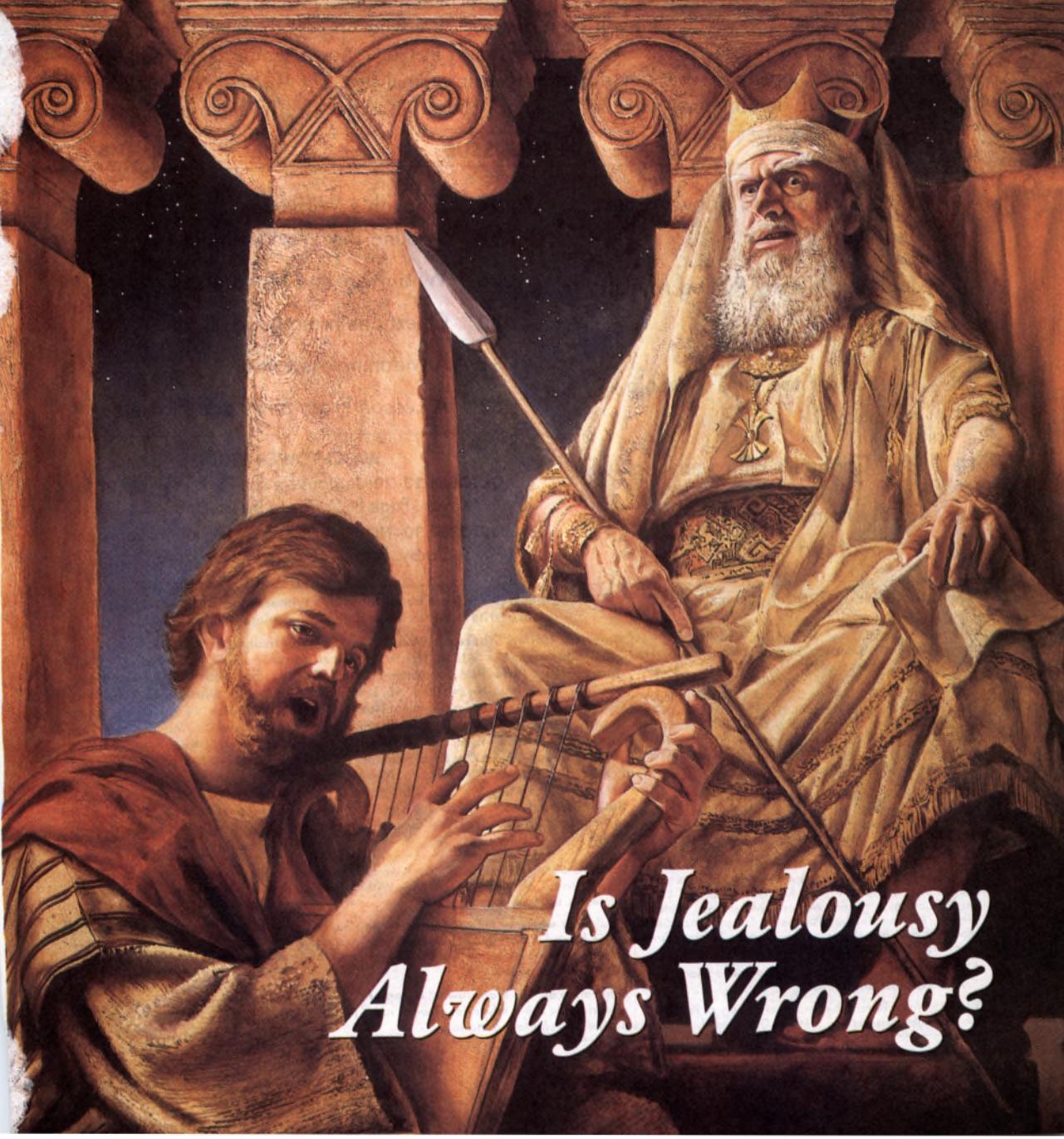


SEPTEMBER 15, 1995

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



*Is Jealousy
Always Wrong?*

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.

IN THIS ISSUE

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>3 What You Should Know About Jealousy</p> <p>5 Jealousy Nearly Ruined My Life</p> <p>7 The Envious Man</p> <p>8 Jealous for the Pure Worship of Jehovah</p> <p>14 Love Conquers Improper Jealousy</p> <p>20 Godly Families of the Past
—A Pattern for Our Day</p> | <p>24 Jehovah's Witnesses Around the World—India</p> <p>26 Who Were the Masoretes?</p> <p>30 Questions From Readers</p> <p>31 A Meaningless Ritual?</p> <p>32 A Lesson From Birds and Flowers</p> |
|--|---|

WATCHTOWER STUDIES

OCTOBER 23-29: Jealous for the Pure Worship of Jehovah. Page 8. Songs to be used: 33, 94.

OCTOBER 30-NOVEMBER 5: Love Conquers Improper Jealousy. Page 14. Songs to be used: 35, 173.

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What You Should Know About **JEALOUSY**

WHAT is jealousy? It is an intense emotion that can make a person feel anxious, sad, or angry. We may experience jealousy when someone appears to be more successful at a task than we are. Or we may feel jealous when a friend receives more praise than we do. But is it always wrong to be jealous?

People overcome by jealousy tend to be suspicious of potential rivals. King Saul of ancient Israel was an example of this. At first he loved his armor-bearer, David, even promoting him to be a leader of the army. (1 Samuel 16:21; 18:5) Then one day King Saul heard women praising David with the words: "Saul has struck down his thousands, and David his tens of thousands." (1 Samuel 18:7) Saul should not have allowed this to affect his good relationship with David. However, he took offense. "Saul was continually looking suspiciously at David from that day forward."—1 Samuel 18:9.

A jealous person may not wish another harm. He or she may just resent the success of a companion and crave to have the same qualities or circumstances. On the other hand, envy is a particularly negative form of jealousy. An envious person may secretly with-

hold good from the one who arouses his jealousy or may wish that harm will befall that one. Sometimes, an envious person cannot keep his feelings secret. He may be driven to harm another openly, just as King Saul tried to murder David. On more than one occasion, Saul threw a spear in an attempt "to pin David to the wall."—1 Samuel 18:11; 19:10.

'But I am not a jealous person,' you may respond. True, jealousy may not control your life. To some extent, however, all of us are affected by jealousy—our own jealous feelings and those of others. Although quick to notice jealousy in others, we may be slow to see it in ourselves.



"A Tendency to Envy"

The record of sinful human nature as revealed in God's Word, the Bible, often highlights sins of envy. Do you recall the account of Cain and Abel? Both of these sons of Adam and Eve offered sacrifices to God. Abel did so because he was a man of faith. (Hebrews 11:4) He had faith in God's ability to fulfill His grand purpose respecting the earth. (Genesis 1:28; 3:15; Hebrews 11:1) Abel also believed that God would reward faithful humans with life in the coming earthly Paradise. (Hebrews 11:6) Thus, God showed his pleasure with Abel's sacrifice. If Cain had truly loved his brother, he would have been happy that God blessed Abel. Instead, Cain "grew hot with great anger."—Genesis 4:5.

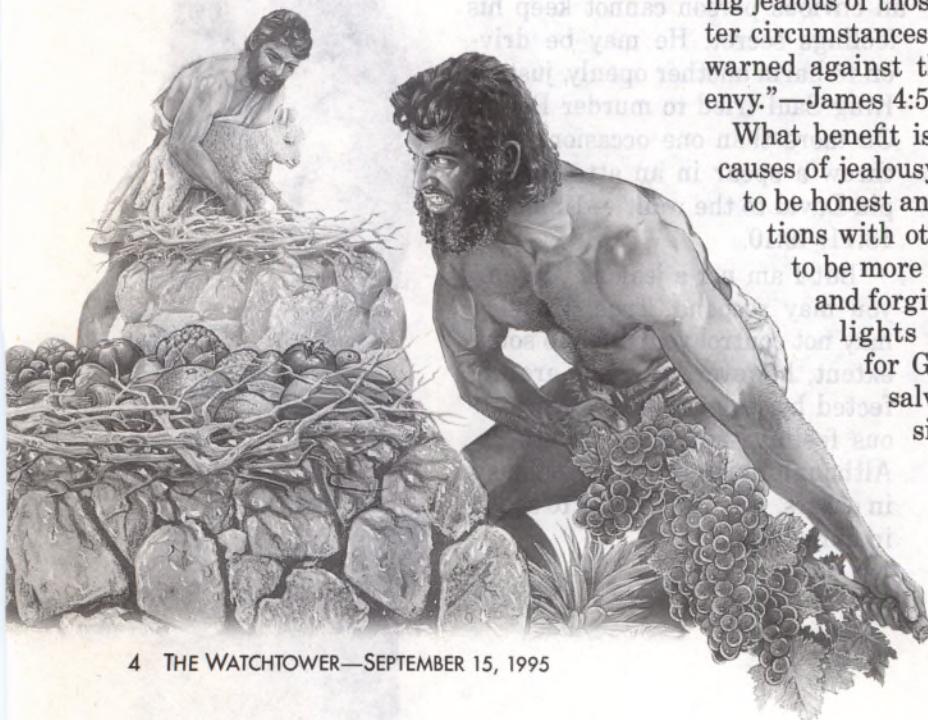
God urged Cain to do good so that he too could receive a blessing. Then God warned: "If you do not turn to doing good, there is sin crouching at the entrance, and for you is its craving; and will you, for your

part, get the mastery over it?" (Genesis 4:7) Sadly, Cain did not master his jealous anger. It drove him to murder his righteous brother. (1 John 3:12) Since then, fights and wars have claimed hundreds of millions of lives. "Some of the basic causes of war may be a desire for more land, a desire for more wealth, a desire for more power, or a desire for security," explains *The World Book Encyclopedia*.

True Christians do not take part in this world's wars. (John 17:16) Sadly, though, individual Christians sometimes get embroiled in verbal fights. If other members of the congregation take sides, these fights can turn into harmful verbal wars. "From what source are there wars and from what source are there fights among you?" the Bible writer James asked fellow believers. (James 4:1) He answered that question by exposing their materialistic greed and added, "You go on . . . coveting," or being "jealous." (James 4:2, footnote) Yes, materialism can lead to coveting and being jealous of those who seem to enjoy better circumstances. For this reason, James warned against the human "tendency to envy."—James 4:5.

What benefit is there in analyzing the causes of jealousy? Well, this can help us to be honest and to promote better relations with others. It can also help us to be more understanding, tolerant, and forgiving. Best of all, it highlights man's desperate need for God's loving provision of salvation and rescue from sinful human tendencies.

—Romans 7:24, 25.



A World Without Sinful Jealousy

From a human viewpoint, a world without sinful jealousy may sound impossible. Author Rom Landau admitted: "The accumulated wisdom of many ages, with all that philosophers . . . and psychologists have said on the subject, offers no guidance to the man tormented by jealousy. . . . Has any doctor ever cured a man of jealousy?"

But God's Word holds out the hope of attaining perfect human life in a new world where no one will ever again be plagued by

ungodly jealousy or envy. Furthermore, the peace of that new world will not be disrupted by people who display such wicked characteristics.—Galatians 5:19-21; 2 Peter 3:13.

Yet, not all jealousy is improper. In fact, the Bible states that Jehovah "is a jealous God." (Exodus 34:14) What does that mean? And what does the Bible say about proper jealousy? At the same time, how can a person gain the mastery over improper jealousy? See the articles that follow.

JEALOUSY

Nearly Ruined My Life

JEALOUSY really began to affect me badly when I got married to my second husband, Mark.* Between us, we had to care for a number of stepchildren and deal with our former mates. The situation was sometimes unbearable. Whenever there was a family confrontation, it seemed that Mark did not stand up for me. I began to feel that he still loved his ex-wife. Instead of controlling my jealousy, I allowed it to take over my life. I felt threatened whenever Mark's ex-wife was around.

I would constantly watch Mark, even watching his eyes to see where he was looking. I read into his looks things that were not even there. Sometimes I would openly accuse him of still being in love with his ex-wife. On one occasion he was so distressed by this that he got up and left a Christian assembly. I felt guilty before Jehovah.

I made my family's life miserable because ultimately the children were also affected. I hated myself for what I was doing, but no matter how hard I tried, I just could not seem to control my jealousy.

Instead of helping me, Mark began to retaliate. When I accused him, he would shout at me, "Jealous, you're just jealous." He even seemed to go out of his way to make me jealous. Maybe he thought that this would cure my jealousy, but it only made matters worse. He started to look at other women, commenting on how beautiful they looked. This made me feel even more inferior and unwanted. It got to the point where another emotion—hatred—raised its ugly head. At that stage, I was so mixed-up that I just wanted him and his family out of my life.

When the Bible says that "jealousy is rottenness to the bones," that is exactly

* The name has been changed.

what it is. (Proverbs 14:30) My health now started to be affected. I developed stomach ulcers that took a long time to heal. I continued to make my life miserable by being suspicious of everything that Mark did. I would go through his pockets, and if I found telephone numbers, I would phone to see who answered. Deep down I was so ashamed of myself, I would cry because of the shame before Jehovah. Yet I couldn't stop myself. I was my own worst enemy.

My spirituality suffered to the point that I couldn't pray anymore. I loved Jehovah and really wanted to do what was right. I knew all the scriptures relating to husbands and wives, but I was not able to apply them. For the first time in my life, I no longer wanted to live, despite the fact that I had wonderful children.

The elders in the Christian congregation were a great encouragement and tried their best to help me. But when they brought up the matter of my jealousy, I would deny it out of embarrassment, not wanting to admit that I had such a problem.

Eventually, my health deteriorated to such a degree that I had to go into the hospital for an operation. While there I realized that life could not go on as it was. Mark and I decided to separate for three months to examine our situation without being so emotionally involved. During this time something wonderful happened. In the *Awake!* magazine there appeared an article entitled "Help for Adult Children of Alcoholics."*

You see, my mother was an alcoholic. Although I wasn't physically abused, my parents never showed physical affection for each other or toward me. I cannot remember my mother ever holding me in her arms

or telling me she loved me. So I actually grew up not really knowing how to love or, just as important, how to be loved.

My mother often told me about my father's affairs and that she couldn't trust him. So I guess I grew up not trusting men in general. Because of my upbringing, I always felt inferior to others, especially other women. Reading that *Awake!* article helped me to grasp the significance of these things. For the first time, I understood the root causes of my problem with jealousy.

I showed the *Awake!* article to my husband, Mark, and it also helped him to understand me better. Soon he and I were able to follow the Bible's advice to couples who are thinking of separating. We made up. (1 Corinthians 7:10, 11) Now our marriage is better than it has ever been. We do most things together, especially when Christian activities are involved. Mark shows more empathy. Almost every day he tells me how much he loves me, and now I really believe it.

Whenever I know we are going to come into contact with Mark's ex-wife, I pray to Jehovah for strength, asking him to help me behave in a mature Christian way. And it works. Even my feelings of animosity toward her are going away. I no longer dwell on negative thoughts or let my imagination run away with me.

I still get some improper feelings of jealousy. Only perfect life in God's new world will completely rid me of it. In the meantime, I have learned to control jealousy, instead of allowing it to control me. Yes, jealousy nearly ruined my life, but thanks to Jehovah and his organization, I am now a much happier person, and my health is back to normal. Once again I have a strong relationship with my God, Jehovah.—Contributed.

* See *Awake!* of May 22, 1992, pages 8-12.

The Envious Man

THE Hebrew language has only one root word for "jealousy." When referring to sinful humans, the Hebrew may be translated "envy" or "rivalry." (Genesis 26:14; Ecclesiastes 4:4) The Greek language, however, has more than one word for "jealousy." The word *ze'los*, like its Hebrew equivalent, may refer to both righteous and sinful jealousy. Another Greek word, *phthonos*, has a purely negative sense. In the *New World Translation*, it is always rendered "envy."

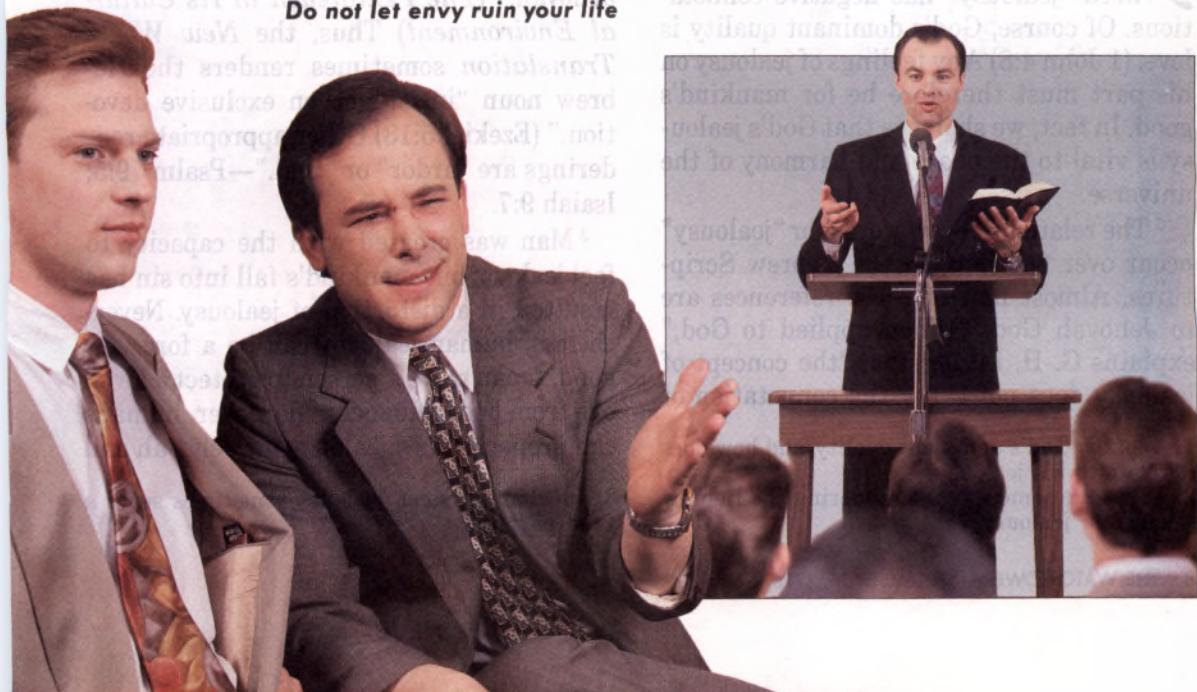
How was the word *phthonos* used in ancient Greek? *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* states: "Unlike the greedy man, the man afflicted by *phthonos* does not necessarily want the goods he resents another having; he simply does not want that other to have them. He differs from the competitive man in that his aim, unlike that of the competitive man, is not to win but to keep others from winning."

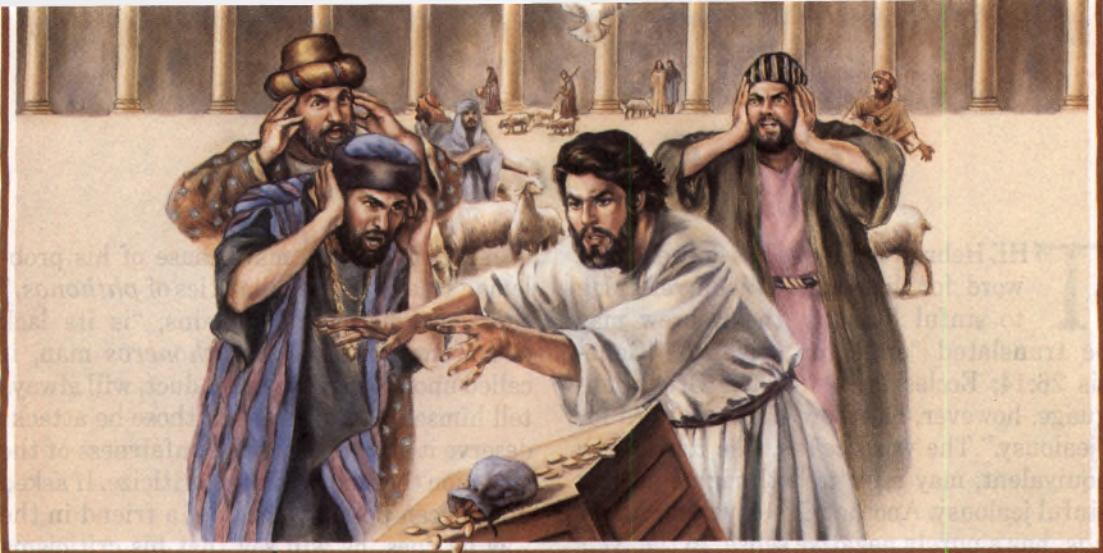
The envious man is often unaware that his

own attitude is the main cause of his problems. "One of the peculiarities of *phthonos*," the same dictionary explains, "is its lack of self-awareness. The *phthoneros* man, if called upon to justify his conduct, will always tell himself and others that those he attacks deserve it and that it is the unfairness of the situation that moves him to criticize. If asked how he can possibly speak of a friend in the way he does, he will say that his criticisms have the friend's best interests at heart."

The Gospel writers Matthew and Mark use the Greek word *phthonos* to describe the motive of those responsible for the murder of Jesus. (Matthew 27:18; Mark 15:10) Yes, they were driven by envy. The same harmful emotion has turned apostates into vicious haters of their former brothers. (1 Timothy 6:3-5) No wonder that envious men are debarred from entry into God's Kingdom! Jehovah God has decreed that all who continue to be "full of envy" are "deserving of death." —Romans 1:29, 32; Galatians 5:21.

Do not let envy ruin your life





JEALOUS FOR THE PURE WORSHIP OF JEHOVAH

"Jehovah, whose name is Jealous, he is a jealous God."—EXODUS 34:14.

J EHOVAH describes himself as “a jealous God.” You may wonder why, since the word “jealousy” has negative connotations. Of course, God’s dominant quality is love. (1 John 4:8) Any feelings of jealousy on his part must therefore be for mankind’s good. In fact, we shall see that God’s jealousy is vital to the peace and harmony of the universe.

² The related Hebrew words for “jealousy” occur over 80 times in the Hebrew Scriptures. Almost half of these references are to Jehovah God. “When applied to God,” explains G. H. Livingston, “the concept of jealousy does not carry the connotation of

1. What is God’s dominant quality, and how does it relate to his jealousy?
2. What are some ways of rendering the Hebrew words for “jealousy”?

a warped emotion, but, rather, of an insistence on the singleness of worship of Jehovah.” (*The Pentateuch in Its Cultural Environment*) Thus, the *New World Translation* sometimes renders the Hebrew noun “insistence on exclusive devotion.” (Ezekiel 5:13) Other appropriate renderings are “ardor” or “zeal.”—Psalm 79:5; Isaiah 9:7.

³ Man was created with the capacity to feel jealous, but mankind’s fall into sin has resulted in a distortion of jealousy. Nevertheless, human jealousy can be a force for good. It can move a person to protect a loved one from bad influences. Moreover, humans can properly show jealousy for Jehovah and

3. In what ways can jealousy sometimes serve a good purpose?

his worship. (1 Kings 19:10) To convey the correct understanding of such jealousy for Jehovah, the Hebrew noun may be translated “toleration of no rivalry” toward him.—2 Kings 10:16.

The Golden Calf

⁴ An example of righteous jealousy is what occurred after the Israelites received the Law at Mount Sinai. Repeatedly, they had been warned not to worship man-made gods. Jehovah told them: “I Jehovah your God am a God exacting exclusive devotion [or, “a God who is jealous (zealous); a God not tolerating rivalry”].” (Exodus 20:5, footnote; compare Exodus 20:22, 23; 22:20; 23:13, 24, 32, 33.) Jehovah entered into a covenant with the Israelites, promising to bless them and to bring them into the Promised Land. (Exodus 23:22, 31) And the people said: “All that Jehovah has spoken we are willing to do and be obedient.”—Exodus 24:7.

⁵ Nevertheless, the Israelites soon sinned against God. They were still encamped at the foot of Mount Sinai. Moses had been on the mountain many days, receiving further instruction from God, and the people pressured Moses’ brother, Aaron, to make a god for them. Aaron complied and made a calf out of gold that the people provided. It was claimed that this idol represented Jehovah. (Psalm 106:20) The next day they offered sacrifices and kept “bowing down to it.” Then they had “a good time.”—Exodus 32:1, 4, 6, 8, 17-19.

⁶ Moses descended from the mountain while the Israelites were celebrating. On

4. What command involving righteous jealousy was prominent in God’s Law to Israel?

5, 6. (a) How did the Israelites sin gravely while encamped at Mount Sinai? (b) How did Jehovah and his loyal worshipers show righteous jealousy at Sinai?

viewing their disgraceful conduct, he called out: “Who is on Jehovah’s side?” (Exodus 32:25, 26) The sons of Levi gathered to Moses, and he instructed them to take swords and execute the idolatrous revelers. Demonstrating their jealousy for God’s pure worship, the Levites killed about 3,000 of their guilty brothers. Jehovah reinforced this action by sending a plague upon the survivors. (Exodus 32:28, 35) Then God repeated the command: “You must not prostrate yourself to another god, because Jehovah, whose name is Jealous, he is a jealous God.”—Exodus 34:14.

Baal of Peor

⁷ Forty years later, when the nation of Israel was about to enter the Promised Land, attractive Moabite and Midianite women lured many Israelites to come and enjoy their hospitality. These men should have rejected intimate association with worshipers of false gods. (Exodus 34:12, 15) Instead, they ran like ‘bulls to the slaughter,’ committing fornication with the women and joining them in bowing down to Baal of Peor.—Proverbs 7:21, 22; Numbers 25:1-3.

⁸ Jehovah sent a scourge to kill those who got involved in this shameful sex worship. God also commanded the innocent Israelites to kill their guilty brothers. In brazen defiance, a chieftain of Israel named Zimri brought a Midianite princess into his tent to have relations with her. On seeing this, the God-fearing priest Phinehas executed the immoral couple. The scourge then stopped, and God declared: “Phinehas . . . has turned my wrath away from the Israelites; he displayed among them the same jealous anger that moved me, and therefore

7, 8. (a) How did many Israelites fall into gross idolatry in connection with Baal of Peor? (b) How did the scourge from Jehovah come to an end?



Phinehas was jealous for the pure worship of Jehovah

in my jealousy I did not exterminate the Israelites." (Numbers 25:11, *The New English Bible*) Although the nation was saved from destruction, at least 23,000 Israel-

ites died. (1 Corinthians 10:8) They lost out on their long-cherished hope of entering the Promised Land.

A Warning Lesson

⁹ Sadly, the Israelites soon forgot these lessons. They did not prove jealous for the pure worship of Jehovah. "With their graven images they kept inciting [God] to jealousy." (Psalm 78:58) As a result, Jehovah allowed ten tribes of Israel to be taken captive by the Assyrians in 740 B.C.E. The remaining two-tribe kingdom of Judah suffered a similar punishment when their capital city of Jerusalem was destroyed in the year 607 B.C.E. Many were killed, and the survivors were taken captive to Babylon. What a warning example for all Christians today!

—1 Corinthians 10:6, 11.

¹⁰ One third of earth's population—some 1,900 million—now profess to be Christian. (1994 *Britannica Book of the Year*) Most of these belong to churches that use icons, images, and crosses in their worship. Jehovah did not spare his own people who incited him to jealousy through their idolatry.

Neither will he spare professed Christians who worship with the aid of material objects. "God is a Spirit, and those

9. What befell the people of Israel and Judah because they were not jealous for the pure worship of Jehovah?

10. What will happen to unrepentant idolaters?

worshiping him must worship with spirit and truth," said Jesus Christ. (John 4:24) Furthermore, the Bible warns Christians to guard against idolatry. (1 John 5:21) Unrepentant idolaters are among those who will not inherit God's Kingdom.—Galatians 5:20, 21.

¹¹ Though a true Christian would never bow down to an idol, he must avoid anything God views as idolatrous, unclean, and sinful. For example, the Bible warns: "Deaden . . . your body members that are upon the earth as respects fornication, uncleanness, sexual appetite, hurtful desire, and covetousness, *which is idolatry*. On account of those things the wrath of God is coming." (Colossians 3:5, 6) Obedience to these words requires the rejection of immoral behavior. This calls for the avoidance of entertainment that is designed to arouse unclean sexual appetite. Instead of satisfying such an appetite, true Christians are jealous for God's pure worship.

Later Examples of Godly Jealousy

¹² The most outstanding example of a man who showed jealousy for God's pure worship was Jesus Christ. In the first year of his ministry, he saw greedy merchants operating in the courtyards of the temple. Visiting Jews may have needed the services of money changers to exchange their foreign currency for money that would be acceptable as temple tax. They also needed to buy animals and birds in order to offer the sacrifices required by God's Law. Such business transactions should have been carried on outside the temple courtyards. Worse,

11. How might a Christian become guilty of idolatry without bowing down to an idol, and what will help one to avoid such idolatry? (Ephesians 5:5)

12, 13. How did Jesus set an outstanding example in displaying jealousy for God's pure worship?

the merchants were evidently taking undue advantage of the religious needs of their brothers by charging exorbitant prices. Consumed with jealousy for God's pure worship, Jesus used a whip to drive out the sheep and the cattle. He also overturned the tables of the money changers, saying: "Stop making the house of my Father a house of merchandise!" (John 2:14-16) Thus Jesus fulfilled the words of Psalm 69:9: "Sheer zeal [or, "jealousy," *Byington*] for your house has eaten me up."

¹³ Three years later Jesus again observed greedy merchants operating in Jehovah's temple. Would he cleanse it a second time? His jealousy for God's pure worship was just as strong then as it was when he started his ministry. He drove out both the sellers and the buyers. And he gave an even stronger reason for his actions, saying: "Is it not written, 'My house will be called a house of prayer for all the nations'? But you have made it a cave of robbers." (Mark 11:17) What a marvelous example of persistence in showing godly jealousy!

¹⁴ The personality of the now glorified Lord Jesus Christ has not changed. (Hebrews 13:8) In this 20th century, he is just as jealous for the pure worship of his Father as he was when he was on earth. This can be seen in Jesus' messages to the seven congregations recorded in the book of Revelation. These have their major application now, in "the Lord's day." (Revelation 1:10; 2:1-3; 22) In vision the apostle John saw the glorified Jesus Christ with "eyes as a fiery flame." (Revelation 1:14) This indicates that nothing escapes Christ's notice as he inspects the congregations to ensure that they remain clean and fit for Jehovah's service. Present-day Christians need to keep in

14. How should Jesus' jealousy for pure worship affect us?

mind Jesus' warning against trying to serve two masters—God and riches. (Matthew 6:24) Jesus told materialistic members of the Laodicean congregation: "Because you are lukewarm and neither hot nor cold, I am going to vomit you out of my mouth. . . . Be zealous and repent." (Revelation 3:14-19) By word and example, appointed congregation elders should help their fellow believers to avoid the trap of materialism. The elders must also protect the flock from the moral corruption of this sex-oriented world. Moreover, God's people dare not tolerate any Jezebel influence in the congregation.—Hebrews 12:14, 15; Revelation 2:20.

¹⁵ The apostle Paul was an imitator of Christ. To protect newly baptized Christians from spiritually unwholesome influ-

15. How did the apostle Paul imitate Jesus in showing jealousy for Jehovah's worship?

ences, he said: "I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy." (2 Corinthians 11:2) Prior to this, Paul's jealousy for pure worship had moved him to instruct this same congregation to disfellowship an unrepentant fornicator who was a contaminating influence. The inspired instructions given on that occasion have been of great help to elders today as they strive to keep the more than 75,500 congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses clean.—1 Corinthians 5:1, 9-13.

God's Jealousy Benefits His People

¹⁶ When God punished the people of Judah by allowing them to be taken captive to Babylon, they were mocked. (Psalm 137:3) In jealous hatred, the Edomites even helped

16, 17. (a) When God punished ancient Judah, what attitude did the nations show? (b) After Judah's 70 years of captivity, how did Jehovah display his jealousy for Jerusalem?

Love Is Not Jealous

REGARDING envy, the 19th-century Bible scholar Albert Barnes wrote: "It is one of the most common manifestations of wickedness, and shows clearly the deep depravity of man." He further said: "He who could trace all wars and contentions and worldly plans to their source—all the schemes and purposes of even professed Christians, that do so much to mar their religion and to make them worldly-minded, to their real origin—would be surprised to find how much is to be attributed to envy. We are

pained that others are more prosperous than we are; we desire to possess what others have, though we have no right to it; and this leads to the various guilty methods which are pursued to lessen their enjoyment of it, or to obtain it ourselves, or to show that they do not possess as much as they are commonly supposed to. . . . for thus the spirit of envy in our bosoms will be gratified." —Romans 1:29; James 4:5.

In contrast, Barnes made an interesting statement regarding love, which "envieth not."

(1 Corinthians 13:4, King James Version) He wrote: "Love does not envy others the happiness which they enjoy; it delights in their welfare; and as their happiness is increased . . . , those who are influenced by love . . . would not diminish it; they would not embarrass them in the possession; they would not detract from that happiness; they would not murmur or repine that they themselves are not so highly favoured. . . . If we loved others—if we rejoiced in their happiness, we should not envy them."

the Babylonians bring calamity upon God's people, and Jehovah took note of this. (Ezekiel 35:11; 36:15) In captivity the survivors repented, and after 70 years Jehovah restored them to their land.

¹⁷ At first, the people of Judah were in a desperate plight. The city of Jerusalem and its temple lay in ruins. But the surrounding nations opposed all efforts to rebuild the temple. (Ezra 4:4, 23, 24) How did Jehovah feel about this? The inspired record states: "This is what Jehovah of armies has said: 'I have been jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with great jealousy. With great indignation I am feeling indignant against the nations that are at ease; because I, for my part, felt indignant to only a little extent, but they, for their part, helped toward calamity.' Therefore this is what Jehovah has said, 'I shall certainly return to Jerusalem with mercies. My own house will be built in her,' is the utterance of Jehovah of armies." (Zechariah 1:14-16) True to this promise, the temple and the city of Jerusalem were successfully rebuilt.

¹⁸ The true Christian congregation had a similar experience in the 20th century. During the first world war, Jehovah disciplined his people because they had not been strictly neutral in that worldly conflict. (John 17:16) God allowed the political powers to oppress them, and the clergy of Christendom rejoiced over this calamity. In fact, clergymen were in the forefront in getting the political element to ban the work of the Bible Students, as Jehovah's Witnesses were then called.—Revelation 11:7, 10.

¹⁹ However, Jehovah showed jealousy for his worship and restored his repentant peo-

ple to his favor in the postwar year of 1919. (Revelation 11:11, 12) As a result, the number of Jehovah's praisers has increased from fewer than 4,000 in 1918 to some 5 million today. (Isaiah 60:22) Soon, Jehovah's jealousy for his pure worship will be manifested in more dramatic ways.

Future Acts of Divine Jealousy

²⁰ For centuries the churches of Christendom have followed the course of the apostate Jews who incited Jehovah to jealousy. (Ezekiel 8:3, 17, 18) Soon Jehovah God will act by putting a drastic thought into the hearts of members of the United Nations. This will move these political powers to desolate Christendom and the rest of false religion. (Revelation 17:16, 17) True worshipers will survive that frightful execution of divine judgment. They will respond to the words of heavenly creatures who say: "Praise Jah, you people! . . . For he has executed judgment upon the great harlot [false religion] who corrupted the earth with her fornication [her false teachings and support of corrupt politics], and he has avenged the blood of his slaves at her hand."—Revelation 19:1, 2.

20. What will God soon do to show his jealousy for pure worship?

Points for Meditation

- What does it mean to be jealous for Jehovah?
- What can we learn from the example set by the ancient Israelites?
- How can we avoid inciting Jehovah to jealousy?
- How have God and Christ shown jealousy for pure worship?

18. What did true Christians experience during the first world war?

19. How has Jehovah shown jealousy for his worship since 1919?

¹⁰²¹ What will happen after the destruction of the world empire of false religion? Satan will incite the political powers to mount a global attack upon Jehovah's people. How will the true God react to this attempt by Satan to wipe true worship off the face of the earth? Ezekiel 38:19-23 tells us: "In my ardor [or, jealousy], in the fire of my fury, I [Jehovah] shall have to speak. . . . And I will bring myself into judgment with him [Satan], with pestilence and with blood; and a flooding downpour and hailstones, fire and sulphur I shall rain down upon him and upon his bands and upon the many peo-

21. (a) What will Satan and his system do after false religion has been destroyed? (b) How will God respond?

ples that will be with him. And I shall certainly magnify myself and sanctify myself and make myself known before the eyes of many nations; and they will have to know that I am Jehovah."—See also Zephaniah 1:18; 3:8.

22 How comforting it is to know that the Sovereign of the universe jealously cares for his true worshipers! Out of deep appreciation for his undeserved kindness, let us be jealous for the pure worship of Jehovah God. With zeal, may we continue to preach the good news and confidently await the grand day when Jehovah magnifies and sanctifies his great name.—Matthew 24:14.

22. How can we show that we are jealous for the pure worship of Jehovah?

LOVE CONQUERS IMPROPER JEALOUSY

"Love is not jealous."

LOVE is an identifying mark of true Christianity. "By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love among yourselves," said Jesus Christ. (John 13:35) The apostle Paul was inspired to explain how love should affect Christian relationships. Among other things, he wrote: "Love is not jealous."—1 Corinthians 13:4.

² When Paul wrote those words, he was referring to improper jealousy. Otherwise

1, 2. (a) What did Jesus tell his disciples about love? (b) Is it possible to be both loving and jealous, and why do you so answer?

—1 CORINTHIANS 13:4. he could not have told the same congregation: "I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy." (2 Corinthians 11:2) His "godly jealousy" was aroused because of men who were a corrupting influence in the congregation. This moved Paul to write Corinthian Christians a second inspired letter containing much loving counsel.—2 Corinthians 11:3-5.

Jealousy Among Christians

- ³ In his first letter to the Corinthians,
3. How did a problem involving jealousy develop among the Corinthian Christians?

Paul had to handle a problem that was preventing these new Christians from getting along with one another. They were elevating certain men, being "puffed up individually in favor of the one against the other." This led to divisions within the congregation, with different ones saying: "I belong to Paul," "But I to Apollos," "But I to Cephas." (1 Corinthians 1:12; 4:6) Under guidance by the holy spirit, the apostle Paul was able to get to the root of the problem. The Corinthians were acting like fleshly-minded people, not like "spiritual men." Thus, Paul wrote: "You are yet fleshly. For whereas there are jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly and are you not walking as men do?" —1 Corinthians 3:1-3.

⁴ Paul helped the Corinthians to appreciate the correct view of the talents and abilities of various ones in the congregation. He asked: "Who makes you to differ from another? Indeed, what do you have that you did not receive? If, now, you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as though you did not receive it?" (1 Corinthians 4:7) In 1 Corinthians chapter 12, Paul explained that those who were part of the congregation were like the different members of a human body, such as the hand, the eye, and the ear. He pointed out that God made the members of the body in such a way that they care for one another. Paul also wrote: "If a member is glorified, all the other members rejoice with it." (1 Corinthians 12:26) All of God's servants today should apply this principle in their relationship with one another. Instead of being jealous of another person because of his assignment or accomplishments in God's service, we should rejoice with that one.

4. What illustration did Paul use to help his brothers arrive at the right view of one another, and what lesson can we learn from this?

⁵ Admittedly, this is easier said than done. The Bible writer James reminds us that "a tendency to envy" resides in every sinful human. (James 4:5) The first human death came about because Cain yielded to his improper jealousy. The Philistines persecuted Isaac because they envied his growing prosperity. Rachel was jealous of her sister's fruitfulness in child-bearing. Jacob's sons were jealous of the favor shown toward their younger brother Joseph. Miriam evidently was jealous of her non-Israelite sister-in-law. Korah, Dathan, and Abiram enviously formed a conspiracy against Moses and Aaron. King Saul became jealous of the military successes of David. No doubt jealousy was also a factor causing Jesus' disciples to get into repeated arguments about who was the greatest among them. The fact is that no imperfect human is totally free of the sinful "tendency to envy."—Genesis 4:4-8; 26:14; 30:1; 37:11; Numbers 12:1, 2; 16:1-3; Psalm 106:16; 1 Samuel 18:7-9; Matthew 20:21, 24; Mark 9:33, 34; Luke 22:24.

In the Congregation

⁶ All Christians need to guard against envy and improper jealousy. This includes bodies of elders appointed to care for the congregations of God's people. If an elder has lowliness of mind, he will not ambitiously try to outshine others. On the other hand, if a certain elder has outstanding abilities as an organizer or a public speaker, the others will rejoice over this, viewing it as a blessing to the congregation. (Romans 12:15, 16) A brother may be making fine progress, giving evidence of producing the fruitage of God's spirit in his life. In considering his qualifications,

5. What is revealed at James 4:5, and how do the Scriptures highlight the truth of these words?
6. How can elders control the tendency to envy?



Do not let jealousy disrupt the peace of the congregation

⁸ A Christian may know of a past failing on the part of one who is now blessed with privileges in the congregation. (James 3:2) Out of jealousy, there may be a temptation to speak to others about this and to challenge that one's assignment in the congregation. This would be contrary to love, which "covers a multitude of sins." (1 Peter 4:8) Jealous talk can disrupt the peace of a congregation. "If you have bitter jealousy and contentiousness in your hearts," warned the disciple James, "do not be bragging and lying against the truth. This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is the earthly, animal, demonic."—James 3:14, 15.

the elders should be careful not to magnify some minor failing to justify not recommending him as a ministerial servant or an elder. That would betray a lack of love and reasonableness.

⁷ If someone receives a theocratic assignment or a spiritual blessing, others in the congregation need to guard against envy. For example, one capable sister may be used more often than another to give demonstrations at Christian meetings. This may give rise to jealousy on the part of some sisters. A similar problem may have existed between Euodia and Syntyche of the Philippi congregation. Such present-day women may need kindly encouragement from the elders to be humble and to be "of the same mind in the Lord."—Philippians 2:2, 3; 4:2, 3.

7. What problem may develop when a Christian gets some theocratic assignment?

In Your Family

¹⁰ Many marriages fail because of improper jealousy. Showing a lack of trust in a marriage partner is not loving. (1 Corinthians 13:7) On the other hand, one mate may be insensitive to feelings of jealousy on the part of the other. For example, a wife may be jealous because of the attention that her husband gives to someone else of the opposite sex. Or a husband may become jealous because of the amount of

8. Jealousy can lead to what sinful acts?
9. How can marriage mates control feelings of jealousy?

Parents can train their children to cope with feelings of jealousy

time his wife spends caring for a needy relative. Embarrassed over such feelings, marriage mates may keep quiet and show their frustration in ways that complicate the problem. Instead, a jealous marriage mate needs to communicate and be honest about his or her feelings. In turn, the other mate needs to show understanding and give reassurance of his or her love. (Ephesians 5:28, 29) Both of them may need to allay feelings of jealousy by avoiding situations that give rise to it. Sometimes a Christian overseer may need to help his wife understand that he is giving limited, proper attention to members of the opposite sex in order to fulfill his responsibility as a shepherd of God's flock. (Isaiah 32:2) Of course, an elder should be careful never to give any valid cause for jealousy. This requires balance, making sure that he spends time in strengthening his own marriage relationship.—1 Timothy 3:5; 5:1, 2.

¹⁰ Parents must also help their children to grasp the concept of improper jealousy. Children often get involved in squabbles that turn into fights. Frequently the root cause is jealousy. Because each child's needs are unique, children cannot be treated iden-



tically. Moreover, children need to understand that each one of them has different strengths and weaknesses. If one child is always encouraged to do as well as the other, this may cultivate envy in one and pride in the other. Hence, parents should train their children to measure their progress by considering the examples in God's Word, not by competing with one another. The Bible says: "Let us not become egotistical, stirring up competition with one another, envying one another." Instead, "let each one prove what his own work is, and then he will have cause for exultation in regard to himself alone, and not in comparison with the other person." (Galatians 5:26; 6:4) Most important, Christian parents need to help their children by means of a regular Bible study, highlighting the good and the bad examples contained in God's Word.—2 Timothy 3:15.

10. How can parents help their children to cope with feelings of jealousy?

Examples of Mastering Jealousy

¹¹ Unlike power-hungry leaders of this world, "Moses was by far the meekest of all the men who were upon the surface of the ground." (Numbers 12:3) When leadership over the Israelites became burdensome for Moses to carry alone, Jehovah caused His spirit to operate upon 70 other Israelites, empowering them to help Moses. When two of these men began to act like prophets, Joshua felt that this improperly detracted from Moses' leadership. Joshua wanted to restrain the men, but Moses humbly reasoned: "Are you feeling jealous for me? No, I wish that all of Jehovah's people were prophets, because Jehovah would put his spirit upon them!" (Numbers 11:29) Yes, Moses was happy when others received privileges of service. He did not jealously want glory for himself.

¹² A fine example of how love prevails over possible improper feelings of jealousy was provided by Jonathan, the son of Israelite King Saul. Jonathan was next in line to inherit the throne of his father, but Jehovah had chosen David, the son of Jesse, to be the next king. Many in Jonathan's position would have been jealous of David, viewing him as a rival. However, Jonathan's love for David prevented such a feeling from ever dominating him. Upon learning of Jonathan's death, David could say: "I am distressed over you, my brother Jonathan, very pleasant you were to me. More wonderful was your love to me than the love from women."—2 Samuel 1:26.

The Most Outstanding Examples

¹³ Jehovah God is the most outstanding

11. How was Moses a fine example in handling jealousy?
12. What enabled Jonathan to avoid feelings of jealousy?
13. Who is the best example in the matter of jealousy, and why?

example of one who has mastery over even proper jealousy. He keeps such feelings under perfect control. Any powerful manifestation of divine jealousy is always in harmony with God's love, justice, and wisdom.—Isaiah 42:13, 14.

¹⁴ The second outstanding example of one showing mastery over jealousy is God's beloved Son, Jesus Christ. "Although he was existing in God's form," Jesus "gave no consideration to a seizure, namely, that he should be equal to God." (Philippians 2:6) What a sharp contrast to the course taken by the ambitious angel who became Satan the Devil! Like "the king of Babylon," Satan jealously desired to "resemble the Most High" by setting himself up as a rival god in opposition to Jehovah. (Isaiah 14:4, 14; 2 Corinthians 4:4) Satan even tried to get Jesus to "fall down and do an act of worship" to him. (Matthew 4:9) But nothing could sway Jesus from his humble course of submission to Jehovah's sovereignty. In contrast with Satan, Jesus "emptied himself and took a slave's form and came to be in the likeness of men. More than that, when he found himself in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient as far as death, yes, death on a torture stake." Jesus upheld the rightfulness of his Father's rule, totally rejecting the Devil's course of pride and jealousy. For Jesus' faithfulness, "God exalted him to a superior position and kindly gave him the name that is above every other name, so that in the name of Jesus every knee should bend of those in heaven and those on earth and those under the ground, and every tongue should openly acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father."—Philippians 2:7-11.

14. What example did Jesus set in contrast with Satan?

Mastering Your Jealousy

¹⁵ Unlike God and Christ, Christians are imperfect. Being sinful, at times they may act out of sinful jealousy. Instead of allowing jealousy to move us to criticize a fellow believer about some minor failing or imagined wrong, therefore, it is important that we meditate on these inspired words: "Do not become righteous overmuch, nor show yourself excessively wise. Why should you cause desolation to yourself?"—Ecclesiastes 7:16.

¹⁶ On the subject of jealousy, *The Watch Tower* of March 15, 1911, cautioned: "While we should be very zealous, very jealous in the Lord's cause, yet we must be very sure that it is not a private matter; and should consider whether or not we are 'busybodies.' Then, too, we should consider whether it may be a proper thing for the elders to deal with and whether or not it would be our duty to go to the elders. We should all have a great deal of jealousy for the Lord's cause and the Lord's work, but be very careful that it is not the bitter kind . . . in other words, we should be very sure that it is not jealousy of another, but jealousy for another, for his interests and best welfare."—1 Peter 4:15.

¹⁷ How can we as Christians avoid pride, jealousy, and envy? The solution lies in allowing a free flow of God's holy spirit in our lives. For example, we need to pray for God's spirit and for help in displaying its good fruitage. (Luke 11:13) We need to attend Christian meetings, which are opened with prayer and have God's spirit and blessing upon them. Moreover, we

15. Why must we be careful to curb feelings of jealousy?

16. What fine advice on jealousy was given in a past issue of this magazine?

17. How can we avoid sinful acts of jealousy?

need to study the Bible, which was inspired by God. (2 Timothy 3:16) And we need to share in the Kingdom-preaching work being done with the power of Jehovah's holy spirit. (Acts 1:8) Helping fellow Christians who have been crushed by some bad experience is another way of yielding to the good influence of God's spirit. (Isaiah 57:15; 1 John 3:15-17) Zealously fulfilling all these Christian obligations will help to protect us from sinful practices of jealousy, for God's Word states: "Keep walking by spirit and you will carry out no fleshly desire at all."—Galatians 5:16.

¹⁸ Love is listed first among the fruits of God's holy spirit. (Galatians 5:22, 23) Exercising love will help us to control sinful tendencies now. But what about the future? Millions of Jehovah's servants have the hope of life in the coming earthly Paradise, where they can look forward to being uplifted to human perfection. In that new world, love will prevail and no one will succumb to improper feelings of jealousy, for "the creation itself also will be set free from enslavement to corruption and have the glorious freedom of the children of God."—Romans 8:21.

18. Why will we not always have to struggle against improper feelings of jealousy?

Points for Meditation

- What illustration did Paul use to help counteract jealousy?
- How might jealousy disrupt the peace of the congregation?
- How can parents train their children to cope with jealousy?
- How can we avoid sinful acts of jealousy?

GODLY FAMILIES OF THE PAST

A Pattern for Our Day

THE family—the United Nations tried to make it the focus of world attention. How? By declaring 1994 the “International Year of the Family.” Although world leaders, sociologists, and family counselors have been quick to lament such things as the rise in illegitimate births and skyrocketing divorce rates, they have been slow to come up with workable, realistic solutions to such problems.

Could it be that the Bible has solutions to family problems? To some it may seem naive to suggest that the Bible could be of help in today’s families. After all, it was written centuries ago in a Middle Eastern setting and culture. In most parts of the world, life has changed drastically since Bible times. Nevertheless, the Bible was inspired by Jehovah God, the one to whom every family owes its name. (Ephesians 3:14, 15; 2 Timothy 3:16) What does the Bible say about family problems?

Jehovah knows exactly what is needed to make family life enjoyable and fulfilling. His Word, the Bible, therefore, has much to say about family life, some in the form of admonition. The Bible also contains examples of families that put godly principles to work. As a result, they enjoyed real closeness and contentment. Let us take a look at family life in Bible times and see what lessons can be learned.

Headship—A Hardship?

Consider, for example, the matter of family headship. In patriarchal times, men like Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were undisputed “family heads.” (Acts 7:8, 9; Hebrews 7:4) *The New Manners and Customs of Bible Times*, by Ralph Gower, says: “The family was . . . a ‘little kingdom’ that was ruled by the father. He ruled over wife, children, grandchildren, and servants—everyone in the household.” Indeed, the patriarchs often had authority over their sons’ families as well.—Compare Genesis 42:37.

Did this not give men the license to oppress their wives and children? Not at all. True, God told the first woman, Eve: “Your craving will be for your husband, and he will dominate you.” (Genesis 3:16) Those words indicated how married women in general would fare, but they did not describe how things were to be among God’s true worshippers. God-fearing husbands were to keep in mind Jehovah’s original purpose. Jehovah made woman to be man’s “helper as a complement of him,” not his slave. (Genesis 2:20) Because godly men of early times recognized their own subjection and accountability to God, they did not abuse their authority. Far from treating their wives and children as mere slaves, God-fearing patriarchs showed them genuine love and affection.

A glimpse into the affection that children commonly received is given at Genesis

50:23. There it says of the great-grandsons of Joseph: "They were born upon Joseph's knees." While this could simply mean that Joseph acknowledged the children as his descendants, it could also indicate that he affectionately played with the children, dandling them upon his knees. Fathers today do well to show their children similar affection.

As family heads, the God-fearing patriarchs also cared for the spiritual needs of their families. Upon emerging from the ark after the global Deluge, "Noah began to build an altar to Jehovah . . . and to offer burnt offerings upon the altar." (Genesis 8:20; compare Job 1:5.) The faithful patriarch Abraham set a good example by giving family members personal instruction. He 'commanded his sons and his household after him so that they would keep Jehovah's way to do righteousness and judgment.' (Genesis 18:19) Loving headship thus contributed to the emotional and spiritual well-being of families.

Christian men today follow this pattern. They exercise headship in matters of worship by helping their families to comply with God's requirements and by setting a good example themselves. (Matthew 28:19, 20; Hebrews 10:24, 25) Like the patriarchs, Christian husbands and fathers also take the time to give personal instruction to their family members.

Taking Decisive Action

When he finally paid off a huge debt to his father-in-law, the patriarch Jacob asked: "When am I to do something also for my own house?" (Genesis 30:30) Like all fathers, Jacob felt the pressure of meeting the material needs of his family, and he worked hard to do this. Says Genesis 30:43: "The man went on increasing more and more, and great flocks and maidservants and menservants and camels and asses came to be his."

Some years later, however, after Jacob had moved into the land of Canaan, he apparently was unaware that his daughter Dinah had developed the dangerous habit of associating with the pagan Canaanites.* (Genesis 34:1) He also failed to act when he became aware of the presence of heathen paraphernalia in his household. At any rate, after the tragic rape of Dinah by a Canaanite, Jacob took decisive action. "Put away the foreign gods that are in the midst of you and cleanse yourselves," he directed.—Genesis 35:2-4.

Christian fathers must be vigilant when it comes to the spirituality of their families. If there are serious threats to the spiritual welfare of the family, such as the presence of immoral literature or unwholesome music in the home, they must take decisive action.

Interestingly, such women of faith as Sarah, Rebekah, and Rachel also exerted significant influence in the family. Although they were submissive to their husbands, they were not restrained from taking the initiative when it was appropriate and necessary. For example, Exodus 4:24-26 tells us that when Moses and his family were going to Egypt, "Jehovah [‘Jehovah's angel,’ *Septuagint*] got to meet him and kept looking for a way to put him [Moses' son] to death." Evidently, Moses' son was in danger of being executed because Moses had failed to circumcise him. Zipporah took swift action and circumcised her son. Consequently, the angel let go of him. Christian wives today can also take the initiative when the situation makes this appropriate.

* It should be noted that prior to this, Jacob had taken firm steps to protect his family from the influence of the Canaanites. He built an altar, doubtless of a style that set him apart from his Canaanite neighbors. (Genesis 33:20; Exodus 20:24, 25) Furthermore, he pitched his camp outside the city of Shechem and established his own water supply. (Genesis 33:18; John 4:6, 12) Dinah would thus have been well aware of Jacob's desire that she not associate with the Canaanites.

Fatherly Instruction Under the Mosaic Law

In 1513 B.C.E., the patriarchal age ended as Israel became a nation. (Exodus 24:3-8) Fathers continued to serve as family heads. However, family law became subordinate to the national Law given by God to Moses and administered by appointed judges. (Exodus 18:13-26) The Levitical priesthood took over the sacrificial aspects of worship. Still, the father continued to play an important role. Moses exhorted: "These words that I am commanding you today must prove to be on your heart; and you must inculcate them 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 6:6, 7.

The Law provided occasions, such as the Passover, during which instruction could be given both formally and informally. As the Passover date, Nisan 14, approached, Jewish families would begin preparing for their customary trip to Jerusalem. (Deuteronomy 16:16; compare Luke 2:41.) What child could fail to be caught up in the excitement of such preparations? The journey itself would be a delight. By then the rainy season had ended, and the springtime sun had begun to take the winter chill out of the air. As the snows of Mount Hermon melted, the Jordan River would overflow its banks.

Along the way, fathers could teach their children not only the geography of their land but also the rich history connected with the sites they might pass. These might include Mounts Ebal and Gerizim, where the curses and blessings of the Law were read. They might also pass Bethel, where Jacob had his vision of the celestial ladder. What thrilling discussions would ensue! As the journey progressed and family groups were joined by travelers from other parts of

the land, all would enjoy upbuilding association.

Finally the family would enter Jerusalem, "the perfection of prettiness." (Psalm 50:2) Says scholar Alfred Edersheim: "Many of these pilgrims must have camped outside the city walls. Those who lodged within the walls were gratuitously accommodated." Yes, Hebrew youths received a firsthand lesson in brotherly love and hospitality. Yearly conventions of Jehovah's Witnesses serve a similar purpose today.

Nisan 14 would finally arrive. The Passover animal would be slaughtered and roasted for several hours. Near midnight the family would eat the lamb, unleavened bread, and bitter herbs. According to custom a son would ask: "What does this service mean to you?" Fathers would then give formal instruction, saying: "It is the sacrifice of the passover to Jehovah, who passed over the houses of the sons of Israel in Egypt when he plagued the Egyptians, but he delivered our houses."—Exodus 12:26, 27; 13:8.

Israel's King Solomon said: 'There is a time to laugh and a time to skip about.' (Ecclesiastes 3:4) Israelite children were allowed time for recreation. Jesus Christ apparently watched children play in the marketplaces. (Zechariah 8:5; Matthew 11:16) And it was not unusual for parents of means to arrange for enjoyable family gatherings that featured singing, dancing, and feasting. (Luke 15:25) Christian parents today likewise take the initiative in providing wholesome recreation and association for their children.

Mothers and Children in Jewish Society

What role did mothers play under the Mosaic Law? Proverbs 1:8 commanded: "Listen, my son, to the discipline of your father,



Your family can be as happy as families that worshiped Jehovah in Bible times

and do not forsake the law of your mother." Within the framework of her husband's authority, the Jewish wife would apply God-given requirements in family life. She was to be honored by her children, even after she had grown old.—Proverbs 23:22.

The mother also had a large share in the training of her children. She cared for an infant almost exclusively until it was old enough to be weaned, no doubt resulting in a close mother and child bond. (Isaiah 49:15) While fathers were teaching their sons a trade, mothers taught their daughters the domestic skills. Mothers also had a profound influence on their sons. For example, Lemuel the king benefited from "the weighty message that his mother gave to him in correction."—Proverbs 31:1.

A capable Jewish wife also enjoyed considerable latitude in "watching over the goings-

on of her household." According to Proverbs 31:10-31, she might purchase household supplies, make real-estate investments, and even manage a small business. To the appreciative husband, her value was "far more than that of corals"!

A Pattern for Today

In Bible times the family arrangement worked for the emotional and spiritual growth of all its members. Fathers were to exercise their authority lovingly to benefit their families. They were to take the lead in worship. Both fathers and mothers showed an interest in their children—teaching and training them, worshiping with them, and providing recreation for them. Godly mothers proved to be valuable helpers, respecting the headship of their husbands while taking initiative in behalf of their families. Obedient children brought joy to their parents and to Jehovah God. Indeed, the God-fearing family of Bible times was an excellent pattern for our day.

Jehovah's Witnesses Around the World

INdia! This vast subcontinent is home to 1 of every 6 humans on this planet. All told, over 1,000 languages and dialects are spoken in this varied land. The people are predominantly Hindu, 83 percent of them, while 11 percent are Muslim, with Sikhs, Buddhists, Jains, and nominal Christians making up the remainder.

Jehovah's Witnesses have been enjoying outstanding success in India in recent years. They have found sheeplike people who are willing to take a firm stand on the side of Jehovah's Kingdom, despite all manner of pressures and opposition.

For example, a girl in an orthodox Hindu family had been crippled by polio since childhood. The suffering she underwent made her think about God and the purpose of life. She looked into many religions for an answer but found no solace. As a result, she lost her faith in religion, though not in God.

About this time two Witnesses met this girl in their house-to-house ministry. "I was moved to tears when I heard them read Revelation 21:4," she recalls. She accepted many of the Watch Tower Society's publications and agreed to a home Bible study despite her mother's opposition. The girl made many changes in her life, boldly faced opposition from relatives, and became a baptized Witness. She says: "I have come a long way, and it has been a very difficult way. But Jehovah God has

always been with me and given me great peace and joy."

Firm for Pure Worship in School

A young sister was asked by her teacher to go to a Catholic church along with the rest of the class. The sister politely refused, saying that she was one of Jehovah's Witnesses and would not worship anyone or anything other than Jehovah. The teacher said that when all others went to the church, she should go also. But the sister stood firm and said that since the ones going to the church would not be praying to Jehovah, she could not see how she could be in attendance there.

Because of the girl's firmness, her teacher wanted to know more. So the following day the sister gave her a Watchtower article on the worship of Jehovah. Impressed by what she had read, the teacher then exempted her from all religious activities at school. The sister was able to place ten magazines with her and the other teachers.

Obedience to God's Law on Blood Rewarded

Recently a viral fever broke out in epidemic form in some parts of the state of Kerala. This disease severely damages the kidneys and leads to the need for dialysis. Blood transfusions are commonly administered. In one city 14 people were admitted to the hospital with this disease. One of these patients was a Witness, an elder in the local congregation. He was told that blood transfusion was the only

available treatment. The elder explained his Scriptural beliefs and firmly refused blood. (Acts 15: 28, 29) After much argument the doctors said that he would die because of his rejection of a blood transfusion.

The other 13 patients received blood. Tragically, all of them died within a few days. The brother was the only survivor! Hospital authorities were very surprised. The medical staff was greatly impressed by the regular visits made by members of the congregation. After he was discharged from the hospital, the brother went to thank the doctors, but they said: "Why do you thank us? Thank your God, Jehovah. He is the One who saved you. Please pray for us also to your God, Jehovah."

COUNTRY PROFILE

1994 Service Year

PEAK NUMBER WITNESSING:

14,271

RATIO:

1 Witness to 56,266

MEMORIAL ATTENDANCE:

38,192

AVERAGE PIONEER PUBLISHERS:

1,780

AVERAGE BIBLE STUDIES:

12,453

NUMBER BAPTIZED:

1,312

NUMBER OF CONGREGATIONS:

410

BRANCH OFFICE:

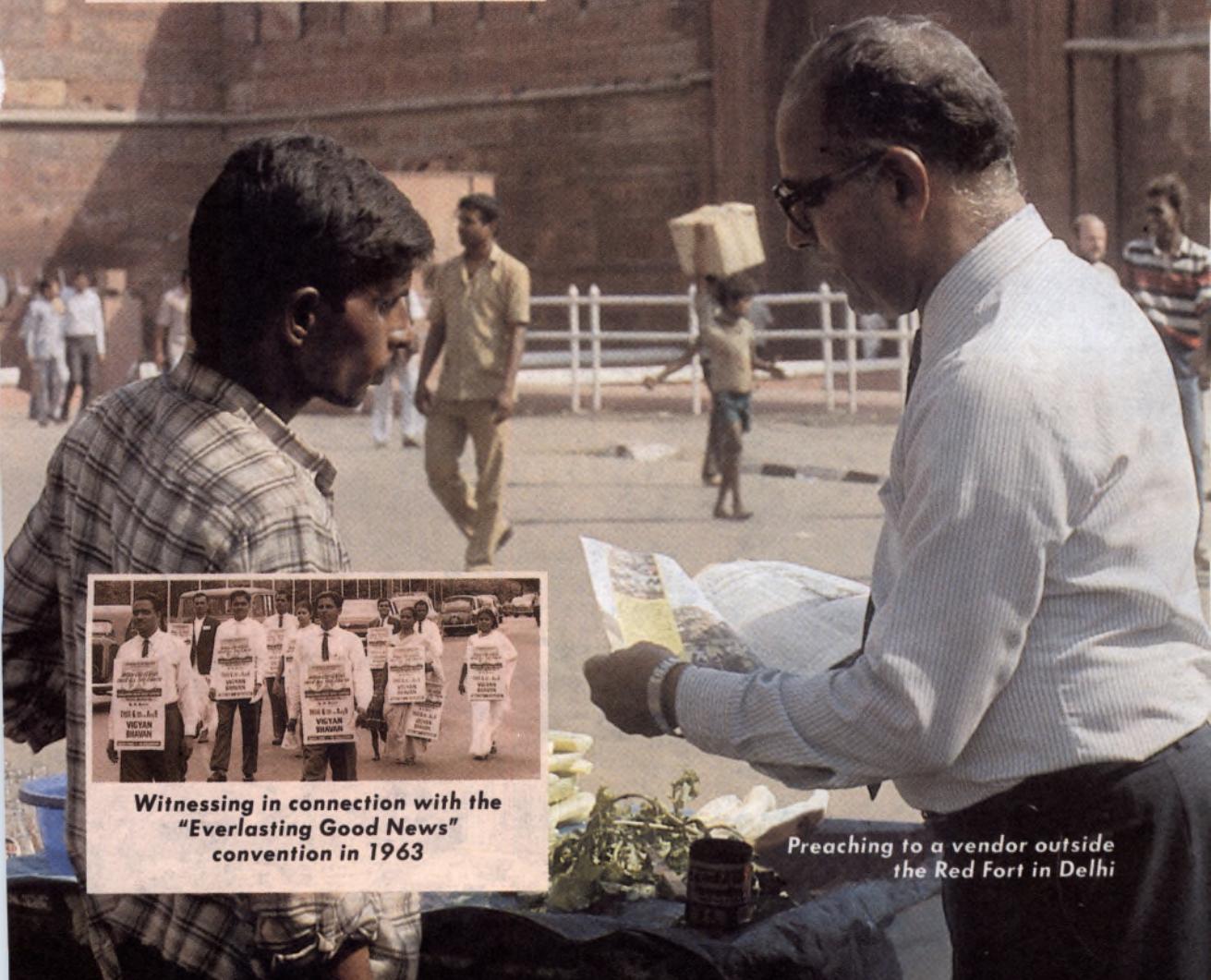
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INDIA



Branch office, Lonavla



**Witnessing in connection with the
"Everlasting Good News"
convention in 1963**

**Preaching to a vendor outside
the Red Fort in Delhi**

Who Were the MASORETES?

JEHOVAH, "the God of truth," has preserved his Word, the Bible. (Psalm 31:5) But since Satan, the enemy of truth, has tried to corrupt and destroy it, how did the Bible reach us essentially as written?—See Matthew 13:39.

Part of the answer can be found in a comment by Professor Robert Gordis: "The achievement of [the] Hebrew scribes, called *masoretes* or 'preservers of tradition,' has not been sufficiently appreciated. These nameless scribes copied the Sacred Book with meticulous and loving care." Al-

though the majority of these copyists remain nameless to us today, the name of one family of Masoretes has been clearly recorded—Ben Asher. What do we know about them and their fellow Masoretes?

The Ben Asher Family

The portion of the Bible originally written in Hebrew, often called the Old Testament, was faithfully copied by Jewish scribes. From the sixth to the tenth century C.E., these copyists were called Masoretes. What did their work involve?

For centuries Hebrew was written only with consonants, the vowels being sup-

Tiberias, the center of Masoretic activity from the eighth to the tenth century

Pictorial Archive (Near Eastern History) Est.



plied by the reader. By the time of the Masoretes, however, the proper pronunciation of Hebrew was being lost because many Jews were no longer fluent in that language. Groups of Masoretes in Babylon and Israel invented signs to be placed around the consonants to indicate accents and proper pronunciation of vowels. At least three different systems were developed, but the one that proved most influential was that of the Masoretes in Tiberias, by the Sea of Galilee, the home of the Ben Asher family.

Sources list five generations of Masoretes from this unique family, beginning with Asher the Elder of the eighth century C.E. The others were Nehemiah Ben Asher, Asher Ben Nehemiah, Moses Ben Asher, and, finally, Aaron Ben Moses Ben Asher of the tenth century C.E.* These men were in the vanguard of those perfecting the written symbols that would best express what they understood to be the proper pronunciation of the Hebrew Bible text. To develop these symbols, they had to determine the basis of the Hebrew grammatical system. No clear system of rules for Hebrew grammar had ever been recorded. Therefore, one might say that these Masoretes were among the first Hebrew grammarians.

Aaron, the final Masorete of the Ben Asher family tradition, was the first to record and edit this information. He did so in a work entitled "Sefer Dikdukei ha-Te'amim," the first book of Hebrew grammatical rules. This book became the basis for the work of other Hebrew grammarians for centuries to come. But this was only a by-product of the more important work of the Masoretes. What was that?

* In Hebrew "ben" means "son." Ben Asher therefore means "the son of Asher."

A Phenomenal Memory Required

The major concern of the Masoretes was the accurate transmission of each word, even each letter, of the Bible text. To ensure accuracy, the Masoretes utilized the side margins of each page to record information that would indicate any possible change of text made either inadvertently or deliberately by past copyists. In these marginal notes, the Masoretes also noted unusual word forms and combinations, marking how frequently these occurred within a book or within the entire Hebrew Scriptures. These comments were recorded in a highly abbreviated code, since space was limited. As an additional cross-checking tool, they marked the middle word and letter of certain books. They went so far as to count every letter of the Bible in order to ensure accurate copying.

In the top and bottom margins of the page, the Masoretes recorded more extensive comments regarding some of the abbreviated notes in the side margins.* These were helpful in cross-checking their work. Since the verses were not then numbered and there were no Bible concordances, how did the Masoretes refer to other parts of the Bible to make this cross-check? In the top and bottom margins, they listed part of a parallel verse to remind them of where the word or words indicated were found elsewhere in the Bible. Because of space limitations, often they would write just one key word to remind them of each parallel verse. For these marginal notes to be useful, these copyists would virtually have to know the entire Hebrew Bible by heart.

* The Masoretic notes in the side margins are called the Small Masora. The notes in the top and bottom margins are called the Large Masora. Lists placed elsewhere in the manuscript are called the Final Masora.

The System for Hebrew Pronunciation

THE search for the best method of recording vowel signs and accent marks lasted for centuries among the Masoretes. Hence, it is not surprising to find continuing development with each generation of the Ben Asher family. Existing manuscripts represent the styles and methods of only the last two Masoretes of the Ben Asher family, Moses and Aaron.* A comparative study of these manuscripts shows that Aaron developed rules on certain minor points of pronunciation and notation that differed from those of his father, Moses.

Ben Naphtali was a contemporary of Aaron Ben Asher. The Cairo Codex of Moses

* The Cairo Codex (895 C.E.), which contains only the former and latter prophets, furnishes an example of Moses' methods. The Aleppo (c.930 C.E.) and Leningrad (1008 C.E.) codices are considered examples of Aaron Ben Asher's methods.

Ben Asher contains many readings that are attributed to Ben Naphtali. Therefore, either Ben Naphtali himself studied under Moses Ben Asher or both of them preserved a more ancient common tradition. Many scholars speak of the differences between the Ben Asher and the Ben Naphtali systems, but M. H. Goshen-Gottstein writes: "It would not be too far from the truth to speak of the two subsystems inside the Ben Asher family and to term the contrast of readings: *Ben Asher versus Ben Asher*." So it would be inaccurate to speak of a single Ben Asher method. It was not the result of inherent superiority that Aaron Ben Asher's methods became the final accepted form. Only because the 12th-century Talmudic scholar Moses Maimonides praised an Aaron Ben Asher text was preference given to it.

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־מֹשֶׁה וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיכָו אָנִי יְהוָה

Part of Exodus 6:2 with and without vowel points and diacritical marks

וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים אֶל־מֹשֶׁה וַיֹּאמֶר אֲלֵיכָו אָנִי יְהוָה

Lists that were too long for the margins were moved to another section of the manuscript. For example, the Masoretic note in the side margin of Genesis 18:3 shows three Hebrew letters, קָלְדָּא. This is the Hebrew equivalent of the number 134. In another section of the manuscript, a list appears indicating 134 places where pre-Masoretic copyists had deliberately removed the name Jehovah from the

Hebrew text, replacing it with the word "Lord."* Although aware of these changes, the Masoretes did not take the liberty of altering the text handed down to them. Instead, they indicated these changes in their marginal notes. But why did the Masoretes take such extreme care not to alter the text when previous copyists had altered it? Was

* See Appendix 1B in the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures With References*.

their form of Jewish belief different from that of their predecessors?

What Did They Believe?

During this period of Masoretic advancement, Judaism was involved in a deep-rooted ideological battle. Since the first century C.E., rabbinical Judaism had been increasing its control. With the writing of the Talmud and interpretations by rabbis, the Biblical text was becoming secondary to rabbinic interpretation of the oral law.* Therefore, the careful preservation of the Bible text could have lost its importance.

In the eighth century, a group known as Karaites rebelled against this trend. Emphasizing the importance of personal Bible study, they rejected the authority and interpretations of the rabbis and the Talmud. They accepted the Bible text alone as their authority. This increased the need for accurate transmission of that text, and Masoretic studies gained renewed impetus.

To what degree did either rabbinical or Karaite belief influence the Masoretes? M. H. Goshen-Gottstein, an expert on Hebrew Bible manuscripts, states: "The Masoretes were convinced . . . that they were keeping up an ancient tradition, and interfering with it purposely would have been for them the worst crime possible."

The Masoretes viewed proper copying of the Bible text as a holy task. Although they personally may have been highly motivated by other religious considerations, it seems that the Masoretic work itself was above ideological issues. The very concise marginal notes left little room for theological debate. The Bible text itself was their life's concern; they would not tamper with it.

* For more information on the oral law and rabbinical Judaism, see pages 8-11 of the brochure *Will There Ever Be a World Without War?*, published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.

Benefiting From Their Work

Although natural Israel was no longer God's chosen people, these Jewish copyists were totally dedicated to the accurate preservation of God's Word. (Matthew 21: 42-44; 23:37, 38) The achievement of the Ben Asher family and the other Masoretes is well summed up by Robert Gordis, who wrote: "Those humble but indomitable workers . . . performed in obscurity their herculean task of guarding the Biblical Text against loss or variation." (*The Biblical Text in the Making*) As a result, when such 16th-century Reformers as Luther and Tyndale defied the authority of the church and began to translate the Bible into common languages for all to read, they had a well-preserved Hebrew text to use as a basis for their work.

The work of the Masoretes continues to benefit us today. Their Hebrew texts form the basis for the Hebrew Scriptures of the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*. This translation continues to be translated into many tongues with the same spirit of dedication and concern for accuracy that was shown by the ancient Masoretes. We do well to show a similar spirit in paying attention to the Word of Jehovah God.—2 Peter 1:19.

In Our Next Issue

A World Without War—When?

Does God Come First
in Your Family?

Guard Your Sense of Urgency

QUESTIONS FROM READERS

What did the disciple James mean when he said: "Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, knowing that we shall receive heavier judgment"?

—James 3:1.

James certainly was not discouraging Christians from teaching the truth to others. At Matthew 28:19, 20, Jesus commanded his disciples to "make disciples of people of all the nations, . . . teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you." Hence, all Christians should be teachers. The apostle Paul counseled Hebrew Christians because they were not yet teachers. He wrote: "Although you ought to be teachers in view of the time, you again need someone to teach you from the beginning the elementary things of the sacred pronouncements of God."—Hebrews 5:12.

What, then, was James speaking about? He was referring to those with special teaching privileges in the congregation. At Ephesians 4:11, we read: "He [Jesus Christ, the Head of the congregation] gave some as apostles, some as prophets, some as evangelizers, some as shepherds and teachers." There were special teaching positions among the first-century congregations as there are today. For example, the Governing Body represents "the faithful and discreet slave" and has special responsibility to oversee the teaching of the worldwide congregation. (Matthew 24:45) Traveling overseers and congregation elders also have special teaching responsibilities.

Was James telling qualified Christian men that they should not accept the role of teacher for fear of God's heavier judgment? By no means. The office of elder is a great privilege, as indicated by 1 Timothy 3:1, which says: "If any man is reaching out for an office of overseer, he is desirous of a fine work." One of the requisites for appointment as a congregation elder is that a man be "qualified to teach." (1 Timothy 3:2) James did not contradict Paul's inspired words.

However, it seems that in the first century C.E., some were setting themselves up as teachers, though they did not qualify and were not appointed. Likely, they felt that there was some prominence in that role, and they desired personal glory. (Compare Mark 12:38-40; 1 Timothy 5:17.) The apostle John mentioned Diotrephes, who 'liked to have the first place, but did not receive anything from John with respect.' (3 John 9) First Timothy 1:7 speaks of certain ones who 'wanted to be teachers of law but who did not perceive either the things they were saying or the things about which they were making strong assertions.' The words of James 3:1 are especially appropriate for men who desire to be teachers but who have the wrong motive. Such ones could seriously harm the flock and would accordingly receive a heavier judgment.—Romans 2:17-21; 14:12.

James 3:1 is also a good reminder for those who are qualified and who serve as teachers. Since much has been entrusted to them, much will be required of them. (Luke 12:48) Jesus said: "Every unprofitable saying that men speak, they will render an account concerning it on Judgment Day." (Matthew 12:36) This is especially true of those whose words carry extra weight, the appointed elders.

Elders will render an account for the way they deal with Jehovah's sheep. (Hebrews 13:17) What they say affects lives. Hence, an elder should be careful not to promote his own opinions or abuse the sheep as did the Pharisees. He must strive to display the same deep love that Jesus showed. In every teaching situation, and especially when involved in judicial matters, an elder should weigh his words, not using glib phrases or expressing purely personal ideas. By leaning heavily upon Jehovah, his Word, and his directions through his organization, the shepherd will receive God's rich blessing, not "heavier judgment."

A Meaningless Ritual?

THE sacrament of confession has been practiced by Catholics for centuries. Yet, for many it is an empty routine. Reflecting on his youth, a high school principal named Bob says: "I was a teenager, and even then I didn't take it seriously." Why not? For him, confession had become a meaningless ritual. He explains: "Confession was like bringing all your luggage full of sins up to the customs man at the airport. He asks you questions about your sins and then he lets you go through after paying something for the luxury items you bought while you were abroad."

Similarly, Frank Wessling, writing in *U.S. Catholic*, describes the practice of confession as "an extremely simplified step-by-step guide, from checkoff of common sins through memorized prayer of repentance to ritual act of token penance." Wessling's conclusion? "I'm convinced that Confession is good for the soul," he says. "But the way Catholics do it is a problem."

The Bible presents confession in a completely different manner. Most important is confession to God. (Psalm 32:1-5) And

the Christian disciple James wrote: "Is there anyone sick among you? Let him call the older men of the congregation to him, and let them pray over him, greasing him with oil in the name of Jehovah. Therefore openly confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may get healed." —James 5:14, 16.

A Christian burdened with sin can call the congregation overseers, who can give personal and practical counsel from the Bible to help the wrongdoer abandon his sinful course.

The overseers can give appropriate encouragement as they monitor the progress of the one who is ailing spiritually. What a contrast to the formalistic ritual of confession practiced by churches today! Fortified by the personal assistance of congregation elders, repentant wrongdoers can gain the relief that David felt, as he expressed in a psalm: "My sin I finally confessed to you, and my error I did not cover. I said: 'I shall make confession over my transgressions to Jehovah.' And you yourself pardoned the error of my sins." —Psalm 32:5.



A Lesson From Birds and Flowers

WHAT often concerns people today more than anything else? For the majority, it is having enough to provide for their family or being able to improve their standard of living.

Making ends meet was also a major concern when Jesus Christ was on the earth. But he warned that this legitimate concern could become an overriding anxiety shutting out spiritual things. To illustrate his point, Jesus told his disciples to look closely at the birds and the flowers.

Birds need to eat every day—proportionately a lot more than we do because of their high metabolic rate. Moreover, they cannot sow seed,

reap, or store food for the future. Yet, as Jesus observed, our “heavenly Father feeds them.” (Matthew 6:26) Likewise, God clothes in the finest array the beautiful “lilies of the field.”—Matthew 6:28-30.

Jesus assures us that if we keep material needs in proper perspective and give spiritual things priority, God will make sure that we also have the necessary food and clothing. If Jehovah God cares for the birds and the flowers, he will surely care for those who love him and ‘keep on seeking first the kingdom and his righteousness.’ (Matthew 6:33) Are you putting the interests of God’s Kingdom first in your life?

