rob him of his desire to serve Jehovah. "Do not throw me away from before your face; and your holy spirit O do not take away from me." David was clearly "dust," but Jehovah did not turn away from him, for David exercised faith in Jehovah's promise not to despise "a heart broken and crushed."—Psalm 38:1-9; 51:3, 9, 11, 17.

[13] Note, however, that while we are to view this "so great a cloud of witnesses" as an encouragement to "run with endurance the race that is set before us," we are not told to become their followers. We are told to follow the steps of "the Chief Agent and Perfecter of our faith, Jesus," not imperfect humans—not even the faithful apostles of the first century.—Hebrews 12:1, 2; 1 Peter 2:21.

[14] The apostles Paul and Peter, pillars in the Christian congregation, stumbled at times. "The good that I wish I do not do, but the bad that I do not wish is what I practice," wrote Paul. "Miserable man that I am!" (Romans 7:19, 24) And Peter in a moment of overconfidence told Jesus: "Although all the others are stumbled in connection with you, never will I be stumbled!" When Jesus warned Peter that he would disown Him three times, Peter presumptuously contradicted his Master, boasting: "Even if I should have to die with you, I will by no means disown you." Yet disown Jesus he did, a mistake that caused him to weep bitterly. Yes, Paul and Peter were made of dust.—Matthew 26:33-35.

11. Like Moses, how might we react to theocratic obligations, but by exercising faith, of what can we be confident?

12. How can David's faith encourage us in the face of discouragement over sins or shortcomings?

13, 14. (a) Why should we not become followers of men? (b) How do the examples of Paul and Peter show that even they were made of dust?

[15] Despite their frailties, however, Moses, David, Paul, Peter, and others like them came off victorious. Why? Because they exercised strong faith in Jehovah, trusted him implicitly, and stuck close to him despite setbacks. They relied upon him to provide "the power beyond what is normal." And he did, never letting them fall beyond recovery. If we keep on exercising faith, we can be sure that when judgment is rendered in our case, it will be in harmony with the words: "God is not unrighteous so as to forget your work and the love you showed for his name." What an incentive this gives us to push ahead despite the fact that we are made of dust!—2 Corinthians 4:7; Hebrews 6:10.

What Does Being Made of Dust Mean for Us Individually?

[16] Experience has taught many parents and teachers the wisdom of judging children or students according to individual ability, not on the basis of comparisons with siblings or classmates. This is in harmony with a Bible principle that Christians have been told to follow: "Let each one prove what his own work is, and then he will have cause for exultation in regard to himself alone, and not in comparison with the other person."—Galatians 6:4.

[17] In harmony with this principle, although Jehovah deals with his people as an organized group, he judges them as individuals. Romans 14:12 says: "Each of us will render an account for himself to God." Jehovah well knows the genetic makeup of each of his servants. He knows their physical and mental makeup, their abilities, their inherited strengths and weaknesses, the possibilities they have, as well as the extent to which they take advantage of these possibilities to produce Christian fruitage. Jesus' comments about the widow who dropped two small coins into the temple treasury and his illustration of the seed sown on fine soil are encouraging examples for Christians who may feel depressed because of unwisely comparing themselves with others.—Mark 4:20; 12:42-44.

[18] It is vital that we determine what being dust means in our own individual case so that we can serve to our fullest potential. (Proverbs 10:4; 12:24; 18:9; Romans 12:1) Only by being keenly aware of our personal frailties and weaknesses can we stay alert to the need and possibilities of improvement. In making a self-examination, let us never overlook the power of holy spirit in helping us to improve. By means of it, the universe was created, the Bible was written, and, in the midst of a dying world, a peaceful new world society has been

15. Despite the fact that we are made of dust, what incentive do we have to push ahead?

16, 17. When it comes to judging, how does Jehovah apply the principle explained at Galatians 6:4?

18. (a) Why should we determine what being dust means for us individually? (b) Why should a frank self-examination not cause us to despair?

Can You Explain?

- ☐ How do Genesis 2:7 and Psalm 103:14 differ in referring to humans as being made of dust?
- ☐ Why is Hebrews chapter 11 a source of encouragement for Christians today?
- ☐ Why are we wise to apply the principle set out at Galatians 6:4?
- ☐ How can Hebrews 6:10 and 1 Corinthians 15:58 help ward off discouragement?

brought into existence. So God's holy spirit is certainly powerful enough to give those who ask for it the wisdom and strength needed to maintain integrity.—Micah 3:8; Romans 15:13; Ephesians 3:16.

[19] How comforting to know that Jehovah remembers that we are dust! Never should we reason, however, that this is a legitimate excuse for slacking the hand or perhaps even for doing wrong. Not at all! That Jehovah remembers that we are dust is an expression of his undeserved kindness. But we do not want to be "ungodly men, turning the undeserved kindness of our God into an excuse for loose conduct and proving false to our only Owner and Lord, Jesus Christ." (Jude 4) Being made of dust is no excuse for being ungodly. A Christian strives to combat wrong tendencies, pummeling his body and leading it as a slave, so as to avoid "grieving God's holy spirit."—Ephesians 4:30; 1 Corinthians 9:27.

19. For what is our being made of dust no excuse?

[20] Now, during the concluding years of Satan's world system, is not the time to slow down—not as far as Kingdom preaching is concerned and not as far as developing more fully the fruitage of God's spirit is concerned. In both areas we have "plenty to do." Now is the time to push ahead because we know our "labor is not in vain." (1 Corinthians 15:58) Jehovah will sustain us, for of him David said: "Never will he allow the righteous one to totter." (Psalm 55:22) What a joy to know that Jehovah is permitting us personally to share in the grandest work imperfect human creatures have ever been assigned to do—and this despite our being made of dust!

20. (a) In what two aspects do we have "plenty to do in the work of the Lord"? (b) Why do we have reason for optimism?

REJOICE IN JEHOVAH!

"Always rejoice in the Lord. Once more I will say, Rejoice!"—PHILIPPIANS 4:4.

NOWADAYS, reasons for rejoicing may seem few and far between. Men of dust, even genuine Christians, encounter situations that cause sorrow—unemployment, ill health, the death of loved ones, personality problems, or opposition from unbelieving family members or former friends. So how are we to understand Paul's admonition, "Always rejoice"? In view of the unpleasant and trying circumstances with which all of us must contend, is this even possible? A discussion of the context of these words will help clarify the matter.

1. Why may we wonder what Paul meant when he said that Christians should always rejoice?

Rejoice—Why and How?

[2] *"Always rejoice in the Lord. Once more I will say, Rejoice!"* This may remind us of

2, 3. What is the importance of joy, as illustrated in the cases of Jesus and the ancient Israelites?

the words directed to the Israelites some 24 centuries ago: "The joy of Jehovah is your stronghold," or according to the *Moffatt* translation: "To rejoice in the Eternal is your strength." (Nehemiah 8:10) Joy provides strength and is like a stronghold into which one can withdraw for comfort and protection. Joy was instrumental in helping even the perfect man Jesus to endure. "For the joy that was set before him he endured a torture stake, despising shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Hebrews 12:2) Clearly, being able to rejoice in the face of difficulties is vital for salvation.

[3] Prior to entering the Promised Land, the Israelites had been commanded: "You must rejoice over all the good that Jehovah your God has given you and your household, you and the Levite and the alien resident who is in your midst." The consequences of failing to serve Jehovah with rejoicing would be severe. "All these maledictions will certainly come upon you and pursue you and overtake you until you have been annihilated . . . due to the fact that you did not serve Jehovah your God with rejoicing and joy of heart for the abundance of everything."—Deuteronomy 26:11; 28:45-47.

[4] It is imperative, therefore, that the anointed remnant of today and their "other sheep" companions rejoice! (John 10:16) Paul, by repeating his counsel, "once more I will say," stressed the importance of rejoicing over all the good that Jehovah has done for us. Do we? Or do we get so caught up in the everyday routine of life that we sometimes lose sight of our many reasons for rejoicing? Do problems pile up so high that they block our view of the Kingdom and its blessings? Do we allow other things—disobeying God's laws, ignoring divine principles, or neglecting Christian duties—to rob us of our joy?

4. Why might we fail to rejoice?

[5] *"Let your reasonableness become known to all men. The Lord is near."* (Philippians 4:5) An unreasonable person lacks balance. He may fail to care for his health properly, needlessly subjecting his body to undue tension or anxiety. Perhaps he has not learned to accept his limitations and to live accordingly. He may set his goals too high and then try to reach them regardless of the cost. Or he may use his limitations as an excuse for slowing down or slacking the hand. Lacking balance and being unreasonable, he finds it difficult to rejoice.

[6] Even if opposers view us as fanatics, fellow Christians should always be able to see our reasonableness. And they will if we are balanced and do not expect perfection either from ourselves or from others. Above all, we must refrain from imposing burdens on others that go beyond what God's Word demands. The apostle Paul said: "Not that we are the masters over your faith, but we are fellow workers for your joy." (2 Corinthians 1:24) As a former Pharisee, Paul well knew that rigid rules laid down and imposed by those in authority stifle joy, whereas helpful suggestions offered by fellow workers increase it. The fact that "the Lord is near" should remind the reasonable person that we are not 'to judge the house servant of another. To his own master he stands or falls.'—Romans 14:4.

[7] *"Do not be anxious over anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication along*

5. Why does an unreasonable person find it difficult to rejoice?

6. (a) What should fellow Christians see in us, and when only will this be the case? (b) How do Paul's words at 2 Corinthians 1:24 and Romans 14:4 help us to be reasonable?

7, 8. Why must Christians expect to have problems, yet how is it possible for them to continue rejoicing?

with thanksgiving let your petitions be made known to God." (Philippians 4:6) We are today experiencing the "critical times hard to deal with" of which Paul wrote. (2 Timothy 3:1-5) So Christians must expect to be faced with problems. Paul's words "always rejoice" do not rule out the possibility that a loyal Christian may have occasional bouts of despondency or discouragement. In Paul's own case, he realistically admitted: "We are pressed in every way, but not cramped beyond movement; we are perplexed, but not absolutely with no way out; we are persecuted, but not left in the lurch; we are thrown down, but not destroyed." (2 Corinthians 4:8, 9) A Christian's joy, however, mitigates and eventually overrides temporary periods of anxiety and sorrow. It imparts the necessary strength to keep pushing ahead, never losing sight of the many reasons for rejoicing.

[8] When problems arise, whatever their nature, the joyful Christian humbly begs for Jehovah's help by means of prayer. He does not give in to extreme anxiety. After doing what he himself reasonably can do to solve the problem, he leaves the outcome in Jehovah's hands in harmony with the invitation: "Throw your burden upon Jehovah himself, and he himself will sustain you." Meanwhile, the Christian continues to thank Jehovah for all His goodness. —Psalm 55:22; see also Matthew 6:25-34.

[9] *"The peace of God that excels all thought will guard your hearts and your mental powers by means of Christ Jesus."* (Philippians 4:7) A knowledge of Bible truth frees the Christian's mind of falsehood and helps him develop healthy thinking patterns. (2 Timothy 1:13) He is thus helped to avoid wrong or unwise behavior that could jeopardize peaceful relations with others. Instead of being frustrated by injustice and wickedness, he places his trust in Jehovah to solve mankind's problems through the Kingdom. Such peace of mind guards his heart, keeps his motives pure, and guides his thinking in the way of righteousness. Pure motives and right thinking, in turn, provide countless reasons for rejoicing, despite problems and pressures brought about by a chaotic world.

[10] *"Finally, brothers, whatever things are true, whatever things are of serious concern, whatever things are righteous, whatever things are chaste, whatever things are lovable, whatever things are well spoken of, whatever virtue there is and whatever praiseworthy thing there is, continue considering these things."* (Philippians 4:8) A Christian finds no pleasure in speaking or thinking about bad things. This automatically eliminates much of the entertainment the world supplies. No one can maintain Christian joy if he fills his mind and heart with lies, foolish jesting, and matters that are unrighteous, immoral, without virtue, hateful, and detestable. Plainly stated, no one can find true joy by filling his mind and heart with filth. In Satan's corrupt world, how upbuilding it is to know that Christians have so many good things to think about and discuss!

Countless Reasons for Rejoicing

[11] When speaking of reasons for rejoicing, let us not forget our international brotherhood. (1 Peter 2:17) While worldly national and ethnic groups express intense hatred

9. How does a knowledge of the truth impart peace of mind, and what good effect does this have upon a Christian?

10. True joy can be experienced only by speaking or thinking about what?

11. (a) What should never be taken for granted, and why not? (b) What effect did attendance at an international convention have on a delegate and his wife?

Russian and German Witnesses rejoice to be part of an international brotherhood

for one another, God's people draw closer together in love. Their unity is especially in evidence at international conventions. Of the one held in 1993 in Kiev, Ukraine, a delegate from the United States wrote: "The joyful tears, the beaming eyes, the constant flow of familylike hugs, and the greetings sent across the playing field by groups waving colorful umbrellas and handkerchiefs clearly spoke of theocratic unity. Our hearts swell with pride in what Jehovah has miraculously accomplished in the worldwide brotherhood. This has touched my wife and me deeply and has added new dimensions to our faith."

[12] How faith strengthening it is for Christians today to see Bible prophecies fulfilled before their very eyes! Consider, for example, the words of Isaiah 60:22: "The little one himself will become a thousand, and the small one a mighty nation. I myself, Jehovah, shall speed it up in its own time." At the Kingdom's birth in 1914, only 5,100—a little one—were actively preaching. But during the past five years, the size of the worldwide brotherhood has been increasing at the average rate of 5,628 newly baptized Witnesses each week! In 1993, a peak of 4,709,889 active ministers was reached. Just imagine! This means that "the little one" of 1914 is literally close to becoming "a thousand"!

[13] Since 1914 the Messianic King has gone forth subduing in the midst of his enemies. His rule has been supported by willing human followers who contribute time, strength, and money to carry on the worldwide preaching work as well as an international construction campaign. (Psalm 110:2, 3) Jehovah's Witnesses rejoice that monetary contributions are being made to see these activities through to completion, even though money is scarcely ever mentioned

12. *How is Isaiah* 60:22 being fulfilled before our very eyes?

13. (a) What has been happening since 1914? (b) How do Jehovah's Witnesses observe the principle of Paul's words at 2 Corinthians 9:7?

at their meetings.* (Compare 1 Chronicles 29:9.) True Christians do not have to be prodded into giving; they consider it a privilege to support their King to the extent their circumstances permit, each one "just as he has resolved in his heart, not grudgingly or under compulsion."—2 Corinthians 9:7.

[14] The foretold restoration of true worship among God's people has resulted in the creation of a spiritual paradise. Since 1919 it has progressively extended its borders. (Psalm 14:7; Isaiah 52:9, 10) The result? True Christians experience "exultation and rejoicing." (Isaiah 51:11) The resultant good fruitage is evidence of what God's holy spirit is capable of accomplishing by means of imperfect humans. All credit and honor go to Jehovah, but what greater privilege could there be than to become God's fellow worker? (1 Corinthians 3:9) Jehovah is powerful enough to cause the stones, if need be, to cry out the message of truth. Nevertheless, he has seen fit not to resort to this method but, rather, to motivate willing creatures made of dust to carry out his will.—Luke 19:40.

Sharing the truth with others is a cause for rejoicing

[15] Full of awe, Jehovah's servants now watch world events as these relate to outstanding Bible prophecies. The nations are trying hard—but in vain—to achieve a stable peace. Events are forcing them to call on the United Nations organization to act in the world's trouble spots. (Revelation 13:15-17) Meanwhile, God's people are already looking ahead with great anticipation to one of the most joyful events ever to take place, one that is getting nearer by the day.

*At conventions and once a month in congregations, a brief statement is read indicating the amount of voluntary contributions received as well as the expenses incurred. Occasionally letters are sent out advising how such donations are being used. Everyone is thus reminded of the financial situation of the worldwide work of Jehovah's Witnesses.

14. What condition among God's people has become apparent since 1919, giving them what reason for rejoicing?

15. (a) What modern events do we follow with interest? (b) To what event do we look forward with rejoicing?

"Let us rejoice and be overjoyed, and let us give him the glory, because the marriage of the Lamb has arrived and his wife has prepared herself."—Revelation 19:7.

Preaching—A Burden or a Joy?

16 *"The things that you learned as well as accepted and heard and saw in connection with me, practice these; and the God of peace will be with you."* (Philippians 4:9) By practicing what they have learned, Christians can expect to receive God's blessing. One of the most important things they have learned is the necessity of preaching the good news to others. Indeed, who could enjoy peace of mind or be joyful if he withheld information from honesthearted persons whose very lives depend upon hearing it?—Ezekiel 3: 17-21; 1 Corinthians 9:16; 1 Timothy 4:16.

17 What a joy it is to find sheeplike persons willing to learn about Jehovah! Indeed, those serving with the right motive will always find Kingdom service to be a source of joy. This is because the main reason for being a Witness of Jehovah is to praise His name and to uphold His position as Sovereign Ruler. (1 Chronicles 16:31) The person who recognizes this fact will rejoice even when people unwisely reject the good news he brings. He knows that preaching to unbelievers will one day come to an end; praising Jehovah's name will go on forever.

16. Illustrate how failing to practice what he has learned could rob a Christian of his joy.
17. Why should our preaching activity always be a source of joy?

How Would You Answer?

- ☐ Why, according to Nehemiah 8:10, should we rejoice?
- ☐ How do Deuteronomy 26:11 and 28:45-47 show the importance of rejoicing?
- ☐ How can Philippians 4:4-9 help us always to rejoice?
- ☐ What reason does the 1994 yeartext give us to rejoice?

18 True religion motivates those who practice it to do the things required by Jehovah, not because they have to, but because they want to. (Psalm 40:8; John 4:34) Many people find this difficult to understand. A lady once told a Witness calling on her: "You know, I must give you credit. I would certainly never go from house to house preaching about my religion as you are doing." With a smile the Witness replied: "I can understand how you feel. Before I became one of Jehovah's Witnesses, you could not have made me go to other people to talk about religion. But now I want to." The lady thought for a moment and then concluded: "Obviously your religion has something to offer that mine does not. Perhaps I should investigate."

19 The 1994 yeartext, prominently displayed in our Kingdom Halls, regularly reminds us: "Trust in Jehovah with all your heart." (Proverbs 3:5) Could there be a greater reason for rejoicing than being able to put our trust in Jehovah, our stronghold in whom we take refuge? Psalm 64:10 explains: "The righteous one will rejoice in Jehovah and will indeed take refuge in him." This is no time to waver or give up. Each passing month brings us closer to the reality of what servants of Jehovah have yearned to see since the days of Abel. Now is the time to trust in Jehovah with all our heart, knowing that never before have we had so many reasons to rejoice!

18. What motivates a Christian to do Jehovah's will?
19. Why is it now the time to rejoice as never before?

Beware of Boasting

TODAY many view boasting as a virtue. Showing off one's strengths, skills, and accomplishments has become fashionable. Some believe that boasting is necessary to achievement. Others feel that it raises one's self-esteem. Observes *Time* magazine: "The ideal of modesty, though hardly dead, has begun to seem almost quaint." Writer Jody Gaylin comments: "Unfortunately, unabashed boasting . . . is the latest fashion. Conversation with a friend or acquaintance has a new accompaniment: horn-tooting."

Role models have set the standard. You may have heard the words of a former boxing champion: "It ain't no accident that I'm the greatest man in the world at this time in history." The statement of a member of the music group the Beatles is also well-known: "We're more popular than Jesus Christ now." While some viewed such comments as having been said innocently, others saw those who uttered them as role models of self-promotion worthy to be followed.

The prevalence of boasting raises the question: Is it healthy to brag of one's own assets and abilities? It is natural, of course, to take pride in one's accomplishments and even to share these with close friends and relatives. But what of those who live by the saying, "If you've got it, flaunt it"? Further, what of those who, while not openly boasting, subtly make sure that others come to know of their strengths and achievements? Is such self-advertising healthy, even necessary, as some claim?

Effect on Relationships

Consider the effect that others' boasting has on you. For example, how do you respond to the following statements?

"The books I haven't written are better than the books other people have."—Well-known author.

"Had I been present at the creation, I would have given some useful hints for the better ordering of the universe."—Medieval king.

"There cannot be a God because, if there were one, I would not believe that I was not He."—19th-century philosopher.

Are you drawn to these individuals by their comments? Do you think you would enjoy their company? Likely not. As a rule, boasting—in earnest or even in jest—causes others to feel tense, annoyed, perhaps envious. This is the effect it had on the psalmist Asaph, who confessed: "I became envious of the boasters." (Psalm 73:3) Surely, none of us want to be the cause of bad feelings in our friends and associates! First Corinthians 13:4 states: "Love . . . does not brag." Godly love and sensitivity to others' feelings will move us to refrain from flaunting our supposed skills and assets.

When a person controls himself and speaks modestly, he makes others around him feel comfortable and good about themselves. This is a priceless ability. Perhaps British statesman Lord Chesterfield had this in mind when he advised his son: "Be wiser than other people if you can; but do not tell them so."

People do not have the same gifts. What comes with relative ease to one person is simply not another's strength. Love will move a person to deal sympathetically with those who are not gifted in areas where he has abilities. Likely, the other individual has gifts in other fields. The apostle Paul told us: "Through the undeserved kindness given to me I tell everyone there among you not to think more of himself than it is necessary to think; but to think so as to have a sound mind, each one as God has distributed to him a measure of faith." —Romans 12:3.

Boasting Stems From Weakness

While some may withdraw from braggarts, feeling inferior in their presence, others react differently. They conclude that boasters are insecure. Writer Frank Trippett explains why the person who blows his own horn may, ironically, lower his esteem in the eyes of others: "Everybody knows at heart that boasting usually signals some pathetic private weaknesses." Since many see right through the boaster's mask, is it not wiser to refrain from windy self-praise?

"But It's True!"

This is how some try to justify self-glorification. They feel that since they truly are gifted in certain respects, to pretend otherwise would be hypocritical.

But is their boasting true? Self-estimation tends to be subjective. What we perceive as an outstanding strength in ourselves may appear ordinary to others.

In Our Next Issue

Why Be Forgiving?

Take as a Pattern the Prophets of God

Do Not Let Loneliness Blight Your Life

The fact that a person feels compelled to show off his ability could even suggest that he is not so strong after all—not strong enough to stand on his own without advertisement. The Bible acknowledges the human tendency toward self-deception when it admonishes: "Let him that thinks he is standing beware that he does not fall." —1 Corinthians 10:12.

Even if a person is unusually talented in a particular area, does this justify bragging? No, because bragging glorifies humans, whereas any talents we have come from God. He should receive the glory. Why should we receive credit for something we were born with? (1 Corinthians 4:7) Besides, just as we have strengths, we also have weaknesses. Does honesty require that we attract attention to our faults and flaws? Few boasters seem to think so. King Herod Agrippa I may have been a truly gifted speaker. Yet his lack of modesty led to a very unpleasant death. That ugly incident reflects how distasteful conceit is to God, as it is also to many humans. —Acts 12:21-23.

Talents and strengths generally become known without undue self-advertisement. When others recognize and commend one's qualities or accomplishments, it reflects more graciously on the receiver. Proverbs 27:2 wisely says: "May a stranger, and not your own mouth, praise you; may a foreigner, and not your own lips, do so."

Needed for Accomplishment?

Some feel that confident self-promotion is necessary for achievement in today's competitive society. They worry that if they do not speak up and advertise their strengths, they will go unnoticed, unappreciated. Representative of their concern is this comment from *Vogue* magazine: "Where once we were taught that modesty is a virtue, now we're learning that reticence can be a handicap."

For those who wish to make progress by this world's standards, the concern may be a valid one. But the Christian's situation is different. He knows that God cares for and chooses to use the abilities of those who are humble, not haughty. Therefore, the Christian has no need to resort to egotistical tactics. True, an overconfident individual may gain temporary prestige by being forceful or manipulative. Yet in time he is exposed and humbled, even humiliated. It is as Jesus Christ stated: "Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted."—Matthew 23:12; Proverbs 8:13; Luke 9:48.

Advantages of Modesty

Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote: "Every man I meet is my superior in some way. In that, I learn of him." His comment is in agreement with the apostle Paul's divinely inspired exhortation that Christians do "nothing out of contentiousness or out of egotism, but with lowliness of mind considering that the others are superior." (Philippians 2:3) This modest viewpoint puts one in a position to learn from others.

So watch that your strength does not become your weakness. Do not detract from your abilities and accomplishments by boasting. Add to your virtues the quality of modesty. This is what truly raises one's esteem in the eyes of others. It helps one to enjoy better relationships with fellow humans and brings the approval of Jehovah God.—Micah 6:8; 2 Corinthians 10:18.

HAPPY IN A GENUINE WORLDWIDE BROTHERHOOD

AS TOLD BY WILLIE DAVIS

In 1934 the Great Depression was gripping the world, and the United States was in the throes of economic turmoil. Outside the Prospect Relief Station in Cleveland, Ohio, there was a struggle between a policeman and an avowed Communist. The policeman shot and killed the Communist and a bystander, my grandmother, Vinnie Williams.

THE Communists tried to turn these deaths into a racial incident, since my grandmother was black and the policeman was white. They distributed newsletters with titles such as "Racist Cleveland Police" and "Avenge These Killings." The Communists arranged and cared for my grandmother's funeral. I have a picture of the pallbearers—all of them white and all party members. Each has a clenched fist held high in the manner that was later adopted as the Black Power symbol.

When my grandmother died, her daughter was carrying me in her womb, and four months later I was born. I grew up with a speech impediment. I could not speak without stuttering, so my early schooling included speech therapy.

My parents separated when I was five, and my sister and I were reared by our mother. When I was ten, I began to deliver groceries after school to help with family expenses. Two years later I began working both before and after school, becoming the family's main wage earner. When Mother was hospitalized and needed a series of operations, I quit school and started working full-time.

Introduction to a Brotherhood

In 1944 one of Jehovah's Witnesses left the book *"The Truth Shall Make You Free"* with my cousin's wife, and I got involved in the Bible study that was started with her. That same year I began attending the Theocratic Ministry School in the Eastside Congregation. The school instructor, Albert Cradock, had the same speech problem that I had, but he had learned to control it. What an encouragement he was to me!

Our neighborhood was largely Italian, Polish, Hungarian, and Jewish, and the congregation was made up of people from these and other ethnic groups. My cousin's wife and I were among the first African Americans to associate with this otherwise white congregation, but the Witnesses never showed racial bias toward us. In fact, they regularly had me as a guest in their homes for meals.

In 1956, I moved to the southern part of the United States to serve where the need for ministers was greater. When I returned

north one summer for the district convention, many of the brothers in Cleveland looked me up and expressed warm interest in my activities. Their concern taught me a vital lesson: Always keep "an eye, not in personal interest upon just your own matters, but also in personal interest upon those of the others."—Philippians 2:4.

Expanded Full-Time Ministry

After serving three years in the full-time preaching work as a pioneer, in November 1959, I was invited to work at Brooklyn Bethel, the world headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses in New York. I was assigned to the Shipping Department. My department overseer, Klaus Jensen, and my roommate, William Hannan, both of them white, became spiritual fathers to me. Each had served nearly 40 years at Bethel by the time I arrived.

In the early 1960's, there were about 600 members of the Bethel family, and about 20 were African Americans. By then, the United States had begun to seethe with racial strife, and race relations were strained. Nevertheless, the Bible teaches that "God is not partial," and neither should we be. (Acts 10:34, 35) The spiritual discussions we had at the Bethel table each morning served to strengthen our determination to accept God's view on such matters.—Psalm 19:7.

While serving at Brooklyn Bethel I met Lois Ruffin, a pioneer from Richmond, Virginia, and we were married in 1964. Our determination was to remain in the full-time ministry, so after our wedding we returned to the southern part of the United States. First we served as special pioneers, and then in 1965, I was invited to take up the circuit work. For the next ten years, we visited congregations in the states of Kentucky, Texas, Louisiana, Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina, and Mississippi.

A Test for Our Brotherhood

Those were years of great change. Before our moving to the South, the races had been segregated. Blacks were forbidden by law to go to the same schools, eat at the same restaurants, sleep in the same hotels, shop at the same stores, or even drink from the same drinking fountains as whites. But in 1964 the United States Congress passed the Civil Rights Act that banned discrimination in public places, including transportation. So there was no longer any legal basis for racial segregation.

Therefore the question was, Would our brothers and sisters in all-black and all-white congregations integrate and show love and affection for one another or would pressure from the community and deep-seated feelings from the past cause them to resist integration? It was a challenge to heed the Scriptural command: "In brotherly love have tender affection for one another. In showing honor to one another take the lead."—Romans 12:10.

My grandmother's funeral

For as long as anyone could remember, the prevailing view, particularly in the South, had been that blacks were inferior. This view had been deeply ingrained in people's minds by practically every facet of society, including the churches. So it was not easy for some whites to view blacks as equals. Indeed, that was a time of testing for our brotherhood—for both blacks and whites.

Happily, on the whole, there was a wonderful response to the integration of our congregations. Centuries of carefully indoctrinated views of racial superiority were not quickly erased. Yet when integration was begun, it was received very well by our brothers, most of whom rejoiced to be able to meet together.

Interestingly, even non-Witnesses often went along with the integration of our congregations. For example, in Lanett, Alabama, neighbors near the Kingdom Hall were asked if they objected to blacks coming to the meetings. An elderly white lady shook a black brother's hand, saying: "You come here to our neighborhood and worship your God as you like!"

Faithful Brothers in Ethiopia

In 1974 we were delighted to receive five and a half months of missionary training at the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead in New York City. We were assigned then to the African country of Ethiopia. Haile Selassie, the emperor, had just been deposed and placed under house arrest. Since our preaching work was under ban, we appreciated the warm closeness of our Christian brotherhood.

We lived and served with many of those who later were imprisoned because of their adherence to true worship. Some of our dear friends were even executed. Adera Teshome was my fellow elder in a congregation in Ethiopia's capital, Addis Ababa.* After three years in prison, he was executed. Naturally, his wife was deeply saddened. What a pleasure years later to see her radiating joy as she serves as a pioneer!

Worku Abebe, another faithful brother, was sentenced to death eight times.* But he was never intimidated! When I last saw him, he showed me his ears that prison guards had smashed with rifle butts. He jokingly said that he had rifle butts for breakfast, lunch, and supper. Though he has since died, he is still lovingly remembered by the brothers.

Hailu Yemiru is another brother I remember fondly.* He showed exemplary love for his wife. She was arrested, but since she was pregnant and would soon give birth, Hailu asked the prison authorities if he could take her place in jail. Later, when he would not compromise his faith, he was executed.—John 15:12, 13; Ephesians 5:28.

Because of the deteriorating political situation in Ethiopia, we moved to Kenya in 1976. For seven years we served in the traveling work, visiting brothers in many countries of East Africa—including Kenya, Ethiopia, Sudan, the Seychelles, Uganda,

* The pictures of Adera Teshome and Hailu Yemiru appear on page 177 of the *1992 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses;* the experience of Worku Abebe is told on pages 178-81.

Tutsi and Hutu Witnesses work together in peace

With my wife, Lois

and Tanzania. I also traveled to Burundi and Rwanda on several occasions as part of a delegation to talk with officials regarding legal registration of our work in those countries.

It was a pleasure to return to Ethiopia in January 1992 to attend the first district convention held there after the removal of the ban on our work. Many of the more than 7,000 present did not know one another, since the brothers previously had met only in small groups. Each day of the convention, most were present two hours before the program began and remained late into the evening, enjoying our loving brotherhood.

Tribalism Defeated

For centuries tribalism has been rampant in Africa. In Burundi and Rwanda, for example, the major ethnic groups, the Hutu and the Tutsi, have long hated each other. Since these countries gained independence from Belgium in 1962, members of the two ethnic groups have periodically slaughtered one another by the thousands. What a delight, therefore, to see members of these ethnic groups who have become Jehovah's Witnesses work together in peace! The genuine love they show for one another has encouraged many others to listen to Bible truths.

Similarly, ethnic groups in Kenya have had their differences. What a contrast there is within the Christian brotherhood of Jehovah's people in Kenya! You can see people of different ethnic groups unitedly worshiping at the Kingdom Halls. It has been my pleasure to see many of these put away their tribal hatreds and show genuine love for their brothers and sisters of other ethnic groups.

Happy for Our Brotherhood

As I look back over 50 years of association with God's organization, gratitude to Jehovah and his Son, Jesus Christ, fills my heart. It has truly been amazing to observe what they have brought about on earth! No, conditions have not always been perfect among God's people, nor are they today. But it cannot be expected that hundreds of years of racist teachings by Satan's world can be erased overnight. After all, we are still imperfect.—Psalm 51:5.

As I compare Jehovah's organization with the world, my heart swells in appreciation for our genuine, worldwide brotherhood. I still remember with fondness those brothers in Cleveland, all white, who nurtured me in the truth. And as I saw our brothers in the southern United States, both whites and blacks, replace their feelings of bias with heartfelt brotherly love, my heart rejoiced. Then, going to Africa and seeing firsthand how Jehovah's Word can erase tribal hatreds has made me appreciate even more our worldwide brotherhood.

Indeed, King David of old expressed it well when he said: "Look! How good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity!"—Psalm 133:1.

KINGDOM PROCLAIMERS REPORT

"Oppose the Devil, and He Will Flee From You"

IN THE first century, a group of "magical arts" devotees in Ephesus responded to the Christian message by publicly burning their books of magic. (Acts 19:19) The calculated cost of these books was 50,000 pieces of silver. If the Bible account refers to the denarius, a Roman silver coin, it would have amounted to at least $37,000!

Today there are many who at one time owned literature dealing with the occult but who displayed a determination similar to that of the ancient Ephesians. Consider the following experience from Canada.

About five years ago, one of Jehovah's Witnesses was preaching from house to house when at one door a woman named Nora literally pulled her into the house. Over many long years of spiritual search, Nora had collected hundreds of religious and spiritistic books, but she wanted to know what the Bible had to say about the hope for the dead. The Witness offered her the tract *What Hope for Dead Loved Ones?* Nora's questions were answered, and she accepted subscriptions for the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines.

Later she moved away and lost contact with Jehovah's Witnesses. However, she continued to receive the magazines in the mail at her new address. She also ordered some of the Bible-based publications mentioned in the magazines. After some time, one of Jehovah's Witnesses came to her door. Impressed that the Witness went directly to the Bible when answering questions, Nora welcomed her and invited her to come back for further discussions.

The Witness, however, found it difficult to contact Nora again. Repeated visits were made at different times of the day and at different times of the week without success. In time, though, her persistence paid off, and she reaped good results. A regular Bible study was started, which at Nora's insistence often was held three times a week. The things she was learning motivated her to talk to friends and family members, resulting in three of them requesting Bible studies with Jehovah's Witnesses.

Through her study Nora came to appreciate that there are many false religions and false prophets but only one road leading to life. For many years she had been looking for answers to her questions in false religions, but after learning what the Bible has to say about demons, she acted like the ancient Ephesians mentioned at Acts 19:19. She cleaned out her library and, over the course of several days, destroyed more than a thousand books dealing with the occult and false religious teachings. Among the publications destroyed, one set of four books was worth more than $800!

Evidently displeased with Nora's actions, the demons harassed her for about two weeks. However, these wicked spirits were not able to dissuade her from continuing her Bible study and her association with Jehovah's modern-day organization.

Such experiences well illustrate the truth of the Bible's words: "Subject yourselves, therefore, to God; but oppose the Devil, and he will flee from you."—James 4:7.

Do Restrictions Discourage You?

RESTRICTIONS! No one really likes them; yet all of us have to put up with them to some extent. Are you, though, sometimes discouraged because your life seems to be too limited? Perhaps you would feel better if you changed your point of view. Instead of fretting about what you cannot do, why not take the fullest advantage of whatever freedoms you do enjoy?

For example, many who are economically poor wish they were wealthy. However, while poverty limits what we can do in this system of things, the important things in life are available to all. Poor people as well as rich fall in love, get married, raise children, enjoy good friendships, and so forth. More important, poor people as well as rich know Jehovah and look forward to the promised new world. Poor people as well as rich progress in Christian wisdom and knowledge, which are better than riches. (Proverbs 2:1-9; Ecclesiastes 7:12) All—rich and poor—can make an excellent name for themselves with Jehovah. (Ecclesiastes 7:1) In Paul's day the Christian congregation was largely made up of people of lowly station—some of them slaves—who made wise use of whatever freedom their circumstances permitted.—1 Corinthians 1:26-29.

Scriptural Headship

In a Christian marriage, the wife is subject to her husband—an arrangement designed to benefit the whole family. (Ephesians 5:22-24) Should a wife feel demeaned because of this? By no means. Husband and wife are a team. The man's headship, when handled in a Christlike manner, puts relatively few restrictions on his wife and leaves her many opportunities to realize her potential. (Ephesians 5:25, 31) The "capable wife" of Proverbs chapter 31 was occupied with many interesting and challenging undertakings. Clearly, subjection to her husband was not frustrating for her. —Proverbs 31:10-29.

Similarly, there is no provision for a woman to take the lead over qualified men in the Christian congregation. (1 Corinthians 14:34; 1 Timothy 2:11, 12) Should Christian women chafe under that restriction? No. Most are grateful to see that aspect of Christian service cared for in a theocratic manner. They are happy to benefit from the shepherding and teaching of appointed elders and concern themselves with the vital work of preaching and making disciples. (Matthew 24:14; 28:19, 20) Christian women accomplish much in this field, and this brings them honor in the sight of Jehovah God.—Psalm 68:11; Proverbs 3:35.

Restrictions on the Young

The young also at times complain that their life is too restricted, often because they are under the authority of their parents. Yet this too is Scriptural. (Ephesians

Do you feel that your parents fence you in?

6:1) Instead of being irritated by restrictions their parents impose on them, wise young Christians focus on enjoying the freedoms they do have—including, usually, freedom from weighty responsibilities. Thus they can take advantage of their youthful strength and circumstances to prepare themselves for adult life.

A former circuit overseer in Brazil well remembers a 12-year-old boy in a small isolated group who was restricted in what he could do. The one in charge of the records was busy in secular work and could not give much attention to the group, but he arranged for this young man to help him. He learned where all the forms were and was always around to give a hand. His interest was encouraging, and he was a faithful companion in the field service. That young man is now an appointed elder.

There are many situations that may limit a person's freedom. Some are restricted by sickness. Some live in divided households and find their freedom limited by the demands of an unbelieving mate. While those living with restrictions may wish things were different, they can still live satisfying lives. This magazine has carried many accounts of such individuals who have been most encouraging to others because they rely on Jehovah and make the most of their circumstances.

Speaking of a common situation in his own day, the apostle Paul said: "Were you called when a slave? Do not let it worry you; but if you can also become free, rather seize the opportunity." (1 Corinthians 7:21) What a balanced view! Some situations change. Young people grow up. Opposed mates sometimes accept the truth. Economic situations have been known to improve. Sick people may get better. In other cases, things may not change until Jehovah's new world is here. Nevertheless, what is to be gained from fretting because one cannot do what others can?

Have you ever watched birds soaring in the sky above the earth and admired the beauty and freedom of their movements? Perhaps you wished that you could fly like that. Well, you cannot and you never will be able to fly as the birds do! But likely you do not complain. Rather, you rejoice in your God-given abilities. You manage very well walking around on the surface of the earth. Similarly, whatever our situation in life, if we concentrate on what we *can* do rather than fret about what we *cannot* do, life will be satisfying, and we will find joy in Jehovah's service.—Psalm 126:5, 6.

Appreciate Your Sacred Service

TO ACHIEVE any worthwhile goal, we must be prepared to pay a price. To become a doctor takes years of study and determination, as well as money. A successful gymnast has spent most of his youth working on progressively more difficult routines in a relentless pursuit of perfection. A skilled pianist can similarly look back on years of dedicated practice.

There is, however, one goal that brings returns far in excess of any price that has to be paid. What is that? It is the privilege of being a servant of the Most High, Jehovah God. Whatever sacrifices we make in the way of time, money, or energy, the privilege of rendering sacred service to our Creator brings rewards beyond compare. The words of the apostle Paul are true: "Godly devotion is beneficial for all things, as it holds promise of the life now and that which is to come." (1 Timothy 4:8) Let us see how that is true.

When We First Learn About God

Most who respond favorably to the good news and begin to study the Bible likely do not realize the extent of the changes that will result in their lives. First, the new Bible student may lose some friends who cannot understand why he no longer goes along with them in pursuits he now recognizes to be God-dishonoring. (1 Peter 4:4) Some may experience family opposition and may be hurt to see those they love manifest a dislike, even a hatred, for Jehovah. (Matthew 10:36) That can be a difficult price to pay.

At work or at school, there will also be a price to pay. The new Bible student will in time stop sharing in worldly parties and other celebrations. He will no longer listen to the unclean talk of his workmates or schoolmates, nor will he swap obscene jokes with them. Rather, he will try to put into practice the admonition found at Ephesians 5:3, 4: "Let fornication and uncleanness of every sort or greediness not even be mentioned among you, just as it befits holy people; neither shameful conduct nor foolish talking nor obscene jesting, things which are not becoming, but rather the giving of thanks."

Such changes may make the Bible student an outsider. That can be difficult, particularly for a youth still in school. Having one holiday after another to contend with, as well as anti-God teachings, such as evolution, and constant pressure to go along with the crowd, young Christians must put up a constant fight for the faith. Following God's ways will make them different and may result in ridicule from classmates and teachers. This is particularly difficult to accept during the sensitive teen years, but God's approval is worth that price.

Are They Really Sacrifices?

Other things that at first appear to be sacrifices turn out to be blessings. Some have to give up the tobacco habit. (2 Corinthians 7:1) This can be a struggle, but what a blessing when that obnoxious vice is finally overcome! The same can be said about overcoming addiction to other drugs or to alcohol. How much better life is without such destructive habits! Others have to get their marital affairs straightened out. Those living together without the benefit of marriage must either marry or cease living together. (Hebrews 13:4) Those living with

a number of wives must retain only the wife of their youth. (Proverbs 5:18) Such adjustments involve sacrifice, but they bring peace to the home.

Think of the Rewards

Indeed, anyone who obeys Jehovah's laws truly benefits. For the first time in his life, the Bible student starts to address his Creator by His name, Jehovah. (Psalm 83:18) The student comes to love Jehovah as he learns about the wonderful things He has done and will yet do for mankind. In countries where fear of the dead is common, he loses this superstitious fear, knowing that the dead are asleep, awaiting a resurrection. (Ecclesiastes 9:5, 10) And what a relief to realize that Jehovah does not torture people forever in hell! Yes, the truth really does set him free.—John 8:32.

As the student conforms his life more and more to Jehovah's standards, he gains a clean conscience and self-respect. Learning to live as a true Christian helps him to care better for his family, which brings great contentment and joy. Then there is the attending of meetings at the Kingdom Hall. What a delightful experience! Here are people who really practice the warm love that the Bible says should identify God's people. (Psalm 133:1; John 13:35) Their speech is clean and upbuilding as they speak "the magnificent things of God." (Acts 2:11) Yes, coming into contact with "the whole association of brothers" is a source of happiness. (1 Peter 2:17) Such fine fellowship helps the Bible student to "put on the new personality which was created according to God's will in true righteousness and loyalty."—Ephesians 4:24.

The Step of Dedication

As an individual progresses in knowledge, he is eventually motivated by love for Jehovah to dedicate his life to him and symbolize this dedication by water baptism. (Matthew 28:19, 20) Jesus' counsel is that before taking this step, his disciples count the cost. (Luke 14:28) Remember, a dedicated Christian puts Jehovah's will first and turns his back on the things of the flesh. He works hard to give up "the works of the flesh" and cultivate "the fruitage of the spirit." (Galatians 5:19-24) The counsel found at Romans 12:2 now plays a fuller role in his life: "Quit being fashioned after this system of things, but be transformed by making your mind over, that you may prove to yourselves the good and acceptable and perfect will of God." Thus, a dedicated Christian lives his life with a renewed sense of purpose.

Consider, though, what he receives. For one thing, he is now in a personal relationship with the Creator of the universe. He is declared righteous with a view to being a friend of God! (James 2:23) With much deeper meaning, he addresses God as "our Father in the heavens." (Matthew 6:9) Another blessing for the newly dedicated one is knowing that life really does have a purpose and that he is living his life in harmony with that purpose. (Ecclesiastes 12:13) Following the lead of Jesus, he can prove the Devil a liar by remaining faithful. What joy that brings to Jehovah's heart!—Proverbs 27:11.

Of course, as a Christian endures in the path of faithfulness, there are further sacrifices to be made. It takes time to engage in meaningful personal and congregation study of God's Word. (Psalm 1:1-3; Hebrews 10:25) Time for the field ministry has to be bought out from other activities. (Ephesians 5:16) Time and effort are also required to attend meetings of Jehovah's Witnesses and to travel to their assem-

blies and conventions. It may call for self-sacrifice to share in financing the Kingdom Hall and the worldwide preaching work. However, as millions of Christians can testify, wholeheartedly participating in such things brings happiness. Jesus said: "There is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving."—Acts 20:35.

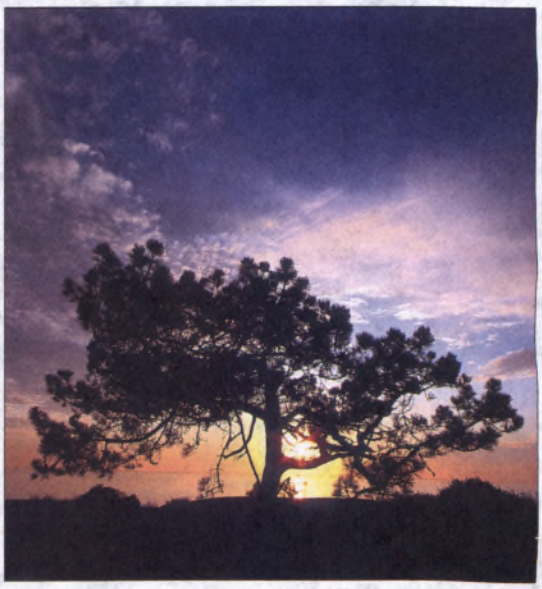
The rewards of supporting Jehovah's work come to far outweigh the costs. As we grow in maturity, our ministry becomes more fruitful and joyous. Indeed, nothing can bring as much satisfaction as teaching someone else Bible truth and seeing that one take up the worship of Jehovah. And if the new worshiper is a family member, perhaps a child that has been trained "in the discipline and mental-regulating of Jehovah," that brings a special joy. (Ephesians 6:4) We see God's rich blessings on our efforts to be his "fellow workers."—1 Corinthians 3:9.

Other Rewards for Faithful Service

True, we will have problems as long as this system of things lasts. Likely, the problems will become more severe as the Devil's time grows shorter. We may have to suffer persecution or endure temptation. But the knowledge that God is with us comforts us and gives us the strength to endure. (1 Corinthians 10:13; 2 Timothy 3:12) Some fellow Christians have endured years of harsh treatment, but they persevere because of their love for God. Those who successfully endure trials of various kinds feel as the apostles did when they were flogged and then released. Acts 5:41 relates: "These, therefore, went their way from before the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy to be dishonored in behalf of his name."

The reward for endurance far outweighs the cost even now. But remember, godly devotion "holds promise" not only of "the life now" but also of "that which is to come." (1 Timothy 4:8) How rich the prospects of one who endures! If you are faithful, you will survive the great tribulation that marks the end of this system of things. Or if you die ahead of that epoch-making event, you will be resurrected into the new world that will follow. (Daniel 12:1; John 11:23-25) Think of the feeling of exultation you will then have when you are able to say: "With Jehovah's help, I made it!" How thrilling to inherit a share in that earth, which "will certainly be filled with the knowledge of Jehovah as the waters are covering the very sea."—Isaiah 11:9.

Yes, it costs something to serve God. But compared with the rewards, the cost is minimal. (Philippians 3:7, 8) In view of all that God does for his servants now and will do in the future, we echo the words of the psalmist: "What shall I repay to Jehovah for all his benefits to me?"—Psalm 116:12.



"I am wonderfully made"

"WHERE did I come from?" This is a question most young children ask at one time or another. When the children grow up, their question often becomes more profound: "Where did life come from?" This question has been discussed for thousands of years, and currently many scientists view evolution as the most reasonable answer to the puzzle of the origin of life. Basically, the evolutionist's explanation is that life arose by chance.

About 3,000 years ago, King David wrote: "In a fear-inspiring way I am wonderfully made." (Psalm 139:14) The more we learn about life, the more truth we see in those words. Indeed, physicist Fred Hoyle wrote: "As biochemists discover more and more about the awesome complexity of life, it is apparent that the chances of it originating by accident are so minute that they can be completely ruled out. Life cannot have arisen by chance."

So what *is* the origin of life? The two opening articles of this magazine discuss that question.