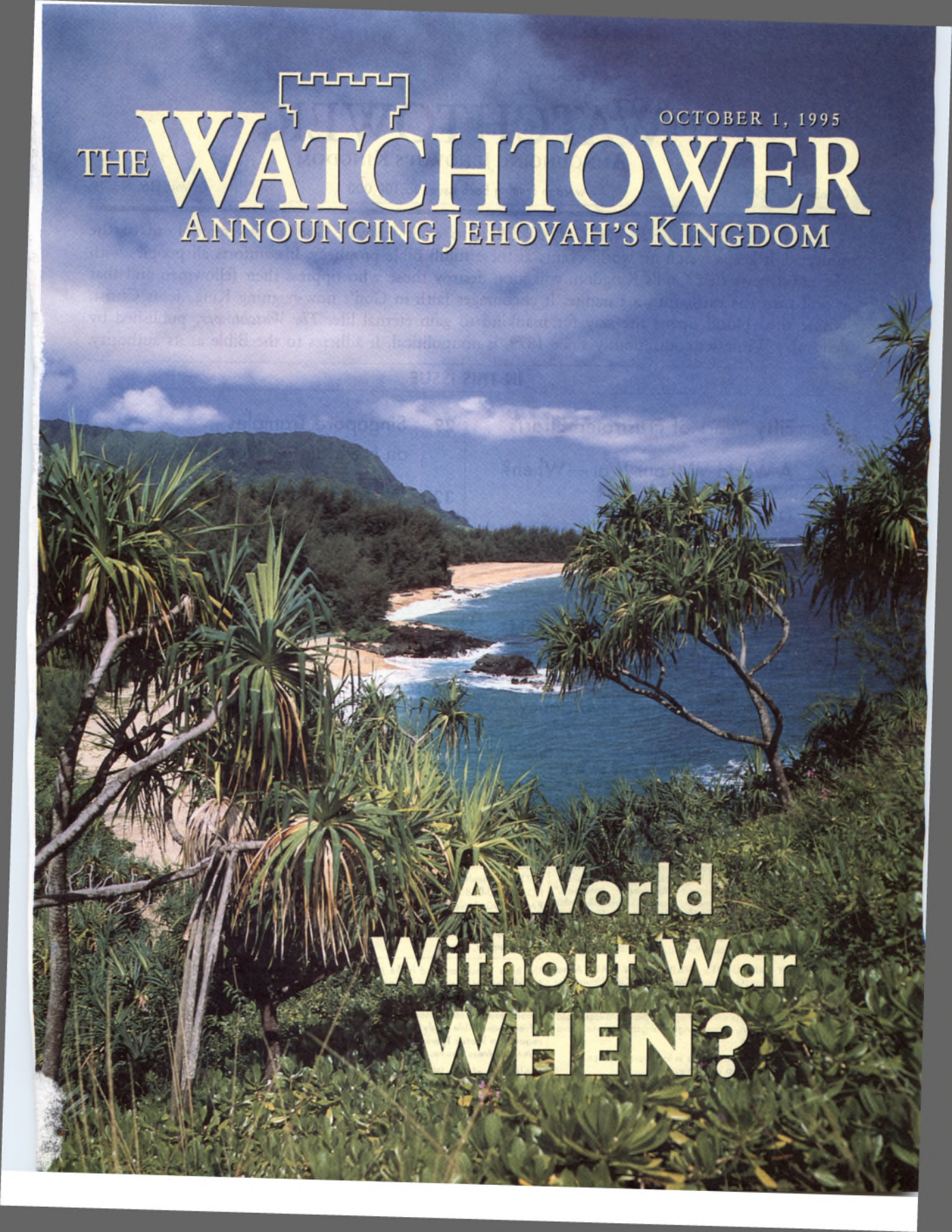




OCTOBER 1, 1995

# THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

**A World  
Without War  
WHEN?**

# THE WATCHTOWER®

## ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

October 1, 1995

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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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# 50 YEARS of frustrated efforts



OCTOBER 24, 1995, marks the 50th anniversary of the United Nations. All 185 current member States are committed to the organization's original principles and goals as expressed in that charter: to maintain international peace and security; to suppress acts of aggression that threaten world peace; to encourage friendly relations among nations; to protect the fundamental freedoms of all peoples without discrimination based on race, sex, language, or religion; and to achieve international cooperation in solving economic, social, and cultural problems.

For 50 years the United Nations organization has made notable efforts to bring about world peace and security. Arguably, it may have prevented a third world war, and the wholesale destruction of human life through the use of nuclear bombs has not been repeated. The United Nations has provided millions of children with food and medicine. It has contributed to improved health standards in many countries, providing, among other things, safer drinking water and immunization against dangerous diseases. Millions of refugees have received humanitarian assistance.

In recognition of its accomplishments, the United Nations organization has been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize five times. Yet, the lamentable fact of life is that we still do not live in a world without war.

## Peace and Security—Unattained Goals

After 50 years of efforts, peace and security are still unattained goals. In a recent speech to the United Nations General Assembly, the president of the United States expressed his frustration by saying that "this century so full of hope and opportunity and achievement has also been an age of deep destruction and despair."

As 1994 closed, *The New York Times* observed: "Nearly 150 wars or skirmishes are in progress in which thousands of people are dying—more civilians than

**"WE THE PEOPLES OF  
THE UNITED NATIONS DETERMINED**  
*to save succeeding generations from the  
scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime  
has brought untold sorrow to mankind, and  
to reaffirm faith in fundamental human  
rights, in the dignity and worth of the human  
person, in the equal rights of men and  
women and of nations large and small, . . ."*  
—Preamble to the charter of the United Nations.

soldiers by most reckonings—and hundreds of thousands are becoming refugees.” The United Nations Department of Public Information reported that since 1945 more than 20 million people have lost their lives as a result of armed conflicts. U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, Madeleine Albright, noted that “regional conflicts are now in many ways more brutal.” Violation of human rights and discrimination hit the news on a daily basis. Many nations seem to tolerate rather than befriend one another.

Sir David Hannay, Britain’s ambassador to the United Nations, admitted that “the United Nations has been, up to the 1980s, fairly close to being an honorable failure.” The secretary-general of the United Nations, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, lamented that there is a growing indifference and fatigue among member States when it comes to peacekeeping operations. He concluded that to many of the members, “the United Nations is not a priority number one.”

## The Media’s Influence

As powerful as the United Nations may appear to be, its efforts are often thwarted by politics and the media. The United Nations is powerless if it lacks the support of its members. But without the public’s approval, many UN members will not support the United Nations. For instance, according to *The Wall Street Journal*, the “spectacular failures in Somalia and Bosnia have persuaded many Americans that the organization isn’t just wasteful, but actually dangerous.” This attitude of the public has, in turn, persuaded some American politicians to propose reducing U.S. financial support of the United Nations.

News organizations are not shy when it comes to criticizing the United Nations severely. Terms like “total incompetence,” “cumbersome,” “inefficient,” and “paralyzed” have been unreservedly used when describing various aspects of UN operations. *The Washington Post National*

## FRUSTRATED EFFORTS

*Peace and security cannot exist as long as there are war, poverty, crime, and corruption. The United Nations recently released the following statistics.*

**Wars:** “Of the 82 armed conflicts between 1989 and 1992, 79 were domestic, many along ethnic lines; 90 per cent of casualties were civilian.”—United Nations Department of Public Information (UNDPI)

**Weapons:** “The ICRC [International Committee of the Red Cross] estimates more than 95 manufacturers in 48 countries are producing between 5 and 10 million anti-personnel mines each year.”—United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

“In Africa, there are about 30 million mines scattered over 18 countries.”—UNHCR

**Poverty:** “Worldwide, one out of every five people—more than one billion in all—live below the poverty line, and an estimated 13 million to 18 million die annually of poverty-related causes.”—UNDPI

**Crime:** “Reported crime has grown at a world-wide average of 5 per cent each year since the 1980s; in the USA alone, there are 35 million crimes committed annually.”—UNDPI

**Corruption:** “Public corruption is becoming commonplace. In some countries financial frauds are estimated to cost the equivalent of 10 per cent of the country’s annual gross domestic product.”—UNDPI

*Weekly Edition* recently stated that “the United Nations remains a slow-motion bureaucracy struggling to adapt to a real-time world.”

Another newspaper quoted Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali as expressing his frustration with the Rwanda massacres. He said: “It is a failure not only for the United Nations; it is a failure for the international community. And all of us are responsible for this failure.” A popular television news-special in 1993 stated that the United Nations “has failed to stop the greatest threat to peace—the spread of nuclear weapons.” The TV program spoke of a United Nations that “for decades has been mostly talk.”

This widespread feeling of disappointment weighs heavily on the minds of United Nations officials and adds to their frustration. Yet, despite the frustrations, at the 50th anniversary of the United Nations, many seem to have renewed optimism and are hoping for a fresh start. Although acknowledging the shortcomings of the United Nations, Ambassador Albright echoed the sentiments of many when she said: “We have to stop talking about where we’ve been, and we need to talk about where we’re going.”

Yes, where is the world going? Will there ever be a world without war? If so, what role will the United Nations play in it? Moreover, if you are God-fearing, you should ask, “What role will God play in it?”

## A World Without War—When?

**T**HE Charter of the United Nations went into effect on October 24, 1945. It is the most comprehensive strategy for world peace ever to be designed by humans. With its original 51 member States, the United Nations became the largest international organization in the history of the world. Also, for the first time ever, an international organization would have access to an army to enforce peace and security and bring about a world without war.

Today, with 185 member States, the United Nations is stronger than ever. Why, then, has the most powerful international organization in history failed to accomplish its noble objectives fully?

### Religion—A Great Hindrance

One major complication is the role that religion plays in world affairs. True, ever since the inception of the United Nations, the principal religions of the world have pledged their support to that organization.

Referring to its 50th anniversary, Pope John Paul II spoke of the United Nations as “the instrument *par excellence* for promoting and safeguarding peace.” His sentiments are shared by a global community of religious leaders. But this tactful liaison between religion and government cannot hide the fact that religion has been a hindrance and a nuisance to the United Nations.

For centuries religion has played a prime role in promoting or supporting nationalistic hatred, wars, and genocides. In recent years, under the cloak of religious fervor, neighbors have killed one another. The term “ethnic cleansing” has been widely used in connection with the war in the Balkans. However, the violent hatred that many there have for one another is based on religious affiliation rather than on race, since most of them have the same ethnic roots. Yes, religion must accept much of the responsibility for the bloodbath in the

former Yugoslavia, and the United Nations has not been able to stop it.

Appropriately, a college professor of religion recently stated that "in a post cold-war world of increasing religious militancies, an examination of religion and genocide may be one of our more pressing priorities, despite the discomfort it engenders." A new awareness of how religion is impeding the efforts for world peace is evident today.

A 1981 UN declaration stated: "*Concerned* by manifestations of intolerance and by the existence of discrimination in matters of religion or belief still in evidence in some areas of the world, *Resolved* to adopt all necessary measures for the speedy elimination of such intolerance in all its forms and manifestations and to prevent and combat discrimination on the ground of religion or belief."

In harmony with their declaration, the United Nations has declared 1995 to be the Year for Tolerance. Realistically speaking, though, will it ever be possible to achieve peace and security in a world divided by religion?

### The Future of Religion

A prophecy in the Bible book of Revelation provides the answer. It speaks of a symbolic "great harlot" that sits as "a queen" and has "a kingdom over the kings of the earth." This harlot lives "in shameless luxury" and has relations with the world's governments. These governments are depicted as "a scarlet-colored wild beast," upon which the harlot rides in comfort. (Revelation 17:1-5, 18; 18:7) Known as "Babylon the Great," this powerful and immoral woman is named after ancient Babylon, the cradle of idolatrous religion. Appropriately, today the harlot represents all the world's religions, which have mingled in with the affairs of governments.

The account goes on to say that, in time, God will put it into the hearts of militaristic components of the wild beast to take action. These "will hate the harlot and will make her devastated and naked, and will eat up her fleshy parts and will completely burn her with fire." (Revelation 17:16)\* Thus Jehovah God himself will have taken the initiative by maneuvering powerful nations into a campaign to remove false religion. The worldwide religious system, with its luxurious temples and shrines, will be completely devastated. Religious hindrance to establishing peace and security will then be out of their way. But even then, will there be real peace and security on earth?

### Imperfect Human Nature

Is there any guarantee that eliminating religion will really clear the way for a world without war? No. The United Nations will continue to face an ironic situation. On the one hand, people want peace and security. Yet, on the other hand, it is people who pose the greatest threat to peace and security. Hatred, pride, egotism, selfishness, and ignorance are human traits at the root of all conflicts and wars.—James 4:1-4.

The Bible foretold that in our day people would be "lovers of themselves, lovers of money, self-assuming, haughty, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, disloyal, having no natural affection, not open to any agreement, slanderers, without self-control, fierce, without love of goodness, betrayers, headstrong, puffed up with pride."—2 Timothy 3:1-4.

Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali acknowledged that "the world is suffering from a social and moral crisis which, in many

\* For an in-depth study of the prophecy of Revelation regarding Babylon the Great, see chapters 33 to 37 of the book *Revelation—Its Grand Climax At Hand!*, published in 1988 by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.

societies, is of immense proportions." No amount of diplomatic maneuvers can neutralize the harmful traits of imperfect human nature.—Compare Genesis 8:21; Jeremiah 17:9.

### **Jesus Christ—The Prince of Peace**

Clearly, the United Nations does not have the ability to bring world peace. Its members and supporters are all imperfect humans, notwithstanding their lofty goals. The Bible says that "to earthling man his way does not belong. It does not belong to man who is walking even to direct his step." (Jeremiah 10:23) Furthermore, God warns: "Do not put your trust in nobles, nor in the son of earthling man, to whom no salvation belongs."—Psalm 146:3.

The Bible foretells what Jehovah will accomplish through his Son, the "Prince of

Peace." Isaiah 9:6, 7 states: "There has been a child born to us, there has been a son given to us; and the princely rule will come to be upon his shoulder. And his name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. To the abundance of the princely rule and to peace there will be no end."

The nations of the world have been wearied by 50 years of frustrated efforts. Very soon they will destroy harlotlike religious organizations. Then Jesus Christ, the "King of kings and Lord of lords," and his army of heavenly warriors will dissolve all human governments and put to death all who reject God's sovereignty. (Revelation 19:11-21; compare Daniel 2:44.) By this means Jehovah God will bring about a world without war.

## **THE CHRISTIAN VIEW OF THE UNITED NATIONS**

In Bible prophecy, human governments are often symbolized by wild beasts. (Daniel 7:6, 12, 23; 8:20-22) Hence, for many decades the *Watchtower* magazine has identified the wild beasts of Revelation chapters 13 and 17 with today's worldly governments. This includes the United Nations, which is depicted in Revelation chapter 17 as a scarlet-colored beast with seven heads and ten horns.

However, this Scriptural position does not condone any form of disrespect toward governments or their officials. The Bible clearly states: "Let every soul be in subjection to the superior authorities, for there is no authority except by God; the existing authorities stand placed in their relative positions by God. Therefore he who opposes the authority has taken a stand against the arrangement of God; those who have taken a stand against

it will receive judgment to themselves." —Romans 13:1, 2.

Accordingly, Jehovah's Witnesses, who are maintaining strict political neutrality, do not interfere with human governments. They never foment revolution or participate in acts of civil disobedience. Rather, they recognize that some form of government is necessary to maintain law and order in human society.—Romans 13:1-7; Titus 3:1.

Jehovah's Witnesses view the United Nations organization as they do other governmental bodies of the world. They acknowledge that the United Nations continues to exist by God's permission. In harmony with the Bible, Jehovah's Witnesses render due respect to all governments and obey them as long as such obedience does not require that they sin against God. —Acts 5:29.

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# DOES GOD COME FIRST IN YOUR FAMILY?

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*"You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart."*—MARK 12:29, 30.

**“W**HICH commandment is first of all?” a scribe had asked Jesus. Rather than give his own opinion, Jesus answered his question by quoting from God’s Word at Deuteronomy 6:4, 5. He replied: “The first is, ‘Hear, O Israel, Jehovah our God is one Jehovah, and you must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole mind and with your whole strength.’”—Mark 12:28-30.

<sup>2</sup> To obey what Jesus called the first commandment—the most important one—requires that we always do what pleases Jehovah. Jesus did, even though on one occasion the apostle Peter took exception to Jesus’ course, and on another his own close relatives did too. (Matthew 16:21-23; Mark 3:21; John 8:29) What if you find yourself in a similar situation? Say that family members want you to cease your Bible study and your association with Jehovah’s Witnesses. Will you put God first by doing what pleases him? Does God come first, even when family members may oppose your efforts to serve him?

## **The Snare of Family Opposition**

<sup>3</sup> Jesus did not minimize the hardship

1. How important is it that we love Jehovah?
2. (a) What opposition did Jesus have to face? (b) What may at times make it difficult to please Jehovah?
3. (a) What may the consequences of Jesus’ teachings be to the family? (b) How can family members show whom they have greater affection for?

that may result when others in the family oppose the member that accepts his teachings. “A man’s enemies will be persons of his own household,” Jesus said. Yet, despite that sad consequence, Jesus showed who should come first by saying: “He that has greater affection for father or mother than for me is not worthy of me; and he that has greater affection for son or daughter than for me is not worthy of me.” (Matthew 10:34-37) We put Jehovah God first by following the teachings of his Son, Jesus Christ, who is “the exact representation of [God’s] very being.”—Hebrews 1:3; John 14:9.

<sup>4</sup> On another occasion when Jesus was discussing what is really involved in being his true follower, he said: “If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own soul, he cannot be my disciple.” (Luke 14:26) Jesus obviously did not mean that his followers should literally hate their family members, since he commanded people to love even their enemies. (Matthew 5:44) Rather, Jesus here meant that his followers must love family members *less* than they love God. (Compare Matthew 6:24.) In keeping with that understanding, the Bible says that Jacob “hated” Leah and loved Rachel, which meant that he did not love Leah as much as he loved her sister, Rachel. (Genesis 29:

4. (a) What did Jesus say was involved in being his follower? (b) In what sense are Christians to hate family members?

30-32) Even our own “soul,” or life, Jesus said, should be hated, or loved less, than Jehovah!

<sup>5</sup> As Creator and Life-Giver, Jehovah deserves complete devotion from all his servants. (Revelation 4:11) “I bend my knees to the Father,” the apostle Paul wrote, “to whom every family in heaven and on earth owes its name.” (Ephesians 3:14, 15) Jehovah created the family arrangement in such a marvelous way that family members have natural affection for one another. (1 Kings 3:25, 26; 1 Thessalonians 2:7) Satan the Devil, however, cunningly exploits this natural family affection, which includes a desire to please loved ones. He fans the flames of family opposition, and many find it a challenge to stand firm for Bible truth in the face of it.—Revelation 12:9, 12.

### Facing Up to the Challenge

<sup>6</sup> What will you do if you are forced to make a choice between pleasing God or pleasing a family member? Will you rationalize that God does not expect us to study his Word and apply its principles if doing so creates family dissension? But think about it. If you give in and cease your Bible study or association with Jehovah’s Witnesses, how will loved ones ever understand that accurate knowledge of the Bible is a life-and-death matter?—John 17:3; 2 Thessalonians 1:6-8.

<sup>7</sup> We might illustrate the situation this way: Perhaps a family member has an excessive craving for alcohol. Would ignoring or condoning his drinking problem be of

real benefit to him? Would it be better to keep the peace by giving in and not doing anything about his problem? No, you probably agree that it would be best to try to help him overcome his drinking problem, even if it means standing up to his wrath and threats. (Proverbs 29:25) Similarly, if you *truly* love your family members, you will not give in to their efforts to stop you from studying the Bible. (Acts 5:29) Only by taking a firm stand may you help them appreciate that living by Christ’s teachings means our very life.

<sup>8</sup> Putting God first may be very difficult at times. But remember, Satan also made it hard for Jesus to do God’s will. Yet Jesus never gave up; he endured even the agony of a torture stake for us. “Jesus Christ [is] our Savior,” the Bible says. “He died for us.” (Titus 3:6; 1 Thessalonians 5:10) Are we not grateful that Jesus did not give in to opposition? Because he endured a sacrificial death, we have the prospect of everlasting life in a peaceful new world of righteousness by exercising faith in his shed blood.—John 3:16, 36; Revelation 21:3, 4.

### A Possible Rich Reward

<sup>9</sup> Did you realize that you too can have a share in saving others, including dearly loved relatives? The apostle Paul urged Timothy: “Stay by these things [that you have been taught], for by doing this you will *save both yourself and those who listen to you.*” (1 Timothy 4:16) Timothy lived in a divided household, his Greek father being an unbeliever. (Acts 16:1; 2 Timothy 1:5; 3:14) Although we do not know whether Timothy’s father ever became a believer, the possibility that he may have was

5. How does Satan cunningly exploit the family arrangement?

6, 7. (a) How can family members be helped to appreciate the importance of Bible study and Christian association? (b) How can we demonstrate that we truly love our family members?

8. How do we benefit from the fact that Jesus faithfully did God’s will?

9. (a) How can Christians share in saving others? (b) What was Timothy’s family situation?

greatly enhanced by the faithful conduct of his wife, Eunice, and of Timothy.

<sup>10</sup> The Scriptures reveal that husbands and wives who steadfastly uphold Bible truth can contribute to *saving* their non-Christian mates by helping them become believers. The apostle Paul wrote: "If any brother has an unbelieving wife, and yet she is agreeable to dwelling with him, let him not leave her; and a woman who has an unbelieving husband, and yet he is agreeable to dwelling with her, let her not leave her husband. For, wife, how do you know but that you will save your husband? Or, husband, how do you know but that you will save your wife?" (1 Corinthians 7:12, 13, 16) The apostle Peter described how wives, in effect, could save their husbands, urging: "Be in subjection to your own husbands, in order that, if any are not obedient to the word, they may be won without a word through the conduct of their wives."—1 Peter 3:1.

<sup>11</sup> In recent years many thousands have become Jehovah's Witnesses after months and even years of opposing the Christian activity of their Witness relatives. What a reward this is for Christians who have remained steadfast, and what a blessing to

10. What can Christians do in behalf of their unbelieving mates?

11, 12. (a) What reward have thousands of Christians received, and what did they do to receive it? (b) Relate an experience of a family member being rewarded for faithful endurance.



#### **How did Sarah contribute to the success of her marriage?**

the onetime opposers! With emotion in his voice, a 74-year-old Christian elder related: "I often thank my wife and children for sticking with the truth during the years that I opposed them." He said that for three years he stubbornly refused even to allow his wife to speak to him about the Bible. "But she used psychology on me," he said, "and began witnessing to me as she rubbed my feet. How grateful I am that she did not give in to my opposition!"

<sup>12</sup> Another husband who opposed his

family wrote: 'I was the worst enemy of my wife because after she got the truth, I threatened her, and we quarreled every day; that is to say, I always started the quarrel. But all in vain; my wife stuck to the Bible. Twelve years thus passed in my wild fight against the truth and against my wife and child. For both of them, I was the Devil incarnate.' Eventually the man began to analyze his life. 'I saw how mean I had been,' he explained. 'I read the Bible, and thanks to its instruction, I am now a baptized Witness.' Think of the wife's grand reward, yes, having helped 'save her husband' by faithfully enduring his opposition for 12 years!

### Learning From Jesus

<sup>13</sup> The main lesson husbands and wives should learn from Jesus' life course is that of obedience to God. "I always do the things pleasing to him," Jesus said. "I seek, not my own will, but the will of him that sent me." (John 5:30; 8:29) Even when Jesus once found a particular aspect of God's will distasteful, he was obedient. "If you wish, remove this cup from me," he prayed. But he quickly added: "Nevertheless, let, not my will, but yours take place." (Luke 22:42) Jesus did not ask God to change His will; he showed that he truly loved God by obediently submitting to whatever was God's will for him. (1 John 5:3) Always putting God's will first, as Jesus did, is vitally important to success not only in single life but also in married and family life. Consider why this is so.

<sup>14</sup> As noted before, when believers put God first, they seek to remain with their

13. (a) What is the main lesson husbands and wives should learn from Jesus' life course?  
 (b) How can people who find it difficult to submit to God's will benefit from Jesus' example?  
 14. How do some Christians reason improperly?

unbelieving mates and are often able to help them come into line for salvation. Even when both mates are believers, their marriage may be far from ideal. Because of sinful inclinations, husbands and wives do not always have loving thoughts toward one another. (Romans 7:19, 20; 1 Corinthians 7:28) Some even go so far as to pursue getting a different mate, though they have no Scriptural grounds for divorce. (Matthew 19:9; Hebrews 13:4) They reason that for them this is best, that God's will for husbands and wives to stay together is too difficult. (Malachi 2:16; Matthew 19:5, 6) This is without question another case of thinking human thoughts rather than those of God.

<sup>15</sup> What a protection it is to put God first! Married couples who do so will try to stick together and work out their problems by applying the counsel of God's Word. They thus avoid all sorts of heartaches that result when his will is ignored. (Psalm 19:7-11) This is illustrated by a young couple who, when on the verge of divorce, decided to follow the Bible's counsel. Years later when the wife reflected on the joy she had had in her marriage, she said: "I must sit down and sob when I consider the possibility that I might have lived separate from my husband all these years. Then I pray to Jehovah God and thank him for his counsel and guidance that brought us together in such a happy relationship."

### Husbands, Wives—Imitate Christ!

<sup>16</sup> Jesus, who always put God first, set a marvelous example for both husbands and wives, and they do well to pay careful attention to it. Husbands are urged to imitate the way that Jesus exercises tender

15. Why is putting God first a protection?  
 16. What example did Jesus set for both husbands and wives?

headship over the members of the Christian congregation. (Ephesians 5:23) And Christian wives can learn from Jesus' flawless example of subjection to God.—1 Corinthians 11:3.

<sup>17</sup> The Bible commands: "Husbands, continue loving your wives, just as the Christ also loved the congregation and delivered up himself for it." (Ephesians 5:25) An important way that Jesus showed his love for his congregation of followers was by being their close friend. "I have called you friends," Jesus said, "because all the things I have heard from my Father I have made known to you." (John 15:15) Think of all the time Jesus spent talking with his disciples—the many, many discussions that he had with them—and of the confidence he placed in them! Is that not an excellent example for husbands?

<sup>18</sup> Jesus took a real interest in his disciples and had a genuine fondness for them. (John 13:1) When his teachings were unclear to them, he patiently took time in private to clarify matters. (Matthew 13:36-43) Husbands, is the spiritual welfare of your

17, 18. In what ways did Jesus set a fine example for husbands?

### Do You Remember?

- ☐ What may be the consequences of Jesus' teachings to many families?
- ☐ What reward have thousands of steadfast Christians received?
- ☐ What will help mates avoid immorality and divorce?
- ☐ What can husbands learn from the example of Jesus?
- ☐ How can wives contribute to a happy marriage?

wife of the same importance to you? Do you spend time with her, making sure that both of you have Bible truths clear in mind and heart? Jesus accompanied his apostles in the ministry, perhaps training each of them individually. Do you accompany your wife in the ministry, sharing in house-to-house visitations and in conducting Bible studies?

<sup>19</sup> Especially in dealing with his apostles' imperfections did Jesus provide a sterling example for husbands. During his last meal with his apostles, he could detect a recurring spirit of rivalry. Did he harshly criticize them? No, but he humbly washed the feet of each one. (Mark 9:33-37; 10:35-45; John 13:2-17) Do you show such patience with your wife? Rather than complain about a recurring weakness, do you patiently try to help her and reach her heart by your example? Wives are likely to respond to such loving compassion, as the apostles eventually did.

<sup>20</sup> Wives too need to consider Jesus, who never forgot that "the head of the Christ is God." He always submitted to his heavenly Father. Similarly, wives should not forget that "the head of a woman is the man," yes, that their husband is their head. (1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 5:23) The apostle Peter urged Christian wives to consider the example of "holy women" of earlier times, especially that of Sarah, who "used to obey Abraham, calling him 'lord.'"—1 Peter 3:5, 6.

<sup>21</sup> Sarah evidently gave up a comfortable

19. How does the way Jesus dealt with his apostles' recurring weaknesses set an example for husbands?

20. What should Christian wives never forget, and who is provided as an example for them?

21. Why was the marriage of Abraham and Sarah a success but that of Lot and his wife a failure?

home in a prosperous city to live in tents in a foreign land. Why? Because she preferred that life-style? Not likely. Because her husband asked her to go? No doubt this was a factor, since Sarah loved and respected Abraham because of his godly qualities. (Genesis 18:12) But the main reason that she went along with her husband was her love for Jehovah and her heartfelt desire to follow God's direction. (Genesis 12:1) She found delight in obedience to God. Lot's wife, on the other hand, hesitated to do God's will and thus looked back longingly at the things left behind in her hometown of Sodom. (Genesis 19:15, 25, 26; Luke 17:

32) What a tragic end to that marriage—all because of her disobedience to God!

<sup>22</sup> So as a husband or a wife, it is vital that you ask yourself, 'Does God come first in our family? Do I truly endeavor to fulfill the family role that God has granted to me? Do I make a genuine effort to love my mate and help that one gain or maintain a good relationship with Jehovah?' In most families there are also children. We will next consider the role of parents and the need for both them and their children to put God first.

22. (a) What self-examination will family members wisely make? (b) What will we consider in our next study?

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## PARENTS AND CHILDREN: PUT GOD FIRST!

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*"Fear the true God and keep his commandments."*—ECCLESIASTES 12:13.

**A** PROPHECY regarding Jesus Christ said that there would "be enjoyment by him in the fear of Jehovah." (Isaiah 11:3) His fear was essentially a profound reverence and awe of God, a fear to displease God because he loved him. Parents and children need to cultivate such Christ-like fear of God, which will bring them enjoyment as it did Jesus. They need to put God first in their lives by obeying his commandments. According to one Bible writer, "this is the whole obligation of man."—Ecclesiastes 12:13.

1. What fear do parents and children need to cultivate, and what will it bring them?

<sup>2</sup> The most important commandment of the Law, namely, that we should 'love Jehovah with all our heart, soul, and vital force,' was given primarily to parents. This is shown by the further words of the Law: "You must inculcate [these words about loving Jehovah] in your son and speak of them when you sit in your house and when you walk on the road and when you lie down and when you get up." (Deuteronomy 6:4-7; Mark 12:28-30) Parents were thus commanded to put God first by loving him themselves and by teaching their children to do the same.

2. What was the most important commandment of the Law, and to whom was it primarily given?

## A Christian Responsibility

<sup>3</sup> Jesus demonstrated the importance of giving even young children attention. On one occasion toward the end of Jesus' earthly ministry, people began bringing their infants to him. Evidently believing that Jesus was too busy to be bothered, the disciples tried to stop the people. But Jesus reprimanded his disciples: "Let the young children come to me, and do not try to stop them." Jesus even "took the children into his arms," thus showing in a touching way the importance of giving attention to young ones.—Luke 18:15-17; Mark 10:13-16.

<sup>4</sup> Jesus also made it clear that his followers had the responsibility to teach others besides their own children. After his death and resurrection, Jesus "appeared to upward of five hundred brothers at one time"—including some parents. (1 Corinthians 15:6) Apparently this occurred at a mountain in Galilee where his 11 apostles were also gathered. There Jesus urged all of them: "Go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations, . . . teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you." (Matthew 28:16-20) No Christian can rightly neglect this command! For fathers and mothers to carry it out requires that they care for their children as well as share in the public preaching and teaching work.

<sup>5</sup> Significantly, even the apostles had to balance their family responsibilities with the obligation to preach as well as shepherd the flock of God. (John 21:1-3, 15-17; Acts 1:8) This is because most, if not all, of them

3. How did Jesus demonstrate the importance of giving attention to children?

4. Who were given the command to "make disciples of people of all the nations," and what would this require them to do?

5. (a) What shows that most, if not all, of the apostles were married and so possibly had children? (b) What counsel did family heads need to take seriously?

were married. Thus the apostle Paul explained: "We have authority to lead about a sister as a wife, even as *the rest of the apostles* and the Lord's brothers and Cephas, do we not?" (1 Corinthians 9:5; Matthew 8:14) Some apostles may also have had children. Early historians, such as Eusebius, say that Peter did. All early Christian parents needed to heed the Scriptural counsel: "Certainly if anyone does not provide for those who are his own, and especially for those who are members of his household, he has disowned the faith and is worse than a person without faith."—1 Timothy 5:8.

## The Primary Responsibility

<sup>6</sup> Christian elders who have families today are in a situation similar to that of the apostles. They must balance their responsibility to care for the spiritual and physical needs of their families with their obligation to preach publicly and to shepherd the flock of God. Which activity should take priority? *The Watchtower* of March 15, 1964, noted: "[The father's] first obligation is to his family, and he could not, in fact, properly serve if he did not take care of this obligation."

<sup>7</sup> So fathers must put God first by heeding the command 'to go on bringing up their children in the discipline and mental-regulating of Jehovah.' (Ephesians 6:4) That responsibility cannot be handed over to someone else, even though a father may also have an assignment to oversee activities in the Christian congregation. How can such fathers care for their responsibilities—providing for family members physically, spiritually, and emotionally—and at the same time, preside and provide oversight in the congregation?

6. (a) What challenge do Christian elders with families have? (b) What is an elder's primary responsibility?

7. How do Christian fathers put God first?



**Often a mature Christian woman can provide a younger woman with needed help**

### Providing Needed Support

<sup>8</sup> Clearly, elders with family responsibilities can benefit from support. The above-quoted *Watchtower* noted that a Christian wife can be of support to her husband. It said: "She can make it as convenient as possible for him to prepare his various assignments, and help to save precious time for him and for herself by having a good schedule in the home, having meals on time, being ready to leave for congregation meetings promptly. . . . Under the direction of her husband, the Christian wife can do much to train up the children in the way they should go to please Jehovah." (Proverbs 22:6) Yes, the wife was created to be "a helper," and her husband will wisely welcome her assistance. (Genesis 2:18) Her support can enable him to care more effectively for both his family and his congregational responsibilities.

8. How can the wife of an elder support him?

<sup>9</sup> However, wives of Christian elders are not the only ones who can share in activity that supports an overseer who must both "shepherd the flock of God" and care for his own household. (1 Peter 5:2) Who else can? The apostle Paul urged the brothers in Thessalonica to have regard for those "presiding over" them. Yet, going on and addressing these same brothers—specifically those not presiding—Paul wrote:

"We exhort you, brothers, admonish the disorderly, speak consolingly to the depressed souls, support the weak, be long-suffering toward all."—1 Thessalonians 5:12-14.

<sup>10</sup> How fine when the brothers in a congregation have the love that moves them to comfort the depressed, to support the weak, to admonish the disorderly, and to be long-suffering toward all! The brothers in Thessalonica, who had recently embraced Bible truth despite suffering great tribulation, applied Paul's counsel to do this. (Acts 17:1-9; 1 Thessalonians 1:6; 2:14; 5:11) Think of the fine effect their loving cooperation had of strengthening and uniting the whole congregation! Similarly, when the brothers

9. Who in the Thessalonica congregation were encouraged to help other congregation members?

10. What fine effect does the loving help of all the brothers have on the congregation?

today comfort, support, and admonish one another, it makes the shepherding responsibilities of elders, who often have families to care for, much easier to handle.

<sup>11</sup> Were women included among the “brothers” that the apostle Paul was addressing? Yes, they were, since many women became believers. (Acts 17:1, 4; 1 Peter 2:17; 5:9) What kind of help could such women render? Well, there were younger women in the congregations who had a problem controlling their “sexual impulses” or who became “depressed souls.” (1 Timothy 5:11-13) Some women today have similar problems. What they may need most is simply a listening ear or a shoulder to cry on. Often a mature Christian woman is the best person to provide such help. She can, for example, discuss personal problems with another woman that a Christian man by himself could not appropriately handle. Highlighting the value of providing such help, Paul wrote: “Let the aged women be . . . teachers of what is good; that they may recall the young women to their senses to love their husbands, to love their children, to be sound in mind, chaste, workers at home, good, subjecting themselves to their own husbands, so that the word of God may not be spoken of abusively.”—Titus 2:3-5.

<sup>12</sup> What a blessing humble sisters are in a congregation when they cooperatively support both their husbands and the elders! (1 Timothy 2:11, 12; Hebrews 13:17) Elders with family responsibilities especially benefit when all cooperate to help one another in a spirit of love and when all are submissive to the direction of the appointed shepherds.—1 Peter 5:1, 2.

11. (a) Why is it reasonable to conclude that women were included in the term “brothers”? (b) What help can a mature Christian woman render to younger women today?

12. Whose direction is it vital that all in the congregation follow?

## Parents, What Do You Put First?

<sup>13</sup> Years ago a prominent entertainer observed: “I see successful men running companies with hundreds of men; they know how to deal with every situation, how to discipline and reward in the business world. But the biggest business they are running is their family and they fail it.” Why? Is it not because they put business and other interests first and neglect God’s counsel? His Word says: “These words that I am commanding . . . , you must inculcate . . . in your son.” And this was to be done daily. Parents need to give unstintingly of their time—and especially of their love and deep concern.—Deuteronomy 6:6-9.

<sup>14</sup> The Bible reminds us that children are an inheritance from Jehovah. (Psalm 127:3) Do you care for your children as God’s property, a gift that he has entrusted to you? Your child will likely respond if you take him or her into your arms, thus demonstrating your loving care and attention. (Mark 10:16) But to ‘train up a child according to the way for him’ requires more than simply providing it hugs and kisses. To be equipped with the wisdom to avoid life’s pitfalls, a child needs loving discipline as well. A parent shows genuine love by ‘looking for his child with discipline.’—Proverbs 13:1, 24; 22:6.

<sup>15</sup> The necessity of parental discipline can be seen from a school counselor’s description of children who come to her office: “They are pitiable, laden-hearted, and lost. They are crying as they talk about how things really are. Many—many more than one might think—have attempted suicide,

13. How do many fathers fail their families?

14. (a) How should parents care for their children? (b) What does proper training of children include?

15. What shows the necessity of parental discipline?



***What comfort can parents with wayward children get from the Scriptures?***

youngsters, like the prodigal son in Jesus' illustration, reject parental guidance and go astray. (Luke 15:11-16) That in itself, however, may not mean that the parents did not fulfill their responsibility to train up their child properly, as Proverbs 22:6 directs. The statement about 'training up a child according to the way for him and he will not depart from it' was given as a general rule. Sadly, like the prodigal, some children will 'despise obedience to a parent.'—Proverbs 30:17.

<sup>17</sup> A father of a wayward son lamented: "I have tried

not because they are so happy they just can't stand it; it's because they feel so unhappy, uncared about, and stressed out because at such a young age they are 'in charge' and it's just too much to handle." She added: "It is a scary thing for a young person to feel that he is running things." True, children may balk at discipline, but they actually appreciate parental guidelines and restrictions. They are happy that their parents care enough to set limits for them. "It's taken a terrific load off my mind," said one teenager whose parents did.

<sup>16</sup> Yet, despite having parents who love them and who provide fine training, some

16. (a) What happens to some children reared in Christian homes? (b) Why does the wayward course of a child not necessarily mean that the training given by the parents was not good?

and tried to reach his heart. I do not know what to do because I have tried so many things. Nothing has worked." Hopefully, such wayward children will, in time, recall the loving training they received and return as did the prodigal. The fact remains, though, that some children rebel and do immoral things to the great hurt of their parents. Parents may draw comfort from knowing that even the greatest teacher to live on earth saw his longtime student Judas Iscariot betray him. And Jehovah himself was no doubt saddened when many of his own spirit sons rejected his counsel and proved rebellious through no fault on His part.—Luke 22:47, 48; Revelation 12:9.

17. From what may parents of wayward children draw comfort?

## Children—Whom Will You Please?

<sup>18</sup> Jehovah urges you young ones: “Be obedient to your parents in union with the Lord.” (Ephesians 6:1) Young people put God first by doing this. Do not be foolish! “Anyone foolish disrespects the discipline of his father,” God’s Word says. Neither should you arrogantly presume that you can do without discipline. The fact is that “there is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet are not washed from their filthiness.” (Proverbs 15:5; 30:12, *American Standard Version*) So heed the divine direction—“listen” to, “treasure up,” “do not forget,” “pay attention” to, “observe,” and “do not forsake” the commandments and discipline of parents.—Proverbs 1:8; 2:1; 3:1; 4:1; 6:20.

<sup>19</sup> You have powerful reasons for obeying Jehovah. He loves you, and he has given his laws, including the law for children to obey their parents, to protect you and to help you enjoy a happy life. (Isaiah 48:17) He has also given his Son to die for you so that

18. How can children show that they put God first?

19. (a) What powerful reasons do children have for obeying Jehovah? (b) How can young ones show that they are grateful to God?

### Can You Answer?

- ☐ What responsibilities did Jesus’ early followers need to balance?
- ☐ What responsibility must Christian parents fulfill?
- ☐ What help is available to Christian elders with families?
- ☐ What valuable service may sisters perform in the congregation?
- ☐ What counsel and direction is it vital that children heed?

you can be saved from sin and death and enjoy everlasting life. (John 3:16) Are you grateful? God is watching from the heavens, examining your heart to see if you truly love him and appreciate his provisions. (Psalm 14:2) Satan is also watching, and he is taunting God, claiming that you will not obey Him. You make Satan glad and Jehovah “feel hurt” when you disobey God. (Psalm 78:40, 41) Jehovah appeals to you: “Be wise, my son, and make my heart rejoice [by being obedient to me], that I may make a reply to him that is taunting me.” (Proverbs 27:11) Yes, the question is, Whom will you please, Satan or Jehovah?

<sup>20</sup> It is not easy to do God’s will in the face of pressures that Satan and his world exert upon you. It can be scary. One youth noted: “Being scared is like being cold. You can do something about it.” She explained: “When you’re cold, you put on a sweater. If you’re still cold, you put on another one. And you keep on putting something on until the coldness goes away and you’re no longer cold. So praying to Jehovah when you’re scared is like putting on a sweater when you’re cold. If after one prayer I’m still scared, I pray again, and again, and again, until I don’t feel scared anymore. And it works. It has kept me out of trouble!”

<sup>21</sup> If we really try to put God first in our lives, Jehovah will back us up. He will strengthen us, providing angelic help when it is needed, even as he did for his Son. (Matthew 18:10; Luke 22:43) Be courageous all you parents and children. Have Christlike fear, and it will bring you enjoyment. (Isaiah 11:3) Yes, “fear the true God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole obligation of man.”—Ecclesiastes 12:13.

20. How has one youth maintained the courage to serve Jehovah even when she gets scared?

21. How will Jehovah back us up if we really try to put him first in our lives?

# FOLLOWING IN MY PARENTS' FOOTSTEPS

AS TOLD BY HILDA PADGETT

“My life is dedicated to the service of the Most High,” read the press report, “and I cannot serve two masters.” Those words from my statement to the British Ministry of Labour and National Service authorities in 1941 presented my reason for refusing their direction to do hospital work during World War II. Shortly thereafter I was convicted and sentenced to three months in prison for my refusal.

**W**HAT had landed me in this predicament? No, it was not some youthful whim or rebellious behavior. Rather, the reasons date back to when I was just a child.

## Dad's Zeal for the Kingdom

I was born on June 5, 1914, in Horsforth near Leeds, in the north of England. My parents, Atkinson and Pattie Padgett, were Sunday-school teachers and choir members at the Primitive Methodist Chapel where Dad played the organ. When I was a baby, our home was a happy one except for one thing. World conditions worried Dad. He hated war and violence and believed the Bible command: “Thou shalt not kill.”—Exodus 20:13, *King James Version*.

In 1915 the government urged all young men to join the army voluntarily and thus avoid conscription. With some misgivings Dad stood all day in the rain waiting his turn to register as a soldier. The very next day, his whole life changed!

While working as a plumber at a big house, he talked with other workmen about world events. The gardener handed him a small tract, *Gathering the Lord's Jewels*.

Dad took it home, read it, and reread it. “If that’s the truth,” he said, “then everything else is wrong.” The next day, he requested more information, and for three weeks into the early hours of the morning, he studied the Bible. He knew he had found the truth! Sunday, January 2, 1916, his diary says: “Went to Chapel in morning, went to I.B.S.A. [International Bible Students Association, as Jehovah’s Witnesses were then known in England] at night—studying Hebrews 6:9-20—my first visit to the brethren.”

Opposition soon arose. Our relatives and chapel friends thought Dad was crazy. But he had made up his mind. He lived for the meetings and study, and by March he had symbolized his dedication to Jehovah by water baptism. After a few weeks of Dad’s going alone to the meetings, Mother had had enough. She put me into my pram and walked the five miles to Leeds, arriving just as the meeting finished. You can imagine Dad’s joy. From then on, our family was united in Jehovah’s service.

Dad’s position was very difficult—a volunteer in the army and then within a few weeks, a conscientious objector. When

called up he refused to handle a gun, and by July 1916 he faced the first of five court-martials, being sentenced to 90 days in prison. After serving the first sentence, Dad had a fortnight's leave, followed by another court-martial and 90 more days in prison. Following his second term of imprisonment, he was transferred to the Royal Army Medical Corps, and on February 12, 1917, he set sail by troop ship for Rouen, France. His diary relates that there he became more disgusted each day with his position. He realized that he was simply patching soldiers up for them to go back and fight.

Again he refused to cooperate. This time the court-martial sentenced him to five years in the British military prison in Rouen. When Dad kept asking to be transferred to a civil prison as a conscientious objector, he was punished with three months on bread and water, followed by regular prison diet until his weight increased; then the whole process was repeated. He was handcuffed with his hands behind his back by day and with his hands in front during the night and at mealtimes. All his life, he bore scars on his wrists where the handcuffs that were too small had been clipped into his flesh, resulting in festering sores. He also had leg chains connected to his waist.

The army authorities did everything in their power to break his spirit but to no avail. His Bible and books were taken from him. He had no letters from home, nor could he send any. After two years he decided to demonstrate his sincerity by going on a hunger strike. For seven days he kept his resolve, neither eating nor drinking, resulting in his transfer to the prison hospital, seriously ill. He proved his point although he almost lost his life as a result. In later years he admitted he had been wrong to jeopardize his life in this way, and he would never take such a course again.

The war ended in November 1918 with Dad still in prison in Rouen, but early the next year, he was moved to a civil prison in England. Imagine his joy to receive all Mother's letters and parcels that had accumulated, together with his precious Bible and books! He was taken to Winchester Prison, where he met up with a young brother whose wartime experiences had been similar to his own. His name was Frank Platt, who later served in London Bethel for many years. They made arrangements to meet the next day, but by then Frank had been transferred elsewhere.

On April 12, 1919, Mother received a telegram: "Hallelujah! Coming home—calling London." What a time of rejoicing after three years of test, trial, and separation! Dad's first thought was to call in and meet the London Bethel brothers. At 34 Craven Terrace, he received a loving welcome. After a bath and a shave and dressed in a borrowed suit and hat, Dad returned home. Can you imagine our reunion? I was then nearly five, and I did not remember him.

The first meeting Dad attended after gaining his freedom was the Memorial. Upon climbing the steps to the hall, whom should he meet but Frank Platt, who had been moved to a military hospital in Leeds. What joy they had in sharing their experiences! From then on until his release, Frank made ours his second home.

### **Mother's Faithful Service**

All the time Dad was away, Mother took in washing to supplement her meager income from the authorities. The brothers were so kind to us. Every few weeks one of the congregation elders handed her a little envelope containing an anonymous gift. Mother always said it was the love of the brothers that brought her close to Jehovah and helped her endure through those trying

times. She faithfully attended the congregation meetings throughout Dad's absence. Her most severe test was when, for over a year, she had no idea whether Dad was alive or dead. As an added burden, in 1918 both Mother and I caught the Spanish flu. People were dying all around us. Neighbors who went to help neighbors caught the disease and died. No doubt the food shortages at that time helped to lower people's resistance to infection.

The words of the apostle Peter proved so true for our family: "After you have suffered a little while, . . . God . . . will make you firm, he will make you strong"! (1 Peter 5:10) My parents' suffering built into them an unshakable faith in Jehovah, an absolute assurance that he does care for us and that nothing can separate us from God's love. I was especially blessed to have such an upbringing in the faith.—Romans 8:38, 39; 1 Peter 5:7.

### Youthful Service

Following Dad's release, Kingdom service became the center of our lives. I cannot remember ever missing a meeting, except for sickness. Soon after his return home, Dad sold his plate camera and Mother's gold bracelet to get money to attend a convention. Though we could not afford vacations, we never missed these gatherings, including those in London.

The first two or three years after the war were times of refreshing. Dad and Mother took full advantage of all opportunities to fellowship and associate. I can recall how we would visit other brothers and sisters, and I, as a little girl, would sit painting and drawing while my seniors talked together for hours and hours about new understandings of truth. Talking together, having song sessions around the organ, enjoying sweet

fellowship, made them very happy and refreshed.

My parents were very strict with my training. At school I stood out as different, even at five years of age, taking my "New Testament" to read while the class learned the catechism. Later I was paraded before the whole school as a "conscientious objector" because I would not take part in Remembrance Day celebrations.\* I do not regret my upbringing. In fact, it was a protection and made it easier to stay on the 'narrow road.' Wherever my parents went, to meetings or in the service, I was there.—Matthew 7:13, 14.

I especially remember that Sunday morning when I first began preaching on my own. I was just 12 years old. When in my teens, I can remember announcing one Sunday morning that I was going to stay at home. No one criticized me or made me go out, so I sat in the garden studying my Bible and feeling thoroughly uncomfortable. After a week or two of this, I said to Dad: "I think I'll come with you this morning!" From then on I never looked back.

What a wonderful year 1931 was! Not only did we receive our new name, Jehovah's Witnesses, but I was immersed while at a national convention at Alexandra Palace, London. I shall never forget that day. We wore long, black robes, and mine happened to be a wet one that had already been used by another candidate!

My ambition as a child always was to be a colporteur, as full-time preachers were then known. As I grew older, I felt I ought to do more in Jehovah's service. So in March 1933, at the age of 18, I joined the ranks of full-time servants.

A special joy for us were "Pioneer Weeks"

\* In commemoration of the end of hostilities in 1918 and, later, 1945.

in certain big cities, when up to a dozen full-time servants would come together, stay with local brothers, and work as a team. We delivered booklets to the religious leaders and other prominent men. It took courage to approach them. Mostly we were received with scorn, and not a few of us had doors slammed in our face. Not that this worried us, for so great was our enthusiasm that we rejoiced to be reproached for Christ's name.—Matthew 5:11, 12.

In Leeds we converted a pram, a tricycle, and Dad's motorcycle and sidecar, and later his car to carry transcription machines. Two brothers would go into a street with the machine, put on a musical record to alert people and bring them to their doors, then follow this with a five-minute talk recorded by Brother Rutherford. They would thereafter move on to the next street while we, the publishers, followed and offered Bible literature.

For years, every Sunday evening after the meeting, we would go to the Town Hall Square where there was a Speaker's Corner and give support by listening to one of the hour-long talks of Brother Rutherford, handing out leaflets and contacting any who showed interest. We became well-known there. Even the police respected us. One evening we gathered as usual when, in the distance, we heard the sound of drums and a band. Soon a parade of about a hundred Fascists came down the road. They marched around behind us and came to a halt with their flags held high. The band stopped, and silence reigned just as Brother Rutherford's voice boomed: "Let them salute their flags and hail men if they wish. We shall worship and hail only Jehovah our God!" We wondered just what would happen next! Nothing happened, except that they got a good witness, and the police made

them keep quiet so that we could hear the rest of the public lecture.

By now the phonograph was coming into use to help us give a grand witness. On the doorstep, we carefully kept our eyes on the record to encourage people to listen for a full five minutes to the recorded Bible sermon. Householders often invited us in and were glad for us to come back and play more records.

The year 1939 was very busy and tough, with outbreaks of opposition and violence. Prior to one of our conventions, the brothers experienced quite a bit of street mobbing and shouting. So during the assembly, they made plans for a special squad of brothers in cars to preach in the troubled areas while the sisters and the other brothers went where it was safer. Working with a group on one street, I went down a passage to visit the houses behind. While at a door, I heard a commotion starting up—there was shouting and crying out in the street. I just continued talking to the person at the door, prolonging the conversation until I could hear that things had quietened down. Then I walked up the passage and out onto the street to find that the other brothers and sisters had panicked when they could not find me! Later in the day, though, the troublemakers tried to disrupt our meeting, but they were escorted out by the brothers.

### World War II Strikes

By now conscription was in force, and many young brothers were imprisoned for from 3 to 12 months. Dad then received an added privilege, that of prison visitor. Every Sunday he conducted the *Watchtower* Study in the local jail. Wednesday evenings he visited the brothers in their cells. Having had such a long and hard prison experience himself during the first world war, he was especially glad to serve those

going through similar trials. This he did for 20 years, right up until his death in 1959.

By 1941 we were getting used to the bitterness and hostility that many people expressed over our position of neutrality. It was not easy to stand on the streets with the magazines and face this. At the same time, we rejoiced to help the refugees

housed in our area. Latvians, Poles, Estonians, Germans—what a joy to see their eyes light up when they saw *The Watchtower* or *Consolation* (now *Awake!*) in their own language!

Then came my trial for the neutral stand I took

*The tract that sparked  
Dad's interest in the truth*

*Hilda Padgett with her parents,  
Atkinson and Pattie*



during World War II. Locked in my cell for 19 hours out of every 24, I found prison life tough. The first three days were the hardest, for I was alone. On the fourth day, I was called to the governor's office where I found two other girls standing. One of the girls whispered to me: "What are you in for?" I said: "You'd be surprised if you knew." She asked in a tense whisper: "Are you a JW?" The other girl heard her and asked us both: "Are you JWs?" and all three of us threw our arms round one another. We were no longer alone!

#### **Delightful Full-Time Service**

Released from prison, I continued my full-time service, and a young girl of 16 who had just left school joined me. We moved to Ilkley, a beautiful town on the edge of the Yorkshire Dales. For a full six months, we tried hard to find a suitable place for our meetings. Finally we rented a small garage, which we converted into a Kingdom Hall. Dad came to our rescue, providing lighting and heating. He also decorated the building for us. For years the nearby congregation supported us, assigning brothers every week to give public talks. With Jehovah's blessing we prospered and grew, and eventually a congregation was established.

In January 1959, Dad suddenly fell ill. I

was called home, and he died in April. The years that followed were hard ones. Mother's health failed and with it her memory, making it a struggle for me. But Jehovah's spirit kept me going, and I was able to care for her right up to her death in 1963.

I have had so many blessings from Jehovah over the years. There are too many to

recount. I have seen my home congregation grow and divide four times, sending out publishers and pioneers, some as missionaries to countries as far apart as Bolivia, Laos, and Uganda. The prospect of marriage and settling down never worked out for me. It has not made me sad; I've been too busy. Although I have no fleshly relatives of my own, I have many children and grandchildren in the Lord, even a hundredfold.  
—Mark 10:29, 30.



I often invite young pioneers and other youths to my home to enjoy Christian fellowship. We prepare together for the Watchtower Study. We also relate experiences and sing Kingdom songs, just as my parents used to do. Surrounded by a cheery group of young people, I keep a young and happy outlook. There is no better life for me than pioneer service. I am grateful to Jehovah that I have had the privilege of following in my parents' footsteps. My prayer is that I may continue serving Jehovah throughout eternity.

# GUARD YOUR SENSE OF URGENCY



**W**HAT is one sure, God-approved way to keep on serving Jehovah whole-souled? It is to have a genuine sense of urgency deep in our hearts. To serve God in a whole-souled manner means to serve him with the whole of our being, and it requires earnest, implicit obedience to everything he asks us to do.

The prophet Moses stressed this need when he instructed the nation of Israel: "You must love Jehovah your God with all your heart and all your soul and all your vital force." (Deuteronomy 6:5) Centuries later that same command was repeated by Christ Jesus: "You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole

mind.” (Matthew 22:37) The apostle Paul alluded to this same requirement when he told the Ephesians to do “the will of God whole-souled,” and when he urged the Colossians: “Whatever you are doing, work at it whole-souled as to Jehovah, and not to men.”—Ephesians 6:6; Colossians 3:23.

It is difficult, however, to put our heart and soul into our service to God if we do not have a feeling of urgency deep within ourselves or if the sense of urgency we once had has now become dull—perhaps lost altogether. Today, we live in a time of urgency unparalleled by any other period in man’s history.

### Specific Periods of Urgency

In pre-Christian times there were several periods of urgency. Noah’s day and the period leading up to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah certainly were times of real urgency. (2 Peter 2:5, 6; Jude 7) The pre-Flood years were undoubtedly filled with urgent activity. Even though Noah and his family did not know precisely when the Deluge would begin, their “godly fear” would have ensured that they did not procrastinate.—Hebrews 11:7.

Similarly, before the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the angels “became ur-

gent with Lot” and told him: “Escape for your soul!” (Genesis 19:15, 17) Yes, on that occasion too, urgency saved righteous lives. Centuries later Jewish captives in Babylon were exhorted: “Turn away, turn away, get out of there, touch nothing unclean; get out from the midst of her.” (Isaiah 52:11) In 537 B.C.E., about 200,000 exiles hastened out of Babylon in obedience to that urgent prophetic command.

The sense of urgency in each of those situations resulted in whole-souled service by those who felt and kept alive a conviction that they were living in urgent times.

### Urgency in Christian Times

Echoes of urgency can also be heard throughout the Christian Greek Scriptures. “Keep looking,” “keep awake,” “keep on the watch,” “prove yourselves ready”—all these are expressions used by Christ Jesus to instill a proper sense of urgency in his followers. (Matthew 24:42-44; Mark 13:32-37) Additionally, his illustrations regarding the ten virgins, the wicked slave, the talents, and the separating of the sheep from the goats all incite anticipation and generate a feeling of urgency.—Matthew 25:1, 14, 15, 32, 33.

Not only did Jesus speak about urgency but he also backed up the realism of his words by working with urgency. On one occasion he told the crowds when they tried to detain him: “Also to other cities I must declare the good news of the kingdom of God, because for this I was sent forth.” (Luke 4:42, 43) Further, he encouraged his disciples to beg the Master of the harvest to send out more workers into His harvest because “the harvest is great, but the workers are few.” (Matthew 9:37, 38) Such a prayerful request to God indeed breathes a spirit of urgency.

## In Our Next Issue

Fear—Common Now  
but Not Forever!

How Will You Stand  
Before the Judgment Seat?

Watch Out for Self-Righteousness!

## Was Such Urgency Misplaced?

Some might raise the logical question, Why was a sense of urgency needed back then if the foretold "great tribulation" was centuries away?—Matthew 24:21.

We can be certain that it was not just a ruse used by Jesus to keep his followers busy in the preaching and teaching work. No, it was Christ's love for his disciples, as well as his perfect understanding of Jehovah's view of time, that was the basis for his counsel on urgency. Yes, Christ Jesus knew that a spirit of urgency was needed to accomplish Jehovah's will according to God's purpose. Furthermore, he knew that his disciples would themselves benefit spiritually by maintaining a sense of urgency until his return.

Jesus Christ had clearly indicated that there was a worldwide witness work to be accomplished and in a limited time. (Matthew 24:14; Mark 13:10) The progressive stages of this assignment were revealed only as the work unfolded. But urgency was needed to fulfill each step. Jesus indicated the progression of this assignment when he said: "You will be witnesses of me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the most distant part of the earth." (Acts 1:8) And that is how the assignment has unfolded down to the present. It has meant some surprises for God's servants along the way, necessitating adjustments in understanding at times.

The Christian sense of urgency has served Jehovah's purpose. It has helped Christ's disciples to carry out the progression of their assignment according to Jehovah's unerring schedule. And so today, looking back over nearly 2,000 years, we understand that divine schedule more fully.

Christian urgency helped the disciples to

give a thorough witness in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the dispersed Jews before 36 C.E. when special favor toward Israel came to a close. (Daniel 9:27; Acts 2:46, 47) Similarly, Christian urgency aided the early congregation in giving a clear warning to all Jews that shortly their system would end. (Luke 19:43, 44; Colossians 1:5, 6, 23) And after it ended unexpectedly in 70 C.E., urgency helped Christ's first-century witnesses to proclaim the heavenly hope to many before the foretold apostasy spread its morbid shroud. (2 Thessalonians 2:3; 2 Timothy 4:2) Then, through the centuries of the Dark Ages, the few wheatlike Christians kept the Kingdom hope alive, as Christ Jesus had foretold. (Matthew 13:28-30) Finally, at his appointed time, Jehovah raised up a vigorous, modern-day congregation, spurred along by his urgent message of judgment for those living in this final generation.—Matthew 24:34.

Like Daniel of old, God's faithful modern-day Witnesses would never dare to question Jehovah, to ask him: "What have you been doing?" (Daniel 4:35) They are confident that Jehovah knows exactly what is necessary to get his work done right on schedule. So rather than question Jehovah's way of arranging matters, they are happy that God has given them the opportunity to work along with him in these momentous times.—1 Corinthians 3:9.

## A Further Encouragement to Urgency

Another reason for urgency is our inability to pinpoint the exact day and hour for the sudden outbreak of the great tribulation. Christ Jesus was definite that nobody on earth knows the predetermined day and hour of the start of that crucial event. (Matthew 24:36) On another occasion he told his eager apostles: "It does not

belong to you to get knowledge of the times or seasons which the Father has placed in his own jurisdiction.” (Acts 1:7) Yes, the outcome is clear, but all the details are simply not ours to know.

The apostle Paul had the right attitude of urgency. Perhaps he had Jesus’ words in mind when he wrote to the Thessalonians about Christ’s presence: “Now as for the times and the seasons, brothers, you need nothing to be written to you.” (1 Thessalonians 5:1) He wrote this letter some 17 years after Jesus had said: “You will be witnesses of me . . . to the most distant part of the earth.” (Acts 1:8) At that time no more could be written because no more had been revealed. Even so they could be confident that Jehovah’s day would definitely come “as a thief in the night” when Christians would still be urgently preaching.—1 Thessalonians 5:2.

It would seem unlikely that with these words in mind, first-century Christians thought that Jehovah’s day was centuries off. True, they knew of Jesus’ parables about the king who went to a distant land and about the man who traveled abroad. They knew, too, that the parables showed that the king would return “eventually” and the traveler “after a long time.” But undoubtedly they puzzled over such questions as, When is “eventually”? And what is meant by “after a long time”? Ten years? Twenty years? Fifty years? Or longer? (Luke 19:12, 15; Matthew 25:14, 19) Jesus’ words would continue to ring in their ears: “You also, keep ready, because at an hour that you do not think likely the Son of man is coming.”—Luke 12:40.

### Urgency’s Positive Effect

Yes, the God-stimulated sense of urgency had a wonderfully encouraging ef-

fect on the first-century Christians, helping them to keep busy in the all-important work of preaching and teaching. It continues to encourage us today in many ways. It keeps us from becoming complacent or ‘weary of well doing.’ (Galatians 6:9, *King James Version*) It protects us from over-involvement with the world and its insidious materialism. It keeps our minds on “the real life.” (1 Timothy 6:19) The Lord Jesus said that his disciples would be like “sheep amidst wolves,” and he knew the need for us to keep a determined, fixed view in order to combat the world. Yes, we have been safeguarded, protected by our Christian sense of urgency.—Matthew 10:16.

Jehovah God in his infinite wisdom has always given his servants enough information for them to keep their sense of urgency alive. He has kindly assured us that we are in “the last days” of this corrupt system of things. (2 Timothy 3:1) We are continually reminded that we must shine as illuminators until the generation in which we live passes away in the great tribulation, its climax being at Har-Magedon.—Philippians 2:15; Revelation 7:14; 16:14, 16.

Yes, a godly sense of urgency is an integral part of whole-souled service to Jehovah. It wards off and helps thwart the Devil’s attempts to cause God’s servants to “get tired and give out in [their] souls.” (Hebrews 12:3) For all eternity, whole-souled devotion will cause Jehovah’s servants to obey him, but now, in these pre-Armageddon days, a deep, genuine sense of urgency is an essential part of whole-souled devotion.

May Jehovah our God help all of us to guard our sense of urgency while we continue to echo the words of the apostle John: “Amen! Come, Lord Jesus.”—Revelation 22:20.

# SINGAPORE

## Tramples on Freedom of Worship

ON THE evening of February 24, 1995, four homes in the city of Singapore were raided by police. A total of 69 people were arrested.\* Among them were a 71-year-old woman and two 15-year-old girls. Why? Was it because of criminal or subversive activity? No. Not one of them was engaged in anything that could even in the remotest sense be considered dangerous, immoral, or antisocial. They posed no threat to the moral values, safety, and well-being of their fellow Singaporeans. Yet, after ransacking the four homes, the police took the 69 people, who had come together to study the Bible and enjoy a social gathering, to the police station. There they were held overnight, interrogated, fingerprinted, and photographed—yes, treated like common criminals! During this time—as long as 18 hours in substandard conditions—they were denied access to legal counsel and were even forbidden to make a phone call to tell family members where they were. One can only imagine how such summary action affected these peaceable, law-abiding citizens!

The scenario is reminiscent of conditions during the dark days of Nazi Germany and the Communist era in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. It is not what a casual visitor to Singapore would expect to find in that pristine and

affluent modern city-state. Singapore has built a reputation as a 20th-century wonder of economic and social advancement. It is a declared democracy that has a constitution guaranteeing its citizens basic human rights, including freedom of speech, religion, and assembly.

Yet, those arrested in February were targeted solely because they were Jehovah's Witnesses meeting together to study the Bible and share Christian fellowship. The charge against them was "attending a meeting of an unlawful society."

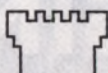
In fact, Jehovah's Witnesses have been denied legal recognition in Singapore since 1972 when the Singapore Congregation was deregistered and the literature, including Bibles, published by the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society was placed under ban. No opportunity was allowed to challenge the assumptions on which that action was taken. Recently, the legality of this official discrimination was challenged in Singapore's courts in the case of four Witnesses who had been convicted in February 1994 of possession of prohibited Bible literature. The appeal against their convictions was heard in August 1994 and was summarily dismissed. Chief Justice Yong Pung How of the High Court released his opinion the following month. He held that there was no violation of religious freedom and that the convictions were justified on the basis that Jehovah's Witnesses were a threat to national security because members would not

\* In the months since these 69 were arrested, another 11 Witnesses have been arrested and charged with possession of illegal literature.

participate in military service. On February 17, 1995, the four Witnesses sought leave to appeal this adverse decision to the Singapore Court of Appeal. The application was denied.

This last decision was given prominence in the government-controlled Singapore press. No doubt this court decision and the resulting publicity foreshadowed the events that followed. Within a week the arrest of the 69 Witnesses took place. The charges against four of these—citizens of Britain, France, and Luxembourg—were subsequently dismissed. Even for these, however, the experience was terrifying. One man had lived and worked in Singapore for years with his wife. They lost their jobs and their rented home and were forced to say good-bye to many close friends.

The 63 remaining adults were charged with belonging to a banned society, and some were also charged with possession of prohibited literature. They face a maximum of three years in prison or a S\$3,000 (\$2,100, U.S.) fine or both. The two 15-year-old girls appeared separately in juvenile court.



## WATCH TOWER

BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA

March 21, 1995

Goh Chok Tong  
Prime Minister  
Istana Annexe  
Singapore 0923  
Republic of Singapore  
Lee Kuan Yew  
Senior Minister  
Prime Minister's Office  
460 Alexandra Road  
37-00 PSA Bldg  
Singapore 0511  
Republic of Singapore

Dear Sirs:

A recent Reuters dispatch from Singapore dated February 25, 1995, was most disturbing. It reported that Bible study meetings of Jehovah's Witnesses had been broken up by police and 69 people were arrested. This report has focused world attention on the situation of Jehovah's Witnesses in Singapore, where their activities and literature have been banned for over 20 years.

It is difficult to understand why a religious organization which functions openly with full protection of the law in more than 200 countries should be banned in Singapore, a country which espouses the principles of democracy. It is all the more disturbing in view of Singapore's constitutional guarantee of freedom of worship for its citizens.

Jehovah's Witnesses have never posed any threat to national security anywhere. Indeed, throughout the world they have the reputation of being peaceable, hardworking, morally upright, and law abiding—qualities which I am sure you promote in your country.

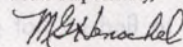
It is true that in their strict adherence to Bible standards for Christians, the position of Jehovah's Witnesses has sometimes been misunderstood or misrepresented. But, was that not true of the founder of Christianity who also was misrepresented as being against "Caesar," the government of his day? Jehovah's Witnesses simply follow the example of Jesus and the early Christians. They respect the government where they live, pay their taxes, and promote good morals. They are conscientious and upright citizens. Never have Jehovah's Witnesses taken part in any kind of subversive activity in any country and I can assure you that their presence in Singapore poses no threat to your country's national interests.

Due to recent media reports, the repressive measures taken against Jehovah's Witnesses in Singapore by your government are now common knowledge. It is especially a matter of concern to their 12 million associates around the world. I ask you to use your good office to remedy the situation and afford Jehovah's Witnesses in your country the freedom of worship and conscience guaranteed by the Constitution.

I believe a frank discussion with representatives of Jehovah's Witnesses would help dispel any misunderstandings about our organization and activity and would reassure you that the government of Singapore has nothing to fear from Jehovah's Witnesses. I would be happy to arrange for such a meeting.

I look forward to your reply.

Yours respectfully,



Milton G. Henschel  
President

### No Threat to National Identity and Unity

Around the world, in the more than 200 lands where they reside, Jehovah's Witnesses are known as decent, honest, law-abiding people. They are recognized for their staunch refusal to take part in any kind of subversive, anti-government activity—unchristian action that can result in their being disfellowshipped, or excommunicated. Truly, the Singapore government has nothing to fear from them. They are in no way a threat to Singapore's national security or sense of national identity and unity. (Romans 13:1-7) This was plainly stated in a letter dated March 21, 1995, from Milton G. Henschel, president of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, to Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong of Singapore. This letter is reproduced here for the benefit of our readers.

Liberty-loving people in business, government, and the private sector will be watching with interest to see how this situation in Singapore develops. Will the government of Singapore act in harmony with the basic human rights and freedoms espoused by its own constitution and the international community of nations? Certainly, Jehovah's Witnesses around the world are deeply concerned about their fellow worshipers in Singapore. They remember them in their prayers and bear in mind the assurance found in the Bible: "Jehovah is a lover of justice, and he will not leave his loyal ones."—Psalm 37:28.



Nik Wheeler/H. Armstrong Roberts

# When "no wind is the right wind"

**W**HEN a man does not know what harbor he is making for, no wind is the right wind." These words, attributed to first-century Roman philosopher Lucius Annaeus Seneca, bear out a long-recognized truth: For life to have direction, goals are essential.

Often, however, life is an aimless drift. Many are content simply to avoid the rocks and whirlpools of everyday life. With no fixed bearing, they become like waves that are "carried forward by the wind one moment and driven back the next." (James 1:6, "Phillips") For such people, "no wind is the right wind."

The Bible provides examples of those who were goal oriented, thus serving

as role models for Christians today. Moses "looked intently toward the payment of the reward." (Hebrews 11:26) Paul wrote: "I run straight toward the goal in order to win the prize." He encouraged fellow believers to "have this same attitude."—Philippians 3:14, 15, "Today's English Version."

With our eyes intently fixed on the Bible's promises, may we imitate the faith of such goal-oriented men. —Compare Hebrews 13:7.

