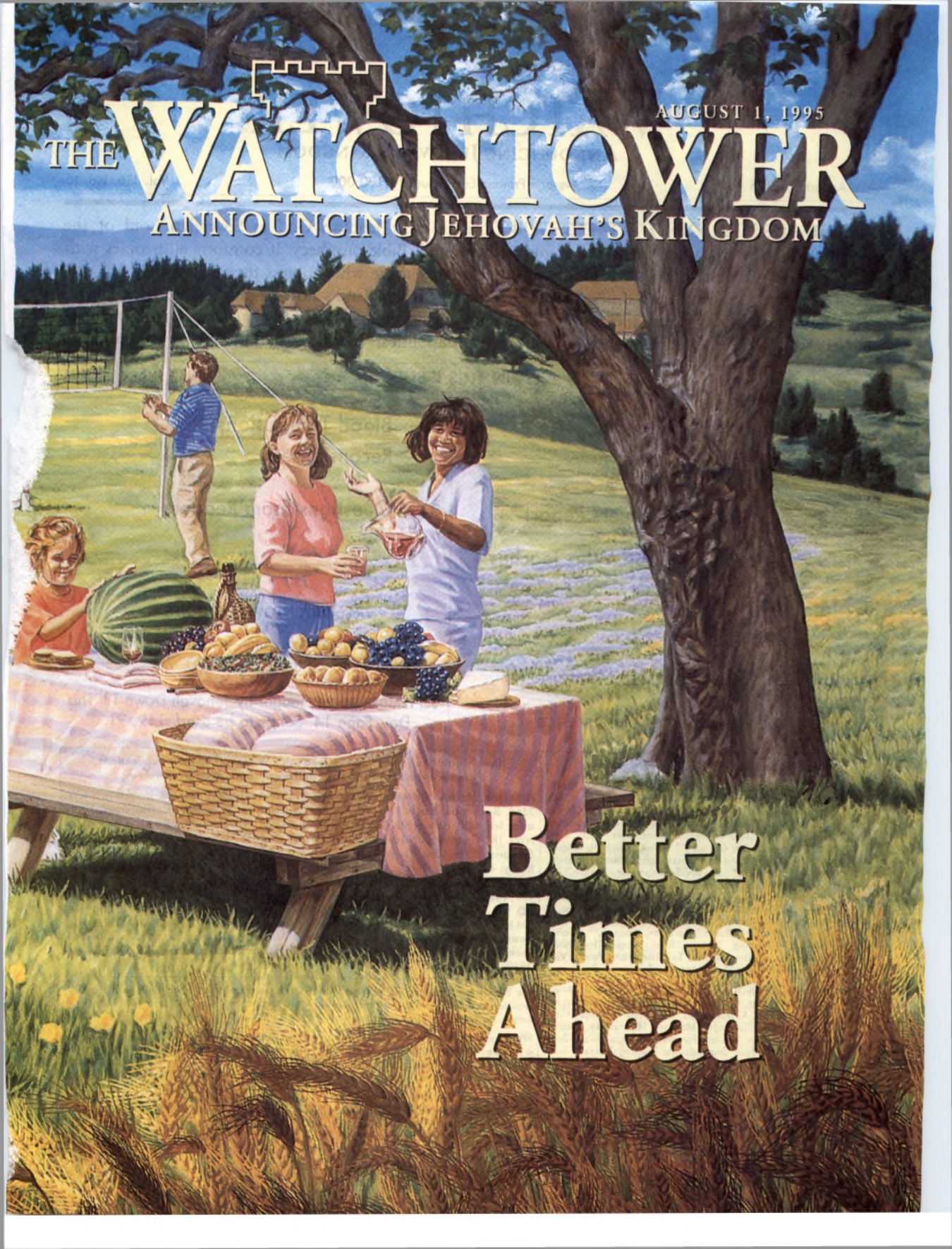
THE WATCHTOWER
AUGUST 1, 1995
ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM
Better Times Ahead

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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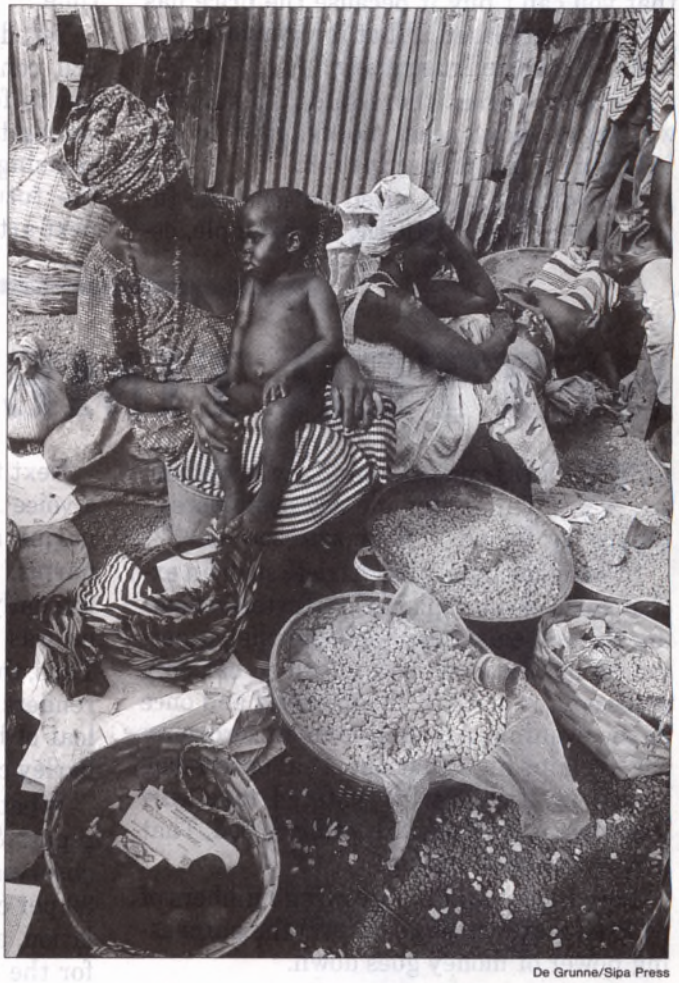
TIMES HAVE CHANGED

WHAT a joy it must have been to live in ancient Israel under the glorious reign of faithful King Solomon! It was an era of peace, prosperity, and happiness. During the time that Solomon stood firm for true worship, Jehovah blessed the nation abundantly. To King Solomon, God gave not only great wealth but also "a wise and understanding heart" in order for Solomon to rule in righteousness and love. (1 Kings 3:12) States the Bible: "All the kings of the earth were seeking the face of Solomon to hear his wisdom, which the true God had put in his heart." —2 Chronicles 9:23.

To the people, Jehovah gave security, peace, and an abundance of good things. God's Word says: "Judah and Israel were many, like the grains of sand that are by the sea for multitude, eating and drinking and rejoicing." Both literally and figuratively, the people "continued to dwell in security, everyone under his own vine and under his own fig tree . . . all the days of Solomon."—1 Kings 4:20, 25.

Times have changed. Life today is a far cry from those happy days of long ago. Unlike in the time of Solomon, a major problem today is poverty. Even in wealthy nations, there is poverty. For example, in both the United States and the European Union, almost 15 percent of the people live in poverty, notes the United Nations Development Program.



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Concerning the global picture, *The State of the World's Children 1994,* a report by UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund), observes that one fifth of the world's population lives in absolute poverty, adding that life for most of the world's poor is "becoming increasingly hard and desperate."

In some countries, skyrocketing inflation adds to the difficulties of the poor. Said a woman in one African land: "You see

something at the market, and you say, 'OK, let me go home and get money to buy it.' You get back an hour later only to be told that you can't buy it because the price has just been increased. What is a person going to do? It's quite frustrating."

Another woman there said: 'To survive, we forget about other needs. How to get food is now our preoccupation.'

According to the United Nations, the future looks bleak. UNICEF, for example, estimates that if present population trends continue, the number of poor people worldwide will quadruple "within a single lifetime."

Yet, despite worsening economic and social conditions, God's servants have reason to feel optimistic. Although they live among those who view the future with increasing pessimism, God's servants look to the future with joy and confidence. The next article will explore the reasons why.

BETTER TIMES AHEAD

"WE DO one-zero-one," says a woman. "Things for me are even worse," replies her friend. "I'm on zero-zero-one."

In some parts of West Africa, such an exchange needs no explanation. Instead of eating three meals a day (one-one-one), a person on one-zero-one can afford to eat only twice a day—once in the morning and once in the evening. A young man on zero-zero-one explains his situation: "I eat once a day. I stuff my fridge with water. I take *gari* [cassava] at night before going to bed. That is how I've been coping."

Such is the plight of growing numbers of people today. Prices go up, and the purchasing power of money goes down.

Food Shortages Foretold

In a series of visions given to the apostle John, God foretold the difficult conditions that many face today. Among them would be a shortage of food. John relates: "I saw, and, look! a black horse; and the one seated upon it had a pair of scales in his hand." (Revelation 6:5) This sinister horse and rider picture famine—food would be so scarce it would be rationed out on scales.

Next the apostle John says: "And I heard a voice . . . say: 'A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius.'" In John's day, a quart of wheat was the daily ration for a soldier, and a denarius was the money paid for a day's work. Thus, the translation by Richard Weymouth renders the verse: "A whole day's wage for a loaf of bread, a whole day's wage for three barley cakes."—Revelation 6:6.

What is a whole day's wage today? The report *State of World Population, 1994* observes: "Some 1.1 billion people, about 30 per cent of the developing world's population, are living on about $1 a day." Thus, for the world's poor, a day's wage literally buys a loaf of bread, more or less.

This, of course, is no surprise to those who are very poor. "Bread!" exclaimed one man. "Who eats bread? Nowadays bread is a luxury food!"

Ironically, there is no shortage of food. According to UN sources, during the past ten years, the world's food production increased by 24 percent, which was more than the growth of the world's population. How-

ever, this increase in food was not enjoyed by all. In Africa, for example, food production actually fell by 5 percent, while the population grew by 34 percent. So despite an overall abundance of food globally, food shortages continue in many countries.

Food shortage means higher prices. Lack of employment, low wages, and rising inflation make it more difficult to find the money to buy what is available. States the *Human Development Report 1994:* "People go hungry not because food is unavailable —but because they cannot afford it."

Increasingly, there is hopelessness, frustration, and despair. "People have a feeling that today is bad, but tomorrow will be worse," said Glory, who lives in West Africa. Another woman said: "People feel that they are approaching a catastrophe. They feel that the day will come when there will be nothing left in the market."

Jehovah Cared for His Servants in the Past

Servants of God know that Jehovah rewards his faithful ones by supplying their needs and by giving them strength to cope with difficult conditions. Such confidence in God's ability to provide is, in fact, an essential part of their faith. The apostle Paul wrote: "He that approaches God must believe that he is and that he becomes the rewarder of those earnestly seeking him." —Hebrews 11:6.

Jehovah has always cared for his faithful servants. During a three-and-a-half-year drought, Jehovah provided food for the prophet Elijah. Initially, God commanded ravens to bring Elijah bread and meat. (1 Kings 17:2-6) Later, Jehovah miraculously sustained the flour and oil supply of a widow who provided food for Elijah. (1 Kings 17:8-16) During the same famine, despite intense religious persecution brought upon them by wicked Queen Jezebel, Jehovah also saw to it that his prophets were provided with bread and water. —1 Kings 18:13.

Later, when the king of Babylon laid siege to apostate Jerusalem, people had to "eat bread by weight and in anxious care." (Ezekiel 4:16) The situation became so desperate that some women ate the flesh of their own children. (Lamentations 2:20) Yet, even though the prophet Jeremiah was in custody because of his preaching, Jehovah saw to it that "there was a giving of a round loaf of bread to [Jeremiah] daily from the street of the bakers, until all the bread was exhausted from the city."—Jeremiah 37:21.

Did Jehovah forget Jeremiah when the supply of bread became exhausted? Apparently not, for when the city fell to the Babylonians, Jeremiah was given 'a food allowance and a present and let go.'—Jeremiah 40:5, 6; see also Psalm 37:25.

God Supports His Servants Today

Just as Jehovah sustained his servants in past generations, so he does today, caring for them both materially and spiritually. Consider, for example, the experience of Lamitunde, who lives in West Africa. He relates: "I used to own a fairly large poultry farm. One day, armed robbers came to the farm and stole most of the chickens, the standby generator, and the money we had. Shortly after that, the few chickens left died from disease. That ruined my poultry business. For two years I tried without success to find a job. Things were really tough, but Jehovah sustained us.

"What helped me to cope with the hard times was my recognizing that Jehovah allows things to happen to us to refine us. My wife and I kept up our routine of family Bible study, and this really helped us. Prayer

was also a great source of strength. Sometimes I did not feel like praying, but when I did pray, I felt better.

"During that difficult period, I learned the value of meditating on the Scriptures. I used to think a lot about Psalm 23, which speaks of Jehovah as our Shepherd. Another scripture that encouraged me was Philippians 4:6, 7, which refers to 'the peace of God that excels all thought.' Another passage that strengthened me was 1 Peter 5:6, 7, which says: 'Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time; while you throw all your anxiety upon him, because he cares for you.' All these verses helped me during those difficult times. When you meditate, you are able to replace the things in your mind that cause depression.

"Now I am employed again, but to be honest, it is not that things are easy. Just as the Bible foretold at 2 Timothy 3:1-5, we are living in 'the last days,' marked by 'critical times hard to deal with.' We cannot change what the scripture says. So I don't expect life to be easy. Yet, I feel that Jehovah's spirit is helping me to cope."

Despite the critical times we are living in, those who trust in Jehovah and his King-Son, Christ Jesus, will not be disappointed. (Romans 10:11) Jesus himself assures us: "On this account I say to you: Stop being anxious about your souls as to what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your bodies as to what you will wear. Does not the soul mean more than food and the body than clothing? Observe intently the birds of heaven, because they do not sow seed or reap or gather into storehouses; still your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth more than they are? Who of you by being anxious can add one cubit to his life span? Also, on the matter of clothing, why are you anxious?" —Matthew 6:25-28.

Those certainly are heart-searching questions in these critical times. But Jesus continued with these reassuring words: "Take a lesson from the lilies of the field, how they are growing; they do not toil, nor do they spin; but I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed as one of these. If, now, God thus clothes the vegetation of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much rather clothe you, you with little faith? So never be anxious and say, 'What are we to eat?' or, 'What are we to drink?' or, 'What are we to put on?' For all these are the things the nations are eagerly pursuing. For your heavenly Father knows you need all these things. Keep on, then, seeking first the kingdom and his righteousness, and all these other things will be added to you." —Matthew 6:28-33.

Better Times Ahead

There is every indication that in many parts of the world, the deteriorating economic and social conditions will continue to worsen. Yet, God's people recognize that these conditions are temporary. The glorious rule of King Solomon foreshadowed the righteous rulership of a King greater than Solomon who will rule over the entire earth. (Matthew 12:42) That King is Christ Jesus, the "King of kings and Lord of lords." —Revelation 19:16.

Psalm 72, which had initial fulfillment regarding King Solomon, describes the magnificent rule of Jesus Christ. Consider some of the marvelous things it foretells concerning earth's future under Christ as King.

Peaceful Conditions Worldwide: "In his days the righteous one will sprout, and the abundance of peace until the moon is no

more. And he will have subjects from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth."—Psalm 72:7, 8.

Concern for the Lowly: "He will deliver the poor one crying for help, also the afflicted one and whoever has no helper. He will feel sorry for the lowly one and the poor one, and the souls of the poor ones he will save. From oppression and from violence he will redeem their soul, and their blood will be precious in his eyes."—Psalm 72:12-14.

An Abundance of Food: "There will come to be plenty of grain on the earth; on the top of the mountains there will be an overflow."—Psalm 72:16.

Jehovah's Glory to Fill the Earth: "Blessed be Jehovah God, Israel's God, who alone is doing wonderful works. And blessed be his glorious name to time indefinite, and let his glory fill the whole earth."—Psalm 72:18, 19.

So there truly are better times ahead.

KINGDOM PROCLAIMERS REPORT

Reaching Greenland's Remote Settlements

FOR many decades Jehovah's Witnesses have used the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines in the preaching of the good news. These journals exalt the wisdom of Jehovah as expressed in his Word, the Bible. They keep watch on world events that relate to Bible prophecy, and they apply the reasonable counsel of the Bible to contemporary problems.—James 3:17.

In 1994, Witnesses in Greenland made a special effort to offer *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* to as many people as possible. During the summer, they made arrangements to visit some of the most remote settlements in Greenland. A group of Kingdom proclaimers traveled by boat more than 2,500 miles up the west coast to Qaanaaq (Thule), reaching some of the northernmost communities on the globe. Their trip took seven weeks. On the east coast, a Witness couple reached the settlement in Ittoqqortoormiit and for the first time covered it systematically with the good news.

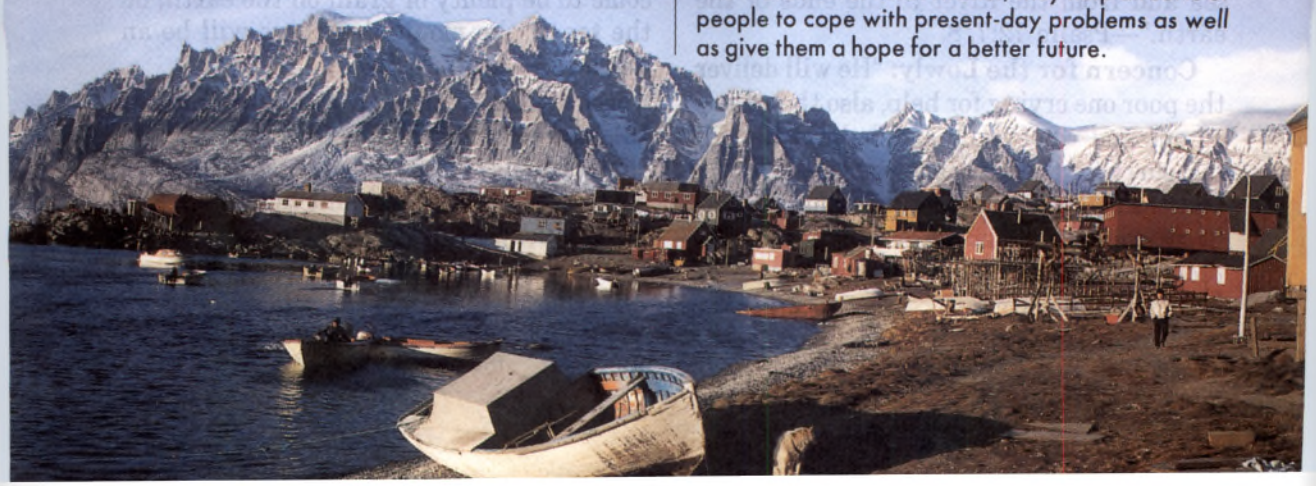
Earlier that year, during the month of April, 7,513 copies of *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* were placed with the people of Greenland. That means that, on an average, each of the 127 Kingdom publishers placed 59 magazines—1 magazine for every 7 inhabitants. That month, *Awake!* featured a series of articles under the cover title "Breast Cancer—Every Woman's Fear." One Witness, who placed 140 magazines, left copies of that *Awake!* with a television reporter.

A couple of days later, a television news program featured the articles on breast cancer. The reporter displayed the magazine on camera, showing several pages as she praised the quality of the Greenlandic translation. She also highlighted the practical suggestions given by *Awake!* as preventive health care.

The Witness who originally placed the magazines with the reporter was interviewed on the same TV program. She answered a number of questions about Jehovah's Witnesses and spoke about the wide distribution of the magazines that month. She also commented on the practical wisdom found in the Bible and pointed out that such reasonable counsel can help us cope with today's problems.

The program concluded with an interview of the president of the Greenlandic Cancer Society. She noted that she had never seen such fine and informative material on this subject in her language. Then she invited all those interested in the subject of breast cancer to read the *Awake!* articles. She said that there was good reason to be grateful to Jehovah's Witnesses for their initiative.

As in Greenland, Jehovah's Witnesses around the world continue to preach the good news "in all creation that is under heaven." (Colossians 1:23; Acts 1:8) With the use of Bible literature, including *The Watchtower* and *Awake!*, they help all sorts of people to cope with present-day problems as well as give them a hope for a better future.



JEHOVAH—A GOD WHO TEACHES

"They will all be taught by Jehovah."—JOHN 6:45.

JESUS CHRIST had recently performed miracles and is now seen teaching in a synagogue in Capernaum, near the Sea of Galilee. (John 6:1-21, 59) Many express disbelief when he says: "I have come down from heaven." They murmur: "Is this not Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it that now he says, 'I have come down from heaven'?" (John 6: 38, 42) Rebuking them, Jesus proclaims: "No man can come to me unless the Father, who sent me, draws him; and I will resurrect him in the last day."—John 6:44.

[2] What a marvelous promise—to be resurrected in the last day, when God's Kingdom rules! We can believe this promise because it is backed up by the Father, Jehovah God. (Job 14:13-15; Isaiah 26:19) Indeed, Jehovah, who teaches that the dead will rise, is "the greatest teacher of all." (Job 36:22, *Today's English Version*) Focusing on the Father's teaching, Jesus next says: "It is written in the Prophets, 'And they will all be taught by Jehovah.'"—John 6:45.

[3] Surely, it would be a privilege to be among those of whom the prophet Isaiah wrote: "All your sons will be persons taught by Jehovah." (Isaiah 54:13) Can we be? Who have been like sons to him and have received his teachings? What are vital teachings of Jehovah that we must know and act upon to receive his blessing? How did Jehovah teach in the past, and does he teach the same way today? These are questions we will consider.

1. What is Jesus now doing in Capernaum?
2. What basis is there for believing Jesus' promise about the resurrection?
3. What questions will we consider?

Father, Teacher, Husband

[4] Jehovah first became both Father and Teacher when he created his only-begotten Son, the prehuman Jesus. This one is called "the Word" because he is Jehovah's Chief Spokesman. (John 1:1, 14; 3:16) The Word served "beside [the Father] as a master worker," and he learned well from his Father's teaching. (Proverbs 8:22, 30) In fact, he became the Agent, or instrumentality, through whom the Father created all other things, including spirit "sons of God." How they must have rejoiced to be taught by God! (Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7; Colossians 1:15-17) Later, the first human, Adam, was created. He too was a "son of God," and the Bible reveals that Jehovah instructed him.—Luke 3:38; Genesis 2:7, 16, 17.

[5] Sadly, Adam, by his willful disobedience, lost the privilege of continuing to be God's son. His descendants, therefore, could not claim the relationship of being sons of God simply on the basis of birth. Yet, Jehovah taught imperfect humans who looked to him for guidance. Noah, for example, proved to be "a righteous man" who "walked with

4. Who were the first of Jehovah's sons to receive his teachings?
5. What precious privilege was lost by Adam, yet whom did Jehovah teach, and why?

Resurrecting Jairus' daughter provided basis for believing Jesus' resurrection promise

the true God," and so Jehovah instructed Noah. (Genesis 6:9, 13–7:5) By his obedience, Abraham proved himself to be "Jehovah's friend," and therefore he also was taught by Jehovah.—James 2:23; Genesis 12:1-4; 15:1-8; 22:1, 2.

[6] Much later, during Moses' day, Jehovah entered into a covenant relationship with the nation of Israel. As a result, that nation became his chosen people and was viewed as his "son." God said: "Israel is my son." (Exodus 4:22, 23; 19:3-6; Deuteronomy 14: 1, 2) Based on that covenant relationship, the Israelites could say, as recorded by the prophet Isaiah: "You, O Jehovah, are our Father." (Isaiah 63:16) Jehovah assumed his fatherly responsibility and lovingly taught his children, Israel. (Psalm 71:17; Isaiah 48:17, 18) In fact, when they became unfaithful, he mercifully pleaded with them: "Return, O you renegade sons."—Jeremiah 3:14.

[7] As a consequence of the covenant relationship with Israel, Jehovah also figuratively became the Husband of the nation, and it became his figurative wife. Of her the prophet Isaiah wrote: "Your Grand Maker is your husbandly owner, Jehovah of armies being his name." (Isaiah 54:5; Jeremiah 31: 32) Although Jehovah honorably fulfilled his role as Husband, the nation of Israel became an unfaithful wife. "As a wife has treacherously gone from her companion," Jehovah said, "so you, O house of Israel, have dealt treacherously with me." (Jeremi-

6. Whom did Jehovah come to view as his "son," and what kind of teacher was he to them?

7. What relationship did Israel have with Jehovah?

ah 3:20) Jehovah kept appealing to the sons of his faithless wife; he continued to be their "Grand Instructor."—Isaiah 30:20; 2 Chronicles 36:15.

8 When Israel rejected and killed His Son, Jesus Christ, God finally rejected her. So no longer was that Jewish nation a figurative wife to him, nor was he the Father and Teacher of her wayward sons. (Matthew 23:37, 38) However, Israel was only a typical, or symbolic, wife. The apostle Paul quoted Isaiah 54:1, which speaks of a "barren woman" who is different and distinct from "the woman with a husbandly owner," the nation of natural Israel. Paul reveals that anointed Christians are children of the "barren woman," whom he calls "Jerusalem above." This antitypical figurative woman consists of God's heavenly organization of spirit creatures.—Galatians 4:26, 27.

9 Thus, in the Capernaum synagogue, when Jesus quoted Isaiah's prophecy: "All your sons will be persons taught by Jehovah," he was speaking about those who would become "sons" of "Jerusalem above," God's wife-like heavenly organization. By accepting the teachings of God's representative from heaven, Jesus Christ, those Jewish listeners could become children of God's previously barren heavenly woman and make up "a holy nation," the spiritual "Israel of God." (1 Peter 2:9, 10; Galatians 6:16) Describing the grand opportunity that Jesus made available for becoming spiritual sons of God, the apostle John wrote: "He came to his own home, but his own people did not take him in. However, as many as did receive him, to them he gave authority to become God's children, because they were exercising faith in his name."—John 1: 11, 12.

8. Even though Israel as a nation was cast off by Jehovah, what antitypical figurative wife does he yet have?

9. (a) Who was Jesus referring to when he spoke of 'your sons being taught by Jehovah'? (b) On what basis do people become spiritual sons of God?

Vital Teachings of Jehovah

10 Jehovah, as a loving Father, informs his children of his purposes. Thus, when a rebel angel induced the first human pair to disobey, Jehovah immediately gave notice of what he would do to fulfill his purpose to make the earth a paradise. He said that he would put hatred between "the original serpent," who is Satan the Devil, "and the woman." He then explained that the woman's "seed" would bruise Satan fatally, "in the head." (Genesis 3:1-6, 15; Revelation 12:9; 20:9, 10) As we have noted, the woman—later identified as "Jerusalem above"—is God's heavenly organization of spirit creatures. But who is her "seed"? He is God's Son, Jesus Christ, the one sent from heaven and the one who will eventually destroy Satan. —Galatians 4:4; Hebrews 2:14; 1 John 3:8.

11 Jehovah expanded on this vital teaching regarding the "seed" when he promised Abraham: "I shall surely multiply your seed like the stars of the heavens . . . And by means of your seed all nations of the earth will certainly bless themselves." (Genesis 22:17, 18) Jehovah used the apostle Paul to explain that Jesus Christ is the promised Seed of Abraham but that others would also become part of the "seed." "If you belong to Christ," Paul wrote, "you are really Abraham's seed, heirs with reference to a promise."—Galatians 3:16, 29.

12 Jehovah also revealed that Christ, the Seed, would come from the royal lineage of Judah and that to him "the obedience of the peoples will belong." (Genesis 49:10)

10. Immediately after the rebellion in Eden, what did Jehovah teach regarding the "seed," and who did this Seed prove to be?

11, 12. How did Jehovah expand on his vital teaching regarding the "seed"?

Regarding King David of the tribe of Judah, Jehovah promised: "I shall certainly set up his seed forever and his throne as the days of heaven. His seed itself will prove to be even to time indefinite, and his throne as the sun in front of me." (Psalm 89:3, 4, 29, 36) When the angel Gabriel announced the birth of Jesus, he explained that the child was God's appointed Ruler, the Seed of David. "This one will be great and will be called Son of the Most High," Gabriel said, "and Jehovah God will give him the throne of David his father, . . . and there will be no end of his kingdom."—Luke 1:32, 33; Isaiah 9:6, 7; Daniel 7:13, 14.

13 In order to receive Jehovah's blessing, we must know and act upon this vital teaching about God's Kingdom. We must believe that Jesus came down from heaven, that he is God's appointed King—the royal Seed who will oversee the restoration of Paradise on earth—and that he will resurrect the dead. (Luke 23:42, 43; John 18:33-37) In Capernaum when Jesus spoke about resurrecting the dead, it should have been evident to the Jews that he spoke the truth. Why, only a few weeks before, probably right there in Capernaum, he had resurrected the 12-year-old daughter of a presiding officer of the synagogue! (Luke 8:49-56) Surely we too have every reason to believe and act in harmony with Jehovah's hope-inspiring teaching regarding his Kingdom!

14 Jesus devoted his earthly life to teaching about Jehovah's Kingdom. He made it the theme of his ministry, and he even instructed his followers to pray for it. (Matthew 6:9, 10; Luke 4:43) Natural Jews were in line to be "sons of the kingdom," but because of lack of faith, most of them lost out on that privilege. (Matthew 8:12; 21:43) Jesus revealed that only a "little flock" receive the privilege of becoming "sons of the kingdom." These "sons" become "joint heirs with Christ" in his heavenly Kingdom. —Luke 12:32; Matthew 13:38; Romans 8:14-17; James 2:5.

15 How many kingdom heirs will Christ take to heaven to rule with him over the earth? Only 144,000, according to the Bible. (John 14:2, 3; 2 Timothy 2:12; Revelation 5:10; 14:1-3; 20:4) But Jesus said he had "other sheep," who will be earthly subjects of that Kingdom rule. These will enjoy perfect health and peace forever on a paradise earth. (John 10:16; Psalm 37:29; Revelation 21:3, 4) We need to understand and be able to explain Jehovah's teaching about the Kingdom.

16 The apostle Paul identified another vital teaching of Jehovah. He said: "You yourselves are taught by God to love one another." (1 Thessalonians 4:9) To please Jehovah, we need to demonstrate such love. "God is love," the Bible says, and we must imitate his example of showing love. (1 John 4:8; Ephesians 5:1, 2) Sadly, most people have failed miserably to learn to love their fellow humans as God teaches us to do. What about us? Have we responded to this teaching of Jehovah?

17 It is vital that we be receptive to all of Jehovah's teachings. May our attitude be that of the Bible psalmists who wrote: "Make me know your own ways, O Jehovah; teach me your own paths. Make me walk in your truth and teach me." "Teach me your regulations. Teach me goodness, sensibleness and knowledge themselves . . . Teach me your own judicial decisions." (Psalm 25:

13. To receive Jehovah's blessing, how must we respond to his teaching?
14, 15. (a) How important is Jehovah's Kingdom to Jesus? (b) What do we need to understand and be able to explain about Jehovah's Kingdom?

16. What vital teaching of Jehovah do we need to learn and practice?
17. Whose attitude should we imitate?

4, 5; 119:12, 66, 108) If your sentiments are the same as those of the psalmists, you can be among a vast crowd who are taught by Jehovah.

Great Crowd of Taught Ones

18 The prophet Isaiah foretold what would happen in our time: "It must occur in the final part of the days that the mountain of the house of Jehovah will become firmly established above the top of the mountains . . . And many peoples will certainly go and say: 'Come, you people, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and *he will instruct us about his ways.*'" (Isaiah 2:2, 3; Micah 4:2) Who are these persons taught by Jehovah?

19 They include others besides those who will rule in heaven with Christ. As noted earlier, Jesus said he had "other sheep" —earthly subjects of the Kingdom—in addition to the "little flock" of Kingdom heirs. (John 10:16; Luke 12:32) The "great crowd," who survive "the great tribulation," are of the other sheep class, and they enjoy an approved standing before Jehovah on the basis of their faith in Jesus' shed blood. (Revelation 7:9, 14) Even though the other sheep are not directly included among the "sons" spoken of at Isaiah 54:13, they are blessed with being taught by Jehovah. Therefore, they properly address God as "Father" because he will, in effect, be their Grandfather through the "Eternal Father," Jesus Christ. —Matthew 6:9; Isaiah 9:6.

How Jehovah Teaches

20 Jehovah teaches in many ways. For example, he does so by means of his creative works, which testify both to his existence and to his great wisdom. (Job 12:7-9; Psalm 19:1, 2; Romans 1:20) In addition, he teaches by direct communication, as he did in instructing the prehuman Jesus. Similarly, on three recorded occasions, he spoke directly from heaven to people on earth.—Matthew 3:17; 17:5; John 12:28.

21 Jehovah also uses angelic representatives to teach, including his Firstborn, "the Word." (John 1:1-3) Although Jehovah could have spoken directly to his perfect human son, Adam, in the garden of Eden, likely he used the prehuman Jesus to speak for Him. (Genesis 2:16, 17) This one was probably "the angel of the true God who was going ahead of the camp of Israel" and regarding whom Jehovah commanded: "Obey his voice." (Exodus 14:19; 23:20, 21) No doubt the prehuman Jesus was also the "prince of the army of Jehovah" who appeared to Joshua to strengthen him. (Joshua 5:14, 15) Jehovah also uses other angels to impart his teachings, such as those he used to deliver his Law to Moses.—Exodus 20:1; Galatians 3:19; Hebrews 2:2, 3.

22 In addition, Jehovah God uses human

18. What did the prophet Isaiah foretell would occur in our time?
19. Who today are included among those taught by Jehovah?
20. In what ways does Jehovah teach?
21. What angel did Jehovah particularly use as his representative, but how do we know that others also were used?
22. (a) Who on earth has Jehovah used to teach? (b) What is the primary means by which Jehovah instructs humans today?

How Would You Answer?

- ☐ How did Jehovah come to be a Father, a Teacher, and a Husband?
- ☐ What does Jehovah teach regarding the "seed"?
- ☐ What vital teaching by God must we observe?
- ☐ How does Jehovah teach?

representatives to teach. Parents in Israel were to teach their children; prophets, priests, princes, and Levites taught Jehovah's Law to the nation. (Deuteronomy 11: 18-21; 1 Samuel 12:20-25; 2 Chronicles 17: 7-9) Jesus was God's principal Spokesman on earth. (Hebrews 1:1, 2) Jesus often said that what he taught was precisely what he had learned from the Father, so his listeners were, in effect, being taught by Jehovah. (John 7:16; 8:28; 12:49; 14:9, 10) Jehovah has had his sayings recorded, and in our day he teaches humans primarily by means of these inspired Scriptures.—Romans 15:4; 2 Timothy 3:16.

[23] We are living in important times, since the Scriptures promise that 'in the *final part of the days* [in which we are living] many peoples will be instructed about Jehovah's ways.' (Isaiah 2:2, 3) How is this instruction provided? What must we do to benefit from, as well as share in, Jehovah's grand teaching program now in progress? We will consider such questions in the next article.

23. What questions will be considered in the next article?

TAUGHT BY JEHOVAH DOWN TILL THIS DAY

"Jehovah himself has given me the tongue of the taught ones."—ISAIAH 50:4.

JEHOVAH GOD has been a Teacher ever since he became a Father. Some time after certain of his children rebelled, he prepared his favorite pupil, his Firstborn, for a ministry on earth. (Proverbs 8:30) Isaiah chapter 50 prophetically presents this pupil as saying: "The Sovereign Lord Jehovah himself has given me the tongue of the taught ones, that I may know how to answer the tired one with a word." (Isaiah 50:4) As a result of applying his Father's teaching while on earth, Jesus was a source of refreshment to all those who were 'tired and loaded down.'—Matthew 11:28-30.

1, 2. (a) For what did Jehovah prepare his favorite pupil, and what was the result? (b) How did Jesus acknowledge the Source of his teachings?

[2] Jesus did many powerful works during the first century. He opened the eyes of the blind and even raised the dead, yet he was primarily known by his contemporaries as a teacher. His followers as well as his opposers called him that. (Matthew 8:19; 9:11; 12:38; 19:16; John 3:2) Jesus never took credit for what he taught but humbly acknowledged: "What I teach is not mine, but belongs to him that sent me." "Just as the Father taught me I speak these things." —John 7:16; 8:28; 12:49.

Ideal Teacher-Pupil Relationship

[3] A superior teacher takes a personal, conscientious, and loving interest in his pu-

3. How does Isaiah's prophecy indicate Jehovah's interest in those whom he teaches?

pils. Isaiah chapter 50 reveals that Jehovah God has that kind of interest in those whom he teaches. "He awakens morning by morning," the prophecy notes, "he awakens my ear to hear like the taught ones." (Isaiah 50:4) The language here suggests an instructor who awakens his pupils early in the morning so as to teach them. Commenting on the application of the prophecy, one Bible scholar observed: "The idea is, that the Redeemer would be . . . one who was, so to speak, in the school of God; and who would be qualified to impart instruction to others. . . . The Messiah would be eminently qualified, by Divine teaching, to be the instructor of mankind."

[4] Ideally, pupils are responsive to the teaching of their instructor. How did Jesus respond to his Father's teaching? His response was in line with what we read at Isaiah 50:5: "The Sovereign Lord Jehovah himself has opened my ear, and I, for my part, was not rebellious. I did not turn in the opposite direction." Yes, Jesus was eager to learn. He was, as the saying goes, all ears. More than that, he was willing to do whatever his Father asked of him. He was not rebellious; rather, he said: "Let, not my will, but yours take place."—Luke 22:42.

[5] The prophecy indicates that the Son was informed of the potential consequences of his doing God's will. This is shown by what the taught one says: "My back I gave to the strikers, and my cheeks to those plucking off the hair. My face I did not conceal from humiliating things and spit." (Isaiah 50:6) As the prophecy indicates, Jesus was treated cruelly on earth. "They spit into his face," the apostle Matthew wrote. "Others slapped him in the face." (Matthew 26:67) This occurred at the hands of religious leaders on Passover night of 33 C.E. The following day Jesus gave his back to the strikers, as the Roman soldiers beat him mercilessly before hanging him on a stake to die.—John 19:1-3, 16-23.

[6] The Son, well schooled in advance, never lost confidence in his Teacher. This is shown by what he says next according to the prophecy: "The Sovereign Lord Jehovah himself will help me. That is why I shall not have to feel humiliated." (Isaiah 50:7) Jesus' confidence in his Teacher's help was richly rewarded. His Father exalted him, blessing him with a superior position above that of all other servants of God. (Philippians 2:5-11) Grand blessings are in store for us too if we obediently adhere to Jehovah's teaching and do not "turn in the opposite direction." Let us look at how that teaching has been made available down to our day.

An Expanded Teaching Program

[7] As we noted earlier, Jehovah used his earthly Representative, Jesus Christ, to carry out divine teaching during the first century. (John 16:27, 28) Jesus constantly pointed to God's Word as the authority for his teaching, setting the example for those whom he taught. (Matthew 4:4, 7, 10; 21:13; 26:24, 31) Afterward, Jehovah's teaching was carried on in the earth by means of the ministry of such taught ones. Recall that Jesus commanded them: "Go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations, . . . *teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you.*" (Matthew

4. How did Jesus respond to his Father's teaching?

5. (a) What indicates that Jesus knew in advance the trials he would suffer on earth? (b) How was the prophecy at Isaiah 50:6 fulfilled?

6. What shows that Jesus never lost confidence in his Teacher, and how was his confidence rewarded?

7. How has Jehovah carried on his teaching in the earth?

Heartfelt comments by children are often encouraging to older ones

28:19, 20) When disciples were made, these became part of "God's household, . . . the congregation of the living God." (1 Timothy 3:15) They were also formed into individual congregations in which they were taught by Jehovah. (Acts 14:23; 15:41; 16:5; 1 Corinthians 11:16) Has divine teaching in that way continued down till our day?

8 Indeed, it has! Three days before his death, Jesus foretold that before the end of this system of things, there would be a great preaching work. "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations," he said, "and then the end will come." Jesus went on to describe the means by which this worldwide preaching and teaching program would be directed. He spoke of "the faithful and discreet slave" that would serve as a channel, or instrument, to provide His servants with spiritual food. (Matthew 24:14, 45-47) Jehovah God has used this "slave" to oversee Kingdom interests throughout the earth.

9 Today, the faithful and discreet slave is made up of the remnant of Kingdom heirs. These are anointed Christians, the remaining ones on earth of the 144,000, who "belong to Christ" and who are part of "Abraham's seed." (Galatians 3:16, 29; Revelation 14:1-3) How can you identify the faithful and discreet slave? Particularly by the work they do and by their close adherence to God's Word, the Bible.

10 Jehovah uses this "slave" as his means of teaching people today. Those of the slave class adopted the name Jehovah's Witnesses in 1931. Since then millions have associated with them and have accepted that name and joined in proclaiming God's Kingdom. This magazine, *The Watchtower Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom,* is the principal instrument employed by the "slave" in the teaching work. However, other publications are also used, including books, booklets, brochures, tracts, and the *Awake!* magazine.

11 In addition, the "slave" sponsors various schools. These include the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead, which is a five-

8. How did Jesus indicate that the preaching work would be directed on earth before the end would come?
9. Who make up the faithful and discreet slave?
10. What instruments are used by the slave class to promote Jehovah's teachings?
11. What schools has the "slave" sponsored, and what purpose does each of these schools serve?

month course that prepares young ministers for foreign missionary service, and the two-month Ministerial Training School course, which trains unmarried elders and ministerial servants for special theocratic assignments. There is also the Kingdom Ministry School, in which Christian elders and ministerial servants are periodically instructed in their congregational responsibilities, and the Pioneer Service School, which equips full-time evangelizers to become more effective in their preaching activity.

[12] Another feature of the teaching program is the five weekly meetings held in the more than 75,500 congregations of Jehovah's people worldwide. Do you benefit as fully as possible from these meetings? By your attentiveness to the instruction given, do you show that you really believe that you are, as it were, in the school of God? Does your spiritual progress make it obvious to others that you have "the tongue of the taught ones"?—Isaiah 50:4; 1 Timothy 4:15, 16.

Taught at Congregation Meetings

[13] Jehovah particularly teaches his people by means of a weekly study of the Bible, using *The Watchtower* as a teaching aid. Do you view this meeting as a place where you can be taught by Jehovah? Although Isaiah 50:4 applies primarily to Jesus, it can also apply to all those who avail themselves of God's provisions to receive "the tongue of the taught ones." One way you can show that you treasure *The Watchtower* is by reading each issue as soon as possible after you receive it. Then, when *The Watchtower* is studied in the congregation, you can show your appreciation to Jehovah by being present and also by being prepared to make a public declaration of your hope.—Hebrews 10:23.

[14] Do you appreciate that by your comments at meetings, you can have a part in Jehovah's grand teaching program? No question about it, commenting at meetings is an important way that we can incite one another "to love and fine works." (Hebrews 10:24, 25) Can children have a part in this program of instruction as well? Yes, they can. Heartfelt comments by young ones are often encouraging to older ones. At times, newer ones at our meetings have been motivated by the comments of children to take a more serious interest in Bible truth. Some youngsters make it a habit to read their comments directly from the paragraph or repeat after an adult who is whispering in their ear. However, it is most encouraging when their comments are well prepared. Such commenting truly brings honor to our Grand Instructor and his exalted program of teaching.—Isaiah 30:20, 21.

[15] It is a joy to see children *wanting* to share in praising our God. Jesus appreciated expressions of praise from young ones. (Matthew 21:15, 16) One Christian elder observes: "When I was a child, I wanted to comment at the *Watchtower* Study. After helping me prepare a comment, my father would require that I practice the comment at least seven times." Possibly during your family Bible study, you parents could help your children prepare comments in their own words on selected paragraphs in *The Watchtower*. Help them appreciate the

12. What is a weekly feature of the teaching program?
13. (a) What is an important way that Jehovah teaches his people today? (b) How can we show our appreciation for *The Watchtower*?
14. (a) Why is commenting at meetings such an important privilege? (b) What kind of comments by youngsters are most encouraging?
15. What can parents do to help children comment more effectively?

great privilege they have of sharing in Jehovah's teaching program.

16 The teaching at other Christian meetings should also be given serious consideration, both by those privileged to deliver the information and by those who listen to the instruction presented. For over 50 years now, Jehovah has used the weekly Theocratic Ministry School to train millions of men and women to present the Kingdom message more effectively. Those who are actively associated with the congregation may enroll, including people who have recently started to attend the meetings, as long as they are leading a life that is in harmony with Christian principles.

17 Another longtime feature of the teaching program is the Public Meeting. As its name indicates, this meeting was established particularly to acquaint non-Witnesses with basic Bible teachings. Thus, the one giving the talk needs to present the information so that it is understandable to those hearing the message for the first time. This means explaining terms such as "other sheep," "brothers," and "remnant," terms that non-Witnesses may not understand. Since people who attend the Public Meeting may have beliefs or lifestyles that are quite contrary to the Scriptures—though acceptable in today's society—the speaker should always be tactful and never make fun of such beliefs or lifestyles.—Compare 1 Corinthians 9:19-23.

18 The Congregation Book Study is a meeting at which publications prepared under the direction of the faithful and discreet slave are studied each week along with the Bible. The book *Revelation—Its Grand Climax At Hand!* is the one currently being studied in many lands. The Service Meeting is designed to equip Jehovah's people to have a full share in preaching the Kingdom good news and to make disciples.—Matthew 28:19, 20; Mark 13:10.

16. What has been the benefit of the Theocratic Ministry School, and who may enroll in the school?

17. (a) For what purpose particularly was the Public Meeting established? (b) What are matters public speakers should keep in mind?

18. What other weekly congregation meetings are there, and what purposes do they serve?

Taught at Larger Meetings

[19] For over a hundred years, the 'faithful slave' has arranged conventions and assemblies for the teaching and special encouragement of true Christians. Three such larger meetings are now held each year. There is the one-day assembly that is attended by a group of congregations that make up a circuit. During the year, each circuit also has a two-day gathering called a circuit assembly. In addition, there is a gathering called a district convention, attended by a number of circuits. In some years there may be international conventions. These large gatherings with guest Witnesses from many countries are truly faith strengthening for Jehovah's people! —Compare Deuteronomy 16:16.

[20] In 1922, when some 10,000 met in Cedar Point, Ohio, U.S.A., the delegates were inspired by the speaker's encouragement: "This is the day of all days. Behold, the King reigns! You are his publicity agents. Therefore *advertise, advertise, advertise,* the King and his kingdom." Such large conventions have consistently placed emphasis on the preaching work. For example, at the international convention in New York City in 1953, announcement was made about the institution of a house-to-house training program in all congregations. The implementation of it had a very positive effect on the Kingdom preaching in many lands.

Taught by God to Teach

[21] Surely, Jehovah has a marvelous teaching program in the earth today! All who take advantage of it can be taught by God, yes, can be among those who have been given "the tongue of the taught ones." What a privilege to be, as it were, in the school of God! Yet, when accepting this privilege, we must not miss its purpose. Jehovah taught Jesus so that he could teach others, and Jesus taught his disciples so that they could do the same work as he was doing but on an even greater scale. Similarly, we are being trained in Jehovah's grand teaching program for the purpose of teaching others. —John 6:45; 14:12; 2 Corinthians 5:20, 21; 6:1; 2 Timothy 2:2.

[22] Do you say, as did Moses, "I am not a fluent speaker," or as Jeremiah said, "I actually do not know how to speak"? Jehovah will help you as he helped them. "I myself shall prove to be with your mouth," he told Moses. And to Jeremiah he said: "Do not be afraid . . . I am with you." (Exodus 4:10-12; Jeremiah 1:6-8) When religious leaders wanted to silence his disciples, Jesus said: "If these remained silent, the stones would cry out." (Luke 19:40) But the stones did not have to cry out then, and they do not need to now because Jehovah is using the tongue of his taught ones to deliver his Kingdom message.

19. What larger gatherings does the "slave" arrange each year?
20. What has been consistently emphasized at larger gatherings of Jehovah's Witnesses?
21. What privilege do we want to accept, not missing its purpose?

22. (a) What problem did Moses and Jeremiah have, but how was it solved? (b) What assurance can we have that God will see to it that the Kingdom preaching is accomplished?

Can You Answer?

- ☐ What ideal Teacher-pupil relationship is highlighted in Isaiah chapter 50?
- ☐ How has Jehovah carried on an extensive teaching program?
- ☐ What are some features of Jehovah's teaching program?
- ☐ Why is it a grand privilege to share in Jehovah's teaching program?

OUR RICH SPIRITUAL HERITAGE

AS TOLD BY PHILLIP F. SMITH

"A torch has been lit that will burn through darkest Africa." How delighted we were to read the above on page 75 of the *1992 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses!* Those words were penned in 1931 by our grandfather, Frank W. Smith, in a letter to Brother Joseph F. Rutherford, then president of the Watch Tower Society. Grandfather had written to report on a preaching tour made by him and his brother.

THE *1992 Yearbook* explained: "Gray Smith and his older brother Frank, two courageous pioneer ministers from Cape Town [South Africa], set off for British East Africa to explore the possibilities of spreading the good news. They took a car, a De Soto that they had converted into a caravan (house car), loaded it on a ship along with 40 cartons of books, and sailed for Mombasa, the seaport of Kenya."

In his letter to Brother Rutherford, Grandfather described the trip from Mombasa to Nairobi, Kenya's capital: "We started on the most terrible nightmare of a motor trip I have ever undertaken. It took us four days, going all day, to do 360 miles . . . Mile after mile I had to get out with a shovel to level ridges, fill in holes, also cut elephant grass and trees to fill in swamp for the wheels to grip."

After reaching Nairobi, Frank and Gray worked for 21 days straight to distribute their Bible literature. "Judging by things we hear," Grandfather wrote, "the work has turned religious Nairobi inside out." Afterward, Grandfather was eager to return home to his two-year-old son, Donovan, and his wife, Phyllis, who was expecting their second child, our father, Frank. Grandfather took the first available ship from Mombasa, but he died of malaria before reaching home.

As my sister, my brother, and I pondered that *Yearbook* account, our minds turned to our dear father. In 1991, only a few months before we received the *1992 Yearbook,* he had died from the complications of heart surgery. Although he had never met his father, he shared his father's deep love for Jehovah. How Grandfather would have rejoiced to know that 28 years later, in 1959, his son would follow his footsteps as a Christian minister to East Africa!

Father's Early Life

Our father was born July 20, 1931, in Cape Town, two months after the death of his own father, after whom he was named. From an early age, Dad showed his love for

Jehovah. When only nine, he stood in the main Cape Town train station doing placard work while his schoolmates poked fun at him. At age 11, he symbolized his dedication to Jehovah by water baptism. Sometimes Dad was assigned to work by himself a whole street in the ministry. By the time he was 18, he was conducting the *Watchtower* Study with a group of elderly Christian sisters in a suburb of Cape Town.

In 1954 the Watch Tower Society announced that international conventions were to be held the following year in Europe. Dad greatly desired to go, but he did not have enough money to travel there from Cape Town. So he contracted to work for three months as a chemist in the copper mines in Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia). The facilities where assaying of mineral ore was done were out in the African bush.

Dad knew that there were large numbers of African Witnesses in Northern Rhodesia, so when he arrived he sought them out and learned where they held their meetings. Although he could not speak the local language, he nevertheless associated with them and regularly attended the meetings of the Mine Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses. Europeans at the mines were racially prejudiced and showed their prejudice by often abusing the Africans verbally. Dad, however, was always kind.

At the end of the three months, an African worker who was not a Witness came up to Dad and asked: "Do you know what we call you?" The man smiled and said: "We call you *Bwana* [Mr.] Watchtower."

In 1955, Dad was able to attend the "Triumphant Kingdom" Assemblies in Europe. There he met Mary Zahariou, who became his wife the following year. After their marriage, they settled in Parma, Ohio, U.S.A.

To East Africa

During a district convention in the United States, an invitation was extended to conventioners to serve where the need for ministers was greater. Our parents decided to go to East Africa. They did exactly what the Watch Tower Society suggested. They saved enough money to buy return tickets in case Dad was unsuccessful in acquiring a job, since only those with work permits were allowed to reside in that territory.

After getting passports, visas, and inoculations, in July 1959, Dad and Mom sailed on a merchant ship from New York City to Mombasa by way of Cape Town. The trip took them four weeks. In Mombasa they

Frank Smith with his mother, Phyllis, in Cape Town

received a warm welcome at the dock by Christian brothers who had come before them to serve where the need was greater. When they arrived in Nairobi, Dad found a letter awaiting him. It was a reply to his request for a position as a chemist in the Geological Survey Department in Entebbe, Uganda. Dad and Mom took the train to Kampala, Uganda, where Dad was interviewed and hired. At the time, there was only one other Witness in the Entebbe-Kampala area, George Kadu.

The colonial government paid for Dad to learn the local language, Luganda. He was delighted, since he had planned to learn it anyway so that he could be more effective in the ministry. Later, Dad even helped translate the booklet *"This Good News of the Kingdom"* into Luganda.

Dad was fearless in witnessing to others. He spoke to all the Europeans in his department, and he shared regularly in preaching to the Ugandans. He even witnessed to the African attorney general of Uganda. The man not only listened to the Kingdom message but had Dad and Mom over for dinner.

My sister, Anthe, was born in 1960, and I came along in 1965. Our family grew very close to the brothers and sisters in the small but growing congregation in the capital, Kampala. As the only white Witnesses in nearby Entebbe, we had some amusing experiences. Once a friend of Dad's made an unexpected stopover at Entebbe and tried to contact Dad. He was unsuccessful until he asked: "Do you know the European couple here who are Jehovah's Witnesses?" The person immediately drove him straight to Mom and Dad's house.

We also had difficult experiences, including living through two armed revolts. Government troops at one time were shooting anyone of a certain ethnic group. All through the day and night, there was incessant shooting. Since there was a 6:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m. curfew, the meetings were held during the afternoons in my parents' home in Entebbe.

Dad and Mom at the time of their marriage

Later, when the curfew was lifted, Dad drove us to Kampala for the *Watchtower* Study. A soldier aimed a rifle at us, stopped our car, and demanded to know where we were going. I was then only an infant, and Anthe was five. When Dad quietly explained, showing the soldier our Bibles and literature, he let us go.

In 1967, after nearly eight years in Uganda, our parents decided to return to the United States because of health problems and family responsibilities. We became part of the Canfield, Ohio, Congregation, where Dad served as an elder. There my parents grew to love the brothers as dearly as they loved the little congregation in Kampala.

Loving Christian Upbringing

In 1971 my brother David was born. As we grew up, we were nurtured in a home atmosphere that was full of love and warmth.

For the first baptism in Entebbe, the brothers rented an African chief's pool

Greeting in the customary way

No doubt this stemmed from the loving relationship that our parents enjoyed with each other.

When we were young, Dad would always read us a Bible story at bedtime, pray, and then, unbeknownst to Mom, give us a chocolate wrapped up in shiny gold paper. We always studied our *Watchtower* together as a family, no matter where we were. While on family vacations, we once studied it on a mountainside and on another occasion while overlooking the ocean. Dad often remarked that those were some of his happiest memories. He said that he felt sorry for those who missed out on the great joy that a family study can bring.

When it came to showing love for Jehovah, Dad taught by example. Whenever a new copy of the *Watchtower* or *Awake!* magazine came or we received another Watchtower publication, Dad would eagerly devour its contents. We learned from him that Bible truth should not be viewed lightly but be esteemed as a precious treasure. One of our most precious possessions is Dad's *Reference Bible*. Practically every

Dad and Mom shortly before Dad's death

page is covered with notes gleaned from his studies. Now when we read from his marginal comments, we can almost still hear him teaching and counseling us.

Faithful to the End

On May 16, 1991, while out in the field ministry, Dad had a heart attack. Weeks later, he had open-heart surgery that appeared to be successful. However, during the night following surgery, we received a phone call from the hospital. Dad was bleeding, and the doctors were very concerned. He was taken back into surgery twice that night to try to stop the bleeding but to no avail. Dad's blood was not clotting.

The next day, as Dad's condition rapidly deteriorated, the doctors first took aside my mother and then my younger brother to put pressure on them to consent to a blood transfusion for Dad. Yet, Dad had previously told the doctors that he would not accept a blood transfusion under any circumstances. He explained to them his Scriptural reasons for refusing blood but said he would accept nonblood alternatives. —Leviticus 17:13, 14; Acts 15:28, 29.

An underlying hostility on the part of several members of the medical staff created a very tense atmosphere in the ICU (intensive care unit). This, coupled with Dad's worsening condition, at times seemed more than we could bear. We supplicated Jehovah for help and also tried to apply the practical suggestions we had received. So when visiting the ICU, we were always well dressed and respectful toward the medical staff. We took an active interest in Dad's condition by asking meaningful questions, and we thanked every staff member involved in Dad's care.

Our efforts did not go unnoticed by the medical staff. In a few days, the tense atmosphere changed to one of kindness. The nurses who cared for Dad would keep checking on his progress even though they were no longer assigned to take care of him. One doctor who had been very rude to us even softened to the point of asking Mom how she was coping. Our congregation and relatives also lovingly supported us. They sent food and many comforting cards, and they prayed in our behalf.

Sadly, Dad never responded to the treatment. He died ten days after his initial surgery. We grieve deeply for Dad. At times, the feelings of loss are overwhelming. Fortunately, our God promises that he will 'daily carry the load for us,' and we have learned to lean on him as never before. —Psalm 68:19.

All of us are determined that we too will continue serving Jehovah faithfully so that we will have the joy of seeing Dad in the new world.—Mark 5:41, 42; John 5:28; Acts 24:15.

The Rewards of Persistence

SHE was a Greek woman living in Phoenicia in the year 32 C.E. Her daughter was extremely ill, and the woman was desperate for a cure. Hearing of a stranger visiting her region—a foreigner who reputedly had powers to heal the sick—she was determined to see him and beg for his help.

Upon meeting him, she fell on her knees, pleading: "Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David. My daughter is badly demonized." In that way, the Greek woman begged Jesus to heal her daughter.

Can you imagine the courage and humility that was required on her part to do this? Jesus was an authority figure with some

Jesus rewarded the humble persistence of this Greek woman

power and reputation, and he had earlier let it be known that he did not want anyone to learn of his whereabouts. He had taken his apostles to Phoenicia to get some much needed rest, not to work among the Gentile unbelievers. Furthermore, Jesus was a Jew and she a Gentile, and she undoubtedly knew about the Jewish aversion to association with the despised people of the nations. Nevertheless, she was firm in her resolve to obtain a cure for her child.

Jesus and his apostles attempted to dissuade the woman from seeking help at that time. At first, Jesus would not say a word to her. Then, because of her repeated, persistent cries, the apostles in exasperation told Jesus: "Send her away; because she keeps crying out after us."

But she would not take no for an answer. Instead, she prostrated herself at Jesus' feet, saying: "Lord, help me!"

Pointing out his primary responsibility to the sons of Israel and, at the same time, testing her faith and determination, Jesus compassionately explained to her: "It is not right to take the bread of the children

Life in Paradise is included in the joy set before Christians today

[of Israel] and throw it to little dogs [Gentiles]."

Rather than being offended by the negative reference to her race, she humbly persisted in her quest by replying: "Yes, Lord; but really the little dogs do eat of the crumbs falling from the table of their masters."

Jesus rewarded the Greek woman's persistence by commending her faith and acting favorably on her supplications. Imagine her joy when she returned home to find her daughter completely healed!—Matthew 15: 21-28; Mark 7:24-30.

Like that woman of the first century, we need to be persistent in our efforts to please Jehovah and win his favor. As in the case of the Greek woman, the Bible assures us that our persistence "in doing what is fine" will be well rewarded.—Galatians 6:9.

What is persistence? Why is it needed? What factors may cause us to lose this quality, to give up or surrender? What rewards can we expect to receive if we now exercise persistence in serving our Creator and Father, Jehovah?

One dictionary defines the verb "persist" as "to hold firmly and steadfastly to some purpose, state, or undertaking, despite obstacles, warnings, or setbacks. . . . to continue in existence; last."

The Bible repeatedly exhorts Jehovah's servants to persist in doing his will. For example, we are told to "keep on, then, seeking first the kingdom," to "hold fast to what is fine," to "persevere in prayer," and not to "tire out" in doing what is fine.—Matthew 6:33; 1 Thessalonians 5:21; Romans 12:12; Galatians 6:9.

In the daily affairs of life, persistence is a quality all of us must possess and develop in order to survive. Without it we cannot achieve anything of true, lasting value. Consider the example of a baby trying to stand up and take its first wobbly steps. Rare is the infant who can learn to stand and walk about freely in a single day. As babes, all of us probably tried and failed many times before we finally achieved a measure of success in walking. What would have happened if upon falling for the first time, we had decided to stop trying? We might still be crawling around on our hands and knees! Persistence is essential for reaching worthwhile goals and gaining corresponding increases in skills and self-respect. As a popular saying goes, "Winners never quit, and quitters never win."

Longtime pioneers realize that success is not guaranteed by special abilities or talents. It requires stick-to-itiveness, a determination to do Jehovah's will fully, and courage in the face of temporary setbacks, even depression. The goal of sharing eternally in God's blessings must be kept clearly in focus.

Yes, all of us who seek to gain Jehovah's favor and who seek to win out in the race for life need persistence, perseverance, and endurance. Without these qualities, we could well lose Jehovah's favor and the reward of the real life.—Psalm 18:20; Matthew 24:13; 1 Timothy 6:18, 19.

It is often more difficult for a Christian to be persistent in his spiritual activities than in his other obligations. A man might keep on working hard at a secular job to take care of his family's physical needs, but he might be 'too tired' to conduct a regular Bible study with his wife and children. What factors make persistence in Christian works so difficult for many?

One factor is discouragement, which comes from our own individual failings and weaknesses. If we dwell negatively on our mistakes, we may despair and give up,

feeling that Jehovah will never be able to forgive us all our sins.

Another factor is the worldly atmosphere of immorality, corruption, and hatred. (1 John 2:15, 16) One of the "useful habits" that worldly influence can spoil or damage is Christian persistence.—1 Corinthians 15:33.

Our persistence in the preaching work can be weakened by the public's opposition or indifference to our sacred service. Out of frustration, we may conclude that people in our territory simply do not want the truth. This can cause us to ask, 'What's the use?' and to relinquish our special privilege of ministerial service.

We can also be influenced by the world's spirit of self-indulgence. Why should we struggle and sacrifice so much while everyone else seems to be having a good time or taking it easy?—Compare Matthew 16: 23, 24.

To persist in doing Jehovah's will, we need to put on the Christian personality and to live by the spirit, not the flesh. (Romans 8:4-8; Colossians 3:10, 12, 14) Having Jehovah's view on the matter will enable us to carry on with our vital spiritual activities.—1 Corinthians 16:13.

Examples of Persistence

Jehovah has provided us with many inspiring examples of servants who remained loyal and faithful to him through many severe trials. By considering them, we see how we can develop and exercise Christian persistence and why it is so valuable.

The greatest example is Jesus, who suffered so much to glorify Jehovah's name. The Bible encourages us to study attentively his acts of persistent devotion: "So, then, because we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also put off every weight and the sin that easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, as we look intently at the Chief Agent and Perfecter of our faith, Jesus. 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. Indeed, consider closely the one who has endured such contrary talk by sinners against their own interests, that you may not get tired and give out in your souls."—Hebrews 12:1-3.

The race for life is a long-distance one, not a short sprint, or dash. That is why we need Christlike persistence. The goal, the finish line, may not be in sight for the greater part of the race. The goal must be clear in our mind's eye so that we can mentally reach out for it throughout the entire, demanding course. Jesus had such a mental image before him, namely, "the joy that was set before him."

What is included in this joy for Christians today? For one thing, it is the reward of immortal life in heaven for a few and everlasting life on earth for many. Also, it is the feeling of satisfaction that comes from knowing that one has brought gladness to Jehovah's heart and has played a part in the sanctification of God's name.—Proverbs 27:11; John 17:4.

Included in this joy is a close, delightful relationship with Jehovah. (Psalm 40:8; John 4:34) Such a relationship is invigorating and life sustaining, giving one the strength to run the race with endurance and not give up. Furthermore, Jehovah blesses that relationship by pouring out his holy spirit on his servants, resulting in an increase of joy and joyful activity.—Romans 12:11; Galatians 5:22.

Considering Job's example of persistent faith is beneficial. He was imperfect and had a limited knowledge of his situation.

So at times, he lapsed into self-justification and despair. However, he consistently displayed a dogged determination to keep his integrity to Jehovah and never forsake Him. (Job 1:20-22; 2:9, 10; 27:2-6) Jehovah rewarded Job for his persistent devotion, giving him spiritual and material blessings and the hope of everlasting life. (Job 42:10-17; James 5:10, 11) Like Job, we may experience much suffering and loss during our life now, but we can also be assured of Jehovah's blessing on our faithful endurance. —Hebrews 6:10-12.

In modern times, Jehovah's Witnesses as a whole have displayed Christian persistence in doing Jehovah's will. For example, their persistent house-to-house work and other public preaching have brought them and their message worldwide attention. The media have made numerous references to their zeal and determination to preach the good news despite opposition and trials. One of these even featured the punch line "Nobody escapes Jehovah's Witnesses!"—Matthew 5:16.

Jehovah has blessed the persistent efforts of his Witnesses with increased fruitage in the ministry. Note the experience of some resourceful Witnesses in Italy back in the 1960's when there were some 10,000 Witnesses preaching to a nation of over 53,000,000 people. In one town of 6,000, there were no Witnesses. The visiting brothers received a hostile reaction to their ministry.

Every time the brothers went there to preach, many of the women, and even the men, of the town would round up the boys, encouraging them to follow the Witnesses and whistle at them and make much noise. After a few minutes of this, the brothers were forced to leave and go to another town. In an endeavor to give at least one complete witness to all the inhabitants of this town, the brothers decided to preach there only on very rainy days, in the hope that they would not be bothered by the young folk. They noticed that the people of the town were unwilling to get themselves wet just to disturb the publishers. In this way a good witness was given. Interested persons were found. New Bible studies were started. As a result, not only was a blossoming congregation established in that small town but the preaching work began to be done even on sunny days. Jehovah has continued to bless the persistence of his Witnesses in that area and throughout Italy. There are now over 200,000 of Jehovah's Witnesses in that country.

The rewards of persistence in doing what is right are great. By the power of God's spirit, Jehovah's Witnesses have been able to accomplish a feat unprecedented in human history, that of preaching the good news of the Kingdom, at the doorsteps and otherwise, to millions of people. (Zechariah 4:6) They have joyfully seen Bible prophecy fulfilled in the amazing growth and vitality of Jehovah's earthly organization. (Isaiah 54:2; 60:22) They hold a good conscience toward God, and they delight in the hope of everlasting life. Above all, they enjoy an intimate relationship with the Creator, Jehovah God.—Psalm 11:7.

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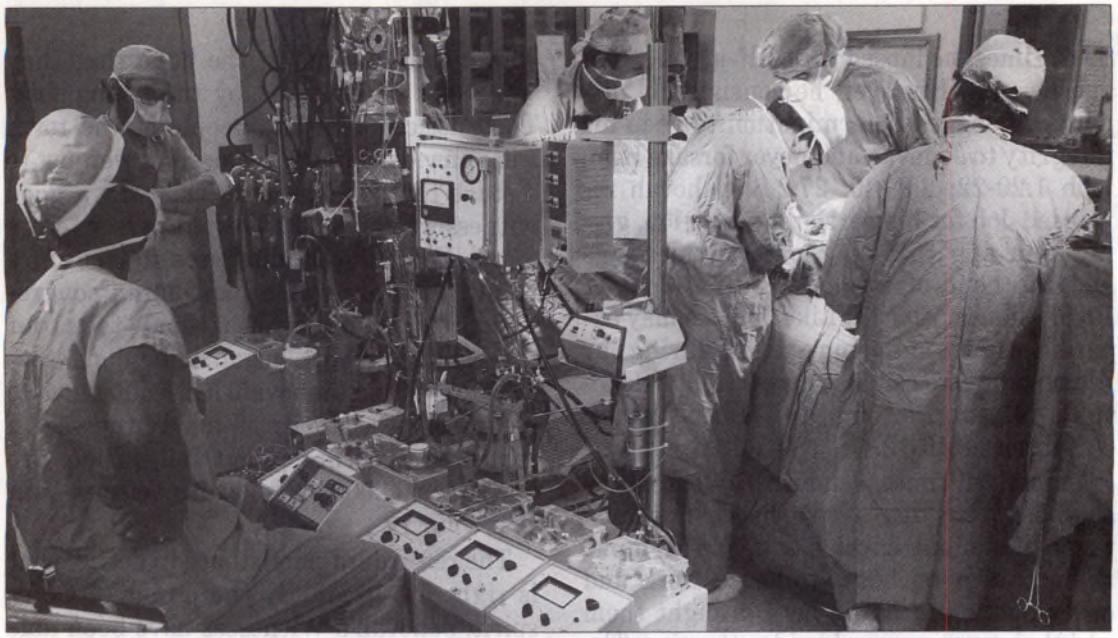
Resist Ungodly Traditions!



Blood Transfusions Reconsidered

IN THIS gloomy age of AIDS, the greatest threat to a hospital patient's health may lurk in the operating room. "There is no way we can make the blood supply completely sterile," says Dr. Richard Spence, who for more than a decade has directed the Center for Bloodless Surgery at Cooper Hospital-University Medical Center in Camden, New Jersey, U.S.A.

Not surprisingly, the center treats many of Jehovah's Witnesses, whose Bible-based refusal of blood transfusions is well-known. (Leviticus 17:11; Acts 15:28, 29) However, a number of non-Witness patients are showing up at the center as well, concerned about the potential dangers of transfusing blood, which include the contracting of hepatitis, AIDS, and other diseases. "The rise of AIDS has shown the need for screening blood," notes the *Courier-Post Weekly Report on Science and Medicine*. "But some cases can still slip through the screening process because someone could have the virus before it would show up on a test."

Because of such dangers, the Center for Bloodless Surgery utilizes alternatives to blood transfusions, including the reinfusion of a patient's own blood—a technique that some Witnesses may find unobjectionable under certain circumstances.* Another treatment involves the use of drugs that stimulate the patient's blood production. Additionally, a synthetic blood substitute is occasionally employed to bolster the delivery of oxygen without the need for transfused blood. "Jehovah's Witnesses want the best medical care," says Dr. Spence, "but they want alternatives to transfusions."

Jehovah's Witnesses are thankful for the cooperation and assistance they have received from doctors who respect their religious convictions. As a result, they have indeed received "the best medical care" and have maintained a clean conscience before Jehovah God.—2 Timothy 1:3.

* A detailed discussion of this process and the factors involved in making a personal, conscientious decision is set out in *The Watchtower* of March 1, 1989, pages 30-1.

QUESTIONS FROM READERS

First John 4:18 tells us: "There is no fear in love, but perfect love throws fear outside." But Peter wrote: "Have love for the whole association of brothers, be in fear of God." (1 Peter 2:17) How can we harmonize these two verses?

Both Peter and John were apostles who had learned directly from Jesus Christ himself. We can thus be confident that what they wrote does harmonize. As to the verses quoted above, the key is that the two apostles were speaking of different sorts of fear.

Let us first consider Peter's counsel. As the context shows, Peter was offering fellow Christians inspired advice on their attitude toward those in authority. Put another way, he was commenting on the proper view of subjection in certain realms. Thus, he advised Christians to be subject to men who held authoritative positions in human governments, such as kings or governors. (1 Peter 2:13, 14) Continuing, Peter wrote: "Honor men of all sorts, have love for the whole association of brothers, be in fear of God, have honor for the king."—1 Peter 2:17.

Taken in context, it is clear that when Peter said that Christians should "be in fear of God," he meant that we should have a deep, reverential respect for God, a fear to displease the highest authority.—Compare Hebrews 11:7.

What about the apostle John's comment? Earlier in 1 John chapter 4, the apostle dealt with the need to test "inspired expressions" such as come from false prophets. Those expressions certainly do not originate with Jehovah God; they come from or reflect the wicked world.

In contrast, anointed Christians "originate with God." (1 John 4:1-6) That being so, John urged: "Beloved ones, let us continue loving one another, because love is from God." God took the initiative in showing love—he "sent forth his Son as a propitiatory sacrifice for our sins." (1 John 4:7-10) How should we respond?

Clearly, we should remain in union with our loving God. We should not be in terror of him nor quake at the prospect of approaching him in prayer. Earlier John counseled: "If our hearts do not condemn us, we have freeness of speech toward God; and whatever we ask we receive from him, because we are observing his commandments." (1 John 3:21, 22) Yes, a good conscience gives us the freedom to approach God without paralyzing or inhibiting fear. Out of love, we feel free to address, or approach, Jehovah in prayer. In this respect, "there is no fear in love."

Let us combine the two thoughts then. A Christian must always have a reverential fear of Jehovah, born of deep respect for his position, power, and justice. But we also love God as our Father and feel a closeness to him and a freeness to approach him. Rather than being inhibited by any terror of him, we trust that we can approach him, as a child feels open to approaching a loving parent.—James 4:8.