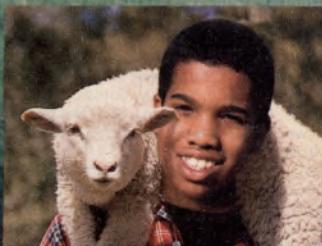


THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

APRIL 15, 2004



*'Your Will
Be Done on
Earth'*
WHEN?

THE WATCHTOWER®

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

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THE PURPOSE OF *THE WATCHTOWER* is to exalt Jehovah God as Sovereign Lord of the universe. It keeps watch on world events as these fulfill Bible prophecy. It comforts all peoples with the good news that God's Kingdom will soon destroy those who oppress their fellowmen and that it will turn the earth into a paradise. It encourages faith in God's now-reigning King, Jesus Christ, whose shed blood opens the way for mankind to gain eternal life. *The Watchtower*, published by Jehovah's Witnesses continuously since 1879, is nonpolitical. It adheres to the Bible as its authority.

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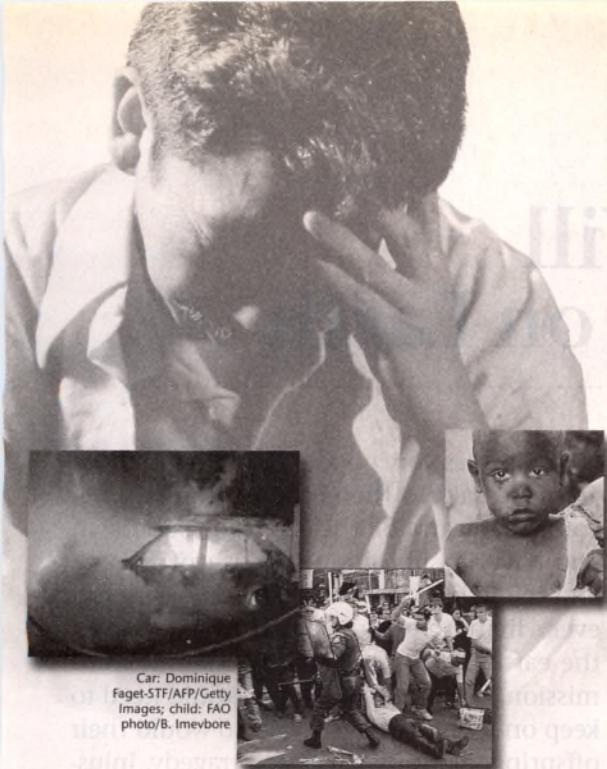
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Is God's Will Being Done?

"Let your will take place, as in heaven, also upon earth."

—Matthew 6:10.

will be done on earth,' do we not acquiesce to what happens on earth as being God's will?

Many are uncomfortable with this view. For them, it portrays God as insensitive to the feelings of his human creation. 'How could a loving God want what is horrific for innocent people?' they ask. 'If there is a lesson to be learned, what could the lesson possibly be?' Perhaps that is how you feel.

In this regard, Jesus' half brother, the disciple James, wrote: "When under trial, let no one say: 'I am being tried by God.' For with evil things God cannot be tried nor does he himself try anyone." (James 1:13) God is not the source of what is bad. Plainly, therefore, not all that happens on earth today is God's will. The Scriptures speak also of man's will, the nations' will, and even the Devil's will. (John 1:13; 2 Timothy 2:26; 1 Peter 4:3) Do you agree that what happened to Julio and Christina's family could not have been the will of a loving heavenly Father?

So, what did Jesus mean when he taught his disciples to pray: 'Let your will be done'? Was it just a request for God to intervene in particular cases, or was Jesus teaching us to pray for something bigger and better, a change that all can hope for? Let us examine further what the Bible has to say.

JULIO and Christina watched in horror as four of their children burned to death. Their parked car had been struck by a drunk driver, and it exploded into flames. A fifth child, Marcos, was rescued from the inferno, but the blaze had scorched his body, permanently disfiguring him. He was nine years old. His father was sick at heart. He comforted himself and his family with the words: "This is God's will, we have to understand that, good, bad, whatever."

In the face of a tragic event like this, many react similarly. 'If God is all-powerful and cares for us,' they reason, 'what has happened must be for our good in some way, hard as that may be to comprehend.' Do you agree?

The view that whatever happens, good or bad, manifests God's will is often based on Jesus' words in what is called the Lord's Prayer, quoted above. God's will is being done in heaven, is it not? In praying 'Let your



When God's Will Is Done on Earth

WHEN Jesus taught his disciples to pray, "Let your will take place, as in heaven, also upon earth," he was speaking as one who had lived in heaven with the Father. (Matthew 6:10; John 1:18; 3:13; 8:42) In Jesus' pre-human existence, he had experienced the time when everything that happened both in heaven and on earth was in harmony with God's will. Those were delightful times of accomplishment and satisfaction.—Proverbs 8:27-31.

God's first creations were spirit creatures, "angels of his, mighty in power, carrying out his word." They were and are "ministers of his, doing his will." (Psalm 103:20, 21) Did they each have a will of their own? Yes, and at the founding of the earth, these "sons of God began shouting in applause." (Job 38:7) Their applause reflected personal delight in what God had willed, and they conformed their will to his.

After founding the earth, God prepared it for human habitation and finally created the first man and woman. (Genesis, chapter 1) Was this also worthy of applause? The inspired account states: "After that God saw everything he had made and, look! it was very good," yes, flawless, perfect.—Genesis 1:31.

What was God's will for our first parents and their offspring? According to Genesis 1:

28, it too was very good: "God blessed them and God said to them: 'Be fruitful and become many and fill the earth and subdue it, and have in subjection the fish of the sea and the flying creatures of the heavens and every living creature that is moving upon the earth.'" To fulfill that wonderful commission, our original parents would need to keep on living—forever—and so would their offspring. Nothing suggested tragedy, injustice, heartache, or death.

This was a time when God's will was being done both in heaven and on earth. Those who carried out his will would find great pleasure in doing so. What went wrong?

An unexpected challenge to God's will arose. No, it was not unanswerable. Still, it introduced a long period of heartache and grief that would cause much confusion about God's will for mankind. Of this we have all been victims. What was that challenge?

God's Will During a Time of Rebellion

One of the spirit "sons of God" saw the possibility of interfering with God's will for man, his plan being to gain benefits for himself. The more this spirit creature considered it, the more feasible it seemed and the more attractive it became. (James 1:14, 15) He may have reasoned that if he could get the first human pair to listen to him rather than to

God, then God would be forced to tolerate a rival sovereignty. He may have figured that God would not execute them, for that would spell failure for God's purpose. Rather, Jehovah God would have to modify his purpose, accepting the position of this spirit son whom His human creation would now be obeying. Aptly, that rebel was later called Satan, that is, "Resister."—Job 1:6, footnote.

Acting on his desire, Satan approached the woman. He urged her to ignore God's will and to become morally independent, stating: "You positively will not die. . . . You are bound to be like God, knowing good and bad." (Genesis 3:1-5) To the woman, this seemed liberating, and she accepted it as what appeared to be a better way of life. Later, she persuaded her husband to join her.—Genesis 3:6.

This was not God's will for the pair. It was their will. And it would bring disastrous consequences. God had already told them that such a course would lead to their death. (Genesis 3:3) They were not created to be successful independently of God. (Jeremiah 10:23) In addition, they would become imperfect, and imperfection and death would now be passed on to their offspring. (Romans 5:12) Satan could not undo these effects.

Did these developments forever change God's purpose, or will, for mankind and the earth? No. (Isaiah 55:9-11) But they did raise issues that needed to be settled: Can mankind "be like God, knowing good and bad," as Satan had claimed? That is, given enough time, can we work out on our own what is right and wrong, beneficial and harmful, in all areas of life? Does God deserve complete obedience, his way of ruling

being the best? Is his will deserving of full compliance? How would you answer?

There was only one way to settle these issues before the eyes of all intelligent creation: Allow those who sought independence to try to make it a success. Simply putting them to death would not settle the issues raised. Letting the human race go on for a sufficient period would settle matters because the results would become obvious. God indicated that he would handle matters this way when he told the woman that she would have children. A human family would thus begin. Thanks to this, we are alive today!—Genesis 3:16, 20.

This did not mean, however, that God would allow humans and the rebellious spirit son to do *entirely* as they wished. God did not abdicate his sovereignty, nor did he abandon his purpose. (Psalm 83:18) This he made clear by foretelling the eventual crushing of the instigator of the rebellion and the canceling of all the bad effects. (Genesis 3:15) From the start, therefore, the human family had promise of relief.

In the meantime, our first parents had withdrawn themselves and their future offspring from God's rulership. For God to prevent all the sad consequences of their decision would require that he impose his will on them at every turn. It would be the same as not letting independence be tried at all.



***Independence
from God's will
brought tragedy***

Of course, individuals could choose God's rulership. They could learn what God's will is for people during this period and conform to it as closely as possible. (Psalm 143:10) Nevertheless, they would not be immune to problems so long as the issue of mankind's full independence remained unresolved.

The effects of personal choice became evident early. The firstborn of the human family, Cain, killed his brother Abel because "his own works were wicked, but those of his brother were righteous." (1 John 3:12) This was not God's will, for God had warned Cain and later punished him. (Genesis 4:3-12) Cain had chosen the moral independence offered by Satan; thus he "originated with the wicked one." Others did likewise.

Over 1,500 years into human history, "the earth came to be ruined in the sight of the true God and the earth became filled with violence." (Genesis 6:11) Decisive action was required to preserve the earth from ruin. God took action by bringing a global deluge and protecting the one righteous family still living—Noah, his wife, his sons, and their wives. (Genesis 7:1) All of us are their descendants.

During human history since then, God has provided guidance for those who sincerely desire to know his will. He inspired loyal men to record his communications for any who looked to him for guidance. These communications are recorded in the Bible. (2 Timothy 3:16) He lovingly allowed faithful humans to come into a relationship with him, even becoming his friends. (Isaiah 41:8) And he provided them with the strength they needed to bear up under the difficult trials that mankind has experienced during these millenniums of independence. (Psalm 46:1; Philippians 4:13) How grateful we can be for all of this!

'Your Will Be Done'—Completely

What God has done to this point is not the sum total of his will for mankind. The Christian apostle Peter wrote: "There are new heavens and a new earth that we are awaiting according to his promise, and in these righteousness is to dwell." (2 Peter 3:13) This symbolic language refers to a new governing authority over mankind and a new human society under that government.

Using explicit language, the prophet Daniel wrote: "In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be brought to ruin.... It will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, and it itself will stand to times indefinite." (Daniel 2:44) This prophecy foretells the end of today's unworkable system of things and its replacement by the Kingdom, or government, of God. What good news this is! The conflicts and selfishness that fill today's world with violence and that again threaten to ruin the earth will one day fade into the past.

When will these things happen? Jesus' disciples asked: "When will these things be, and what will be the sign of your presence and of the conclusion of the system of things?" As part of his answer, Jesus said: "This good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come."—Matthew 24:3, 14.

It is a matter of public record that this preaching work is now being performed worldwide. You have likely seen it in your own neighborhood. In his book *These Also Believe*, Professor Charles S. Braden writes: "Jehovah's Witnesses have literally covered the earth with their witnessing.... No single religious group in the world displayed more zeal and persistence in the attempt to spread the good news of the Kingdom than the Jehovah's Witnesses." The Witnesses are ac-

tively proclaiming this good news in over 230 lands and in nearly 400 languages. This foretold work was never previously accomplished on such a global scale. It is one of many evidences that the time is now approaching for that Kingdom to replace human governments.

The Kingdom that Jesus said would be preached is the very one he taught us to pray for in his model prayer: "Let your kingdom come. Let your will take place, as in heaven, also upon earth." (Matthew 6:10) Yes, that Kingdom is the agency God will use to fulfill his purpose, his will, for mankind and the earth.

What does that mean? Let Revelation 21:3, 4 answer: "I heard a loud voice from the

throne say: 'Look! The tent of God is with mankind, and he will reside with them, and they will be his peoples. And God himself will be with them. And he will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away.'" Then God's will shall indeed be done on earth and in heaven—completely.* Would you not like to be part of it?

* If you would like to learn more about God's Kingdom, please contact Jehovah's Witnesses in your area or write to one of the addresses listed on page 2 of this magazine.



Rebekah

A GODLY WOMAN OF ACTION



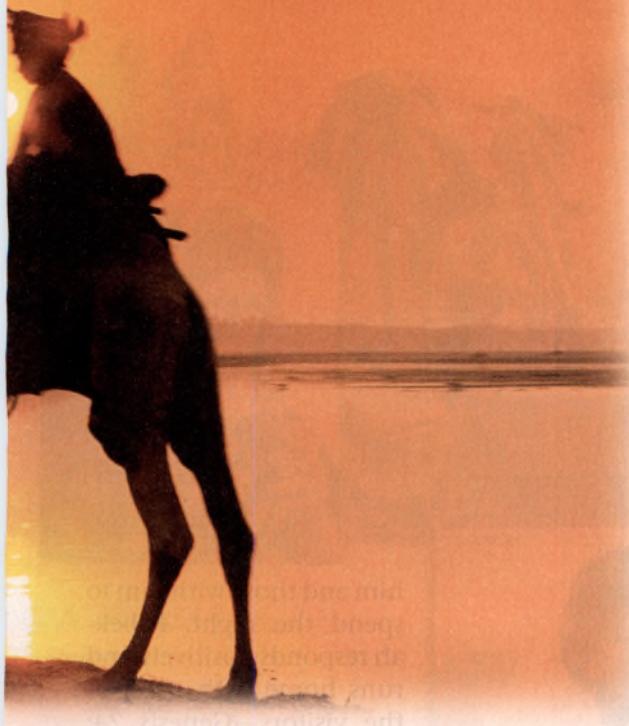
SUPPOSE you could handpick a wife for your son. What kind of person would you choose? What qualifications would she need? Would you look for someone who was physically attractive, intelligent, kind, and hardworking? Or would you first look for something else?

Abraham faced this dilemma. Jehovah had promised that blessings would flow to his descendants through his son Isaac. As we pick up the account, Abraham by now is old, but his son is still a bachelor. (Genesis 12: 1-3, 7; 17:19; 22:17, 18; 24:1) Since Isaac will share blessings with a yet-to-be-found wife and any offspring they may produce, Abraham arranges to locate a suitable wife for

Isaac. Above all, she must be a servant of Jehovah. As no such woman can be found in Canaan, where Abraham dwells, he has to look elsewhere. The person finally selected is Rebekah. How is she found? Is she a spiritual woman? What can we learn from considering her example?

The Search for a Qualified Woman

Abraham sends his oldest servant, likely Eliezer, to distant Mesopotamia to take a bride for Isaac from among Abraham's relatives, fellow worshipers of Jehovah. The matter is so serious that Eliezer is made to swear that he will not take a Canaanite as a wife for Isaac. Abraham's insistence on this is noteworthy.—Genesis 24:2-10.



After traveling to the city of Abraham's relatives, Eliezer brings his ten camels to a well. Picture the scene! It is evening, and Eliezer prays: "Here I am stationed at a fountain of water, and the daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water. What must occur is that the young woman to whom I shall say, 'Let your water jar down, please, that I may take a drink,' and who will indeed say, 'Take a drink, and I shall also water your camels,' this is the one you must assign to your servant, to Isaac."—Genesis 24: 11-14.

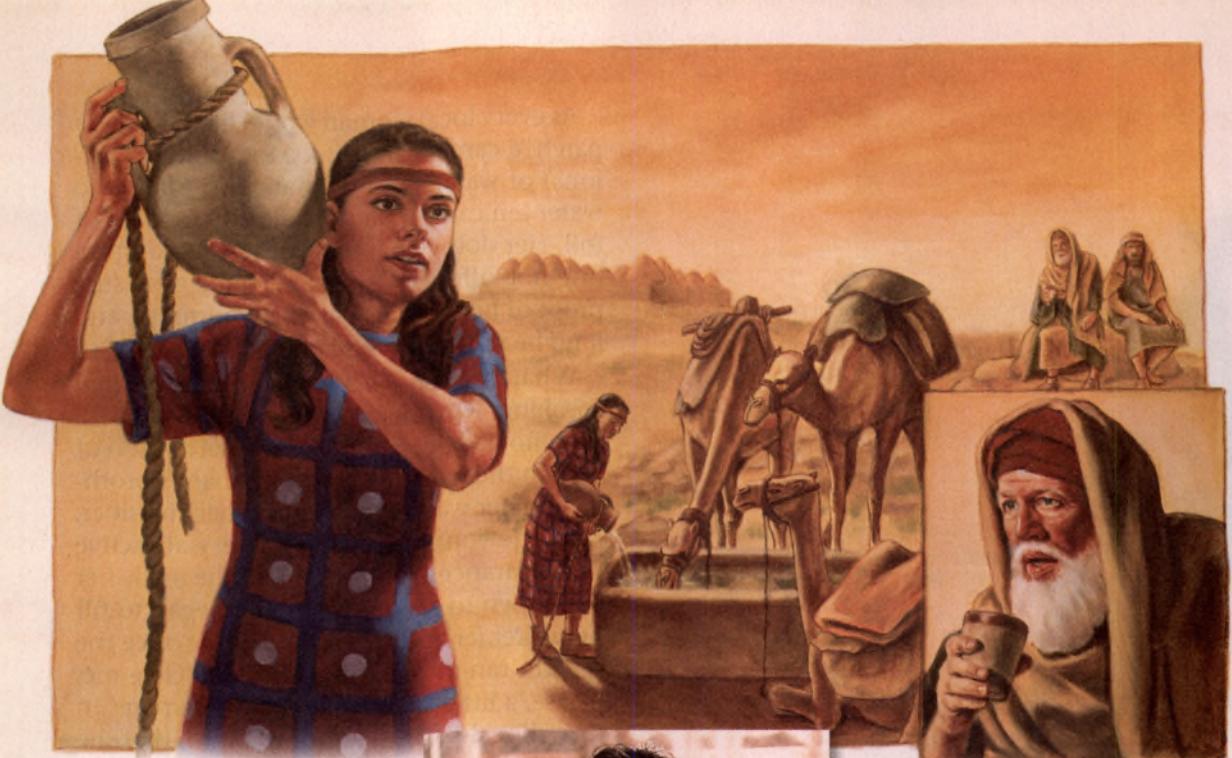
As every local woman would likely know, a parched camel can drink a lot (up to 25 gallons) of water. So a woman who offered to water ten camels had to be ready for a lot of toil. Her doing that with others looking on but not offering to help would give sure proof of her energy, patience, humility, and kind heart toward man and beast.

What happens? "Before he had finished speaking, why, here coming out was Rebekah, who had been born to Bethuel the son of Milcah the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, and her water jar was upon her shoulder. Now the young woman was very attractive in appearance, a virgin, . . . and she made her way down to the fountain and began to fill her water jar and then came up. At once the servant ran to meet her and said: 'Give me, please, a little sip of water from your jar.' In turn she said: 'Drink, my lord.' With that she quickly lowered her jar upon her hand and gave him a drink."—Genesis 24:15-18.

Does Rebekah Qualify?

Rebekah is Abraham's grandniece, and besides being beautiful, she is virtuous. She does not shrink back from talking to a stranger, nor is she unduly familiar. She obliges Eliezer when he asks for a drink.





That is only to be expected, since it is a mark of common courtesy. What about the second part of the test?

Rebekah says: "Drink, my lord." But it did not stop there. Rebekah continues: "For your camels too I shall draw water until they are done drinking."

She offers more than what might normally be expected. With alacrity 'she quickly empties her jar into the drinking trough and runs yet again and again to the well to draw water and keeps drawing for all his camels.' She is a whirl of activity. 'All the while,' says the account, 'the man is gazing at her in wonder.' —Genesis 24:19-21.

On learning that the maiden is related to Abraham, Eliezer prostrates himself in thanks to Jehovah. He inquires as to whether there is room at her father's house for

him and those with him to spend the night. Rebekah responds positively and runs home with news of the visitors.—Genesis 24:22-28.

After listening to Eliezer's story, Rebekah's brother, Laban, and her father, Bethuel, perceive that God is guiding things.

Surely Rebekah is designated for Isaac. "Take her and go," they say, "and let her become a wife to the son of your master, just as Jehovah has spoken." How does Rebekah feel? Asked if she will depart immediately, she answers with one word in Hebrew, meaning: "I am willing to go." She is not obliged to accept this proposal. Abraham said as much in freeing Eliezer from his oath "if the woman should not wish" to depart. But Rebekah too sees God's hand in the matter. So without delay, she leaves her family to marry a man

she has never met. That courageous decision is an outstanding demonstration of faith. She is indeed the right choice!—Genesis 24:29-59.

On meeting Isaac, Rebekah veils herself as evidence of submission. Isaac takes her as his wife, and no doubt because of her excellent qualities, he falls in love with her.—Genesis 24:62-67.

Twin Sons

Rebekah is childless for some 19 years. At length, she conceives twins, but the pregnancy is difficult, for the children struggle in her womb, causing Rebekah to cry out to God. We may do the same thing in times of great distress in our life. Jehovah hears Rebekah and reassures her. She will become mother to two nations, and “the older will serve the younger.”—Genesis 25:20-26.

Those words may not be the only reason for Rebekah’s greater love for her younger son, Jacob. The boys are different. Jacob is “blameless,” but Esau has such an unconcerned attitude toward spiritual things that for one meal, he sells his birthright, his right to inherit God’s promises, to Jacob. Esau’s marriage to two Hittite women shows disregard—if not contempt—for spiritual values, causing his parents great distress.—Genesis 25:27-34; 26:34, 35.

Procuring the Blessing for Jacob

The Bible does not say whether Isaac knows that Esau must serve Jacob. In any case, both Rebekah and Jacob know that the blessing belongs to him. Rebekah springs into action on hearing that Isaac intends to bless Esau when he takes his father a dish of game. The decisiveness and zeal that characterized her in her youth have not deserted her. She ‘commands’ Jacob to bring her two kids of goats. She will prepare a dish her husband is fond of. Then Jacob must imperson-

ate Esau to obtain the blessing. Jacob objects. His father is bound to become aware of the ruse and curse him! Rebekah insists. “Upon me be the malediction meant for you, my son,” she says. Then she makes the dish, disguises Jacob, and sends him to her husband.—Genesis 27:1-17.

Why Rebekah acts this way is not stated. Many condemn her action, but the Bible does not, nor does Isaac on discovering that Jacob has received the blessing. Rather, Isaac amplifies it. (Genesis 27:29; 28:3, 4) Rebekah knows what Jehovah foretold about her sons. So she acts to see that Jacob secures the blessing that is rightfully his. This is clearly in harmony with Jehovah’s will.—Romans 9:6-13.

Jacob Sent to Haran

Rebekah now thwarts Esau by urging Jacob to flee until his brother’s rage passes. She seeks Isaac’s consent to her plan but kindly avoids mentioning Esau’s ire. Rather, she tactfully appeals to her husband by voicing anxiety lest Jacob ever marry a Canaanite. The very idea is enough to persuade Isaac to order Jacob to avoid such a marriage and to send him to Rebekah’s family to find a God-fearing wife. There is no record that Rebekah ever sees Jacob again, but her actions do yield a rich reward for the future nation of Israel.—Genesis 27:43-28:2.

What we know of Rebekah moves us to admire her. She was very attractive, but her real beauty lay in her godly devotion. That was what Abraham sought in a daughter-in-law. Her other good traits likely surpassed all that Abraham had even hoped for. Her faith and courage in following divine guidance and her zeal, modesty, and generous hospitality are qualities that all Christian women do well to imitate. These are the qualities that Jehovah himself looks for in a truly exemplary woman.

GOD'S PEOPLE MUST LOVE KINDNESS

"What is Jehovah asking back from you but to exercise justice and to love kindness and to be modest in walking with your God?"—MICAH 6:8.

JEHOVAH is a God of kindness. (Romans 2:4; 11:22) How the first couple, Adam and Eve, must have appreciated that fact! In the garden of Eden, they were surrounded by visible creations that gave evidence of God's kindness toward humans, who could enjoy them. And God continues to be kind to all, even to unthankful and wicked people.

² Being made in God's image, humans have the capacity to reflect godly attributes. (Genesis 1:26) Not surprisingly, Jehovah expects us to show kindness. As Micah 6:8 states, God's people must "love kindness." But what is kindness? How is it related to other godly qualities? Since humans are capable of displaying kindness, why is the world such a cruel and harsh place? Why should we as Christians endeavor to show kindness in our dealings with others?

What Is Kindness?

³ Kindness is displayed by taking an active interest in the welfare of others. It is shown by helpful acts and considerate words. To be kind means to do good rather than to do anything harmful. A kind person is friendly, gentle, sympathetic, and gracious. He has a generous, considerate attitude toward others. The apostle Paul admonished Chris-

1, 2. (a) Why should it not surprise us that Jehovah expects his people to show kindness? (b) What questions regarding kindness deserve our consideration?

3. How would you define kindness?

tians: "Clothe yourselves with the tender affections of compassion, kindness, lowliness of mind, mildness, and long-suffering." (Colossians 3:12) Kindness, then, is part of every true Christian's figurative attire.

⁴ Jehovah God has taken the lead in showing kindness. As Paul said, it was when "the kindness and the love for man on the part of our Savior, God, was manifested" that "he saved us through the bath that brought us to life and through the making of us new by holy spirit." (Titus 3:4, 5) God 'bathes,' or cleanses, anointed Christians in Jesus' blood, applying the merit of Christ's ransom sacrifice in their behalf. They are also made new through holy spirit, becoming "a new creation" as spirit-begotten sons of God. (2 Corinthians 5:17) Moreover, God's kindness and love extend to "a great crowd," who have "washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."—Revelation 7:9, 14; 1 John 2:1, 2.

⁵ Kindness is also part of the fruitage of God's holy spirit, or active force. Paul said: "The fruitage of the spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, mildness, self-control. Against such things there is no law." (Galatians 5:22, 23) So, then, should not those led by God's spirit show kindness to others?

4. How has Jehovah taken the lead in showing kindness to mankind?

5. Why should those led by God's spirit show kindness?

Christian elders strive to be kind in dealing with the flock

True Kindness Is Not Weakness

⁶ Some people view kindness as weakness. They feel that a person must be hard, even rude at times, so that others can see his strength. In reality, though, it takes real strength to be truly kind and to avoid showing mistaken kindness. Since true kindness is part of the fruitage of God's spirit, it cannot be a weak, compromising attitude toward wrong conduct. Mistaken kindness, on the other hand, is a weakness that causes one to condone wrongdoing.

⁷ Consider, for example, Israel's high priest Eli. He was lax in disciplining his sons, Hophni and Phinehas, who officiated as priests at the tabernacle. Not content with the portion of a sacrifice assigned to them by God's Law, they had an attendant demand raw meat from an offerer before the fat of the offering was made to smoke on the altar. Eli's sons also had immoral intercourse with women serving at the entrance of the tabernacle. However, instead of ousting Hophni and Phinehas from office, Eli merely rebuked them mildly. (1 Samuel 2:12-29) No wonder "word from Jehovah had become rare in those days"! (1 Samuel 3:1) Christian elders must be careful not to succumb to showing mistaken kindness to wrongdoers who could imperil a congregation's spirituality. True kindness is not blind to evil words and deeds that violate God's standards.

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6. When is kindness a weakness, and why?
 7. (a) How did Eli prove to be lax? (b) Why must elders guard against showing mistaken kindness?



⁸ Our Exemplar, Jesus Christ, was never guilty of displaying mistaken kindness. He was the very epitome of true kindness. For instance, 'he felt tender affection for the people because they were skinned and knocked about like sheep without a shepherd.' Honesthearted people felt free to approach Jesus, even bringing their young children to him. Think of the kindness and compassion he displayed as "he took the children into his arms and began blessing them." (Matthew 9:36; Mark 10:13-16) Though Jesus was kind, he was nevertheless firm for what was right in the sight of his heavenly Father. Jesus never condoned evil; he had the God-given strength to denounce the hypocritical religious leaders. As noted at Matthew 23:13-26, several times he repeated the pronouncement: "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!"

Kindness and Other Godly Qualities

⁹ Kindness is related to other qualities produced by God's spirit. It is listed between "long-suffering" and "goodness." Indeed, the person who cultivates kindness demonstrates that quality by being long-suffering.

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8. How did Jesus display true kindness?
 9. How is kindness related to long-suffering and goodness?

He is patient even with the unkind. Kindness is related to goodness in that it is often displayed in helpful deeds for the benefit of others. Sometimes, the Greek word used in the Bible for "kindness" may be translated "goodness." The display of this trait among early Christians so astounded the pagans that they, according to Tertullian, called those followers of Jesus 'people made up of kindness.'

¹⁰ There is a link between kindness and love. Concerning his followers, Jesus said: "By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love among yourselves." (John 13:35) And concerning this love, Paul said: "Love is long-suffering and kind." (1 Corinthians 13:4) Kindness is also linked with love in the word "loving-kindness," often used in the Scriptures. This is kindness stemming from loyal love. The Hebrew noun rendered "loving-kindness" includes more than tender regard. It is kindness that lovingly attaches itself to an object until its purpose in connection with it is realized. Jehovah's loving-kindness, or loyal love, is displayed in various ways. For instance, it is seen in his acts of deliverance and protection.—Psalm 6:4; 40:11; 143:12.

¹¹ Jehovah's loving-kindness draws people to him. (Jeremiah 31:3) When God's faithful servants need deliverance or help, they know that his loving-kindness is indeed loyal love. It will not fail them. Hence, they can pray in faith, as did the psalmist who said: "As for me, in your loving-kindness I have trusted; let my heart be joyful in your salvation." (Psalm 13:5) Since God's love is loyal, his servants can trust in him completely. They have this assurance: "Jehovah will not forsake his people, nor will he leave his own inheritance."—Psalm 94:14.

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10. How are kindness and love linked?
 11. What assurance does God's loving-kindness give us?

Why Is the World So Cruel?

¹² The answer to this question has to do with what happened in the garden of Eden. Early in human history, a spirit creature who had become selfish and haughty introduced a plan to become a world ruler. As a result of his scheming, he did become "the ruler of this world," indeed a very oppressive one. (John 12:31) He became known as Satan the Devil, the arch-opposer of both God and man. (John 8:44; Revelation 12:9) His selfish plot to establish a rule rivaling Jehovah's kindly rulership was exposed shortly after Eve was created. Thus, bad rule had its start when Adam chose the road of independence from God's rule, totally rejecting His kindness. (Genesis 3:1-6) Instead of truly ruling themselves, Adam and Eve actually came under the selfish and proud influence of the Devil, becoming subjects of his rule.

¹³ Consider some of the consequences. Adam and Eve were evicted from a section of the earth that was a paradise. They went from a lush estate with easy access to healthful vegetation and fruit to the difficult situation outside the garden of Eden. God said to Adam: "Because you listened to your wife's voice and took to eating from the tree concerning which I gave you this command, 'You must not eat from it,' cursed is the ground on your account. In pain you will eat its produce all the days of your life. And thorns and thistles it will grow for you." The curse pronounced on the ground meant that cultivating it would now become very hard. The effects of the cursed ground, with its thorns and thistles, were so keenly felt by

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12. When and how did oppressive rule have its start?

- 13-15. (a) What were some of the consequences of rejecting Jehovah's righteous rulership? (b) Why is this world a harsh place?



Jehovah's loving-kindness will not fail his servants in difficult times

Adam's descendants that Noah's father, Lamech, spoke of 'the pain of their hands resulting from the ground which Jehovah had cursed.'—Genesis 3:17-19; 5:29.

¹⁴ Adam and Eve also exchanged tranquillity for distress. God said to Eve: "I shall greatly increase the pain of your pregnancy; in birth pangs you will bring forth children, and your craving will be for your husband, and he will dominate you." Later, Cain, the firstborn of Adam and Eve, committed the cruel act of murdering his brother Abel.—Genesis 3:16; 4:8.

¹⁵ "The whole world is lying in the power of the wicked one," declared the apostle John. (1 John 5:19) Like its ruler, the world today manifests evil traits that include selfishness and pride. No wonder it is full of harshness and cruelty! But it will not always be that way. Jehovah will see to it that kindness and compassion, rather than harshness and cruelty, prevail under his Kingdom.

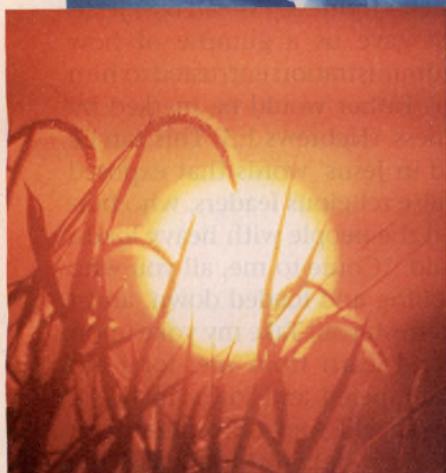
Under God's Kingdom Kindness Will Prevail

¹⁶ Jehovah and the designated King of His Kingdom, Christ Jesus, require that their subjects be known for their kindness. (Micah 6:8) Jesus Christ gave us a glimpse of how the administration entrusted to him by his Father would be marked by kindness. (Hebrews 1:3) This can be noted in Jesus' words that exposed the false religious leaders, who burdened the people with heavy loads. He said: "Come to me, all you who are toiling and loaded down, and I will refresh you. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am mild-tempered and lowly in heart, and you will find refreshment for your souls. For my yoke is kindly and my load is light." (Matthew 11:28-30) All too many earthly rulers, religious or otherwise, exhaust the people with wearisome burdens of endless rules and thankless tasks. Yet, what Jesus requires of his followers fits their needs and abilities. A refreshing, kindly yoke indeed! Are we not moved to be like him in showing kindness to others?—John 13:15.

¹⁷ Jesus' striking remarks to his apostles highlight how God's Kingdom rule differs markedly from human rule. The Bible states: "There also arose a heated dispute among them [the disciples] over which one of them seemed to be greatest. But he said to them: 'The kings of the nations lord it over them, and those having authority over them are called Benefactors. You, though, are not to be that way. But let him that is the greatest

16. Why is God's rule by means of Christ Jesus marked by kindness, and what does this obligate us to do?

17, 18. Why can we trust that those who rule with Christ in heaven and his earthly representatives will display kindness?



*Jehovah kindly allows the sun to shine
and the rain to fall upon all humans*

among you become as the youngest, and the one acting as chief as the one ministering. For which one is greater, the one reclining at the table or the one ministering? Is it not the one reclining at the table? But I am in your midst as the one ministering.'”—Luke 22:24-27.

¹⁸ Human rulers seek to establish their greatness by ‘lording it over’ the people and by seeking great titles, as if such titles make them better than those they rule over. But Jesus said that true greatness comes from ministering to others—diligently and persistently reaching out to serve. All those who will rule with Christ in heaven or serve as his earthly representatives must strive to follow his example of humility and kindness.

¹⁹ Let us look at other loving counsel that Jesus offered. Showing the extent of Jehovah’s kindness, Jesus said: “If you love those

^{19, 20. (a)} How did Jesus convey the extent of Jehovah’s kindness? (b) How can we imitate Jehovah in displaying kindness?

loving you, of what credit is it to you? For even the sinners love those loving them. And if you do good to those doing good to you, really of what credit is it to you? Even the sinners do the same. Also, if you lend without interest to those from whom you hope to receive, of what credit is it to you? Even sinners lend without interest to sinners that they may get back as much. To the contrary, continue to love your enemies and to do good and to lend without interest, not hoping for anything back; and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, *because he is kind toward the unthankful and wicked*. Continue becoming merciful, just as your Father is merciful.”—Luke 6:32-36.

²⁰ Godly kindness is unselfish. It asks for nothing and expects nothing in return. Jehovah kindly “makes his sun rise upon wicked people and good and makes it rain upon righteous people and unrighteous.” (Matthew 5:43-45; Acts 14:16, 17) In imitation of

our heavenly Father, not only do we refrain from harming the unthankful but we do good to them, even to those who have acted as our enemies. By displaying kindness, we show Jehovah and Jesus that we desire to live under God's Kingdom, when kindness and other godly qualities will permeate all human relationships.

Why Show Kindness?

²¹ For a genuine Christian, displaying kindness is especially important. It is evidence that God's spirit is at work in us. Moreover, when we display true kindness, we imitate Jehovah God and Christ Jesus. Kindness is also a requirement for those who will be

^{21, 22}. Why should we show kindness?

subjects of God's Kingdom. We must, then, love kindness and learn to display it.

²² What are some practical ways in which we can show kindness in our everyday life? The next article will address that subject.

How Do You Answer?

- What is kindness?
- Why is the world a cruel and harsh place?
- How do we know that kindness will prevail under God's rule?
- Why is the showing of kindness important for those who desire to live under God's Kingdom?

PURSUING KINDNESS IN A HOSTILE WORLD

"The desirable thing in earthling man is his loving-kindness."—PROVERBS 19:22.

DO YOU consider yourself to be a kind person? If so, living in today's world can be trying. True, kindness is identified in the Bible as part of "the fruitage of the spirit," but why is it so difficult to express kindness even in so-called Christian lands? (Galatians 5:22) As we noted in the preceding article, the answer can in part be found in what the apostle John wrote—the whole world is in the control of an unkind spirit person, Satan the Devil. (1 John 5:19) Jesus Christ identified Satan as "the ruler of the world." (John 14:30) Thus, this world tends to resemble its rebel ruler, whose attitude

1. Why can it be difficult to show kindness?

is characterized by vicious behavior.—Ephesians 2:2.

² Our lives are affected adversely when others treat us in an unkind manner. The unkindness could be expressed by spiteful neighbors, unfriendly strangers, even friends and family members who may, at times, act thoughtlessly. The pressure of having contact with people who are rude and who shout and curse at one another often causes much dismay. Such lack of kindness by others could make us feel hostile ourselves, and we may consider returning

2. What challenges can affect our showing kindness?



Kindness shown by all in the family promotes unity and cooperation

Mildness and kindness are two aspects of the fruitage of the spirit that are closely related and are effective when dealing with difficult and challenging circumstances.

⁵ Since displaying the fruitage of God's holy spirit is so important to us as Christians, we do well to consider how we might show one of those qualities—kindness. Is it possible to pursue kindness in a hostile

world? If so, what are some areas in which we can give evidence that we do not allow the influence of Satan to stifle our kindness, especially in stressful situations? Let us consider pursuing kindness in the family, in the workplace, at school, with our neighbors, in our ministry, and among fellow believers.

Kindness Within the Family

⁶ To have Jehovah's blessing and direction, the fruitage of the spirit is vital and needs to be fully cultivated. (Ephesians 4:32) Let us focus on the particular need for family members to express kindness to one another. In day-to-day dealings, a husband and wife should manifest a kind and caring spirit between themselves and with their children. (Ephesians 5:28-33; 6:1, 2) Such kindness needs to be evident in the way members of the family speak to one another, children honoring and respecting their parents and parents treating their children appropriately. Be quick to commend, slow to condemn.

unkindness for unkindness. That may even lead to spiritual or physical health problems.
—Romans 12:17.

³ Stressful world conditions may also make it difficult for us to show kindness. For example, mankind in general feels stress because of threats and acts of terrorism, as well as the possible use of biological or nuclear weapons by various national groups. In addition, millions of people are impoverished, existing with minimal food, shelter, clothing, and medical care. Pursuing kindness becomes a challenge when the situation seems hopeless.—Ecclesiastes 7:7.

⁴ A person could easily conclude that showing kindness is hardly a priority and may even be a sign of weakness. He could feel exploited, especially when others ride roughshod over him. (Psalm 73:2-9) However, the Bible provides proper direction for us when it says: "An answer, when mild, turns away rage, but a word causing pain makes anger to come up." (Proverbs 15:1)

3. What serious problems do people face that test their willingness to be kind?
4. What wrong conclusion might some draw when thinking about showing kindness to others?

5. What are some areas of life in which kindness is needed?
6. Why is kindness within the family so important, and how can it be manifested?

⁷ Being kind to those in our family involves following the admonition of the apostle Paul: "Really put them all away from you, wrath, anger, badness, abusive speech, and obscene talk out of your mouth." Every day, Christian families should communicate with one another in a respectful manner. Why? Because good communication is the lifeblood of strong, healthy families. When disagreements arise, to smooth the conflict, try to solve the problem rather than win the argument. Happy family members make an earnest effort to promote kindness and consideration for one another.—Colossians 3:8, 12-14.

⁸ Kindness is positive and makes us want to do good to others. Thus, we seek to be useful, considerate, and helpful in an agreeable manner with other family members. It takes both individual and collective effort to show the type of kindness that speaks well of a family. As a result, not only will they have God's blessing but, in the congregation and in the community, they will honor the God of kindness, Jehovah.—1 Peter 2:12.

Kindness in the Workplace

⁹ For a Christian, the daily routine of employment may present the challenge of showing kindness to fellow workers. Rivalry among employees may lead to one's job being jeopardized by a fellow

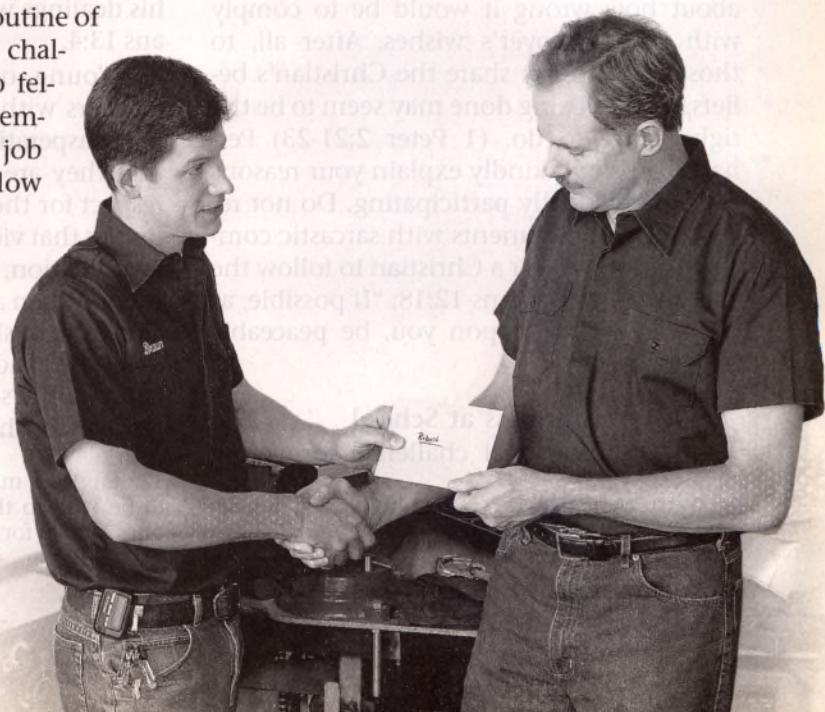
7, 8. (a) What type of conduct do we have to avoid if we are to show genuine kindness in the family? (b) How does good communication contribute to a strong family bond? (c) How can you display kindness in your family?

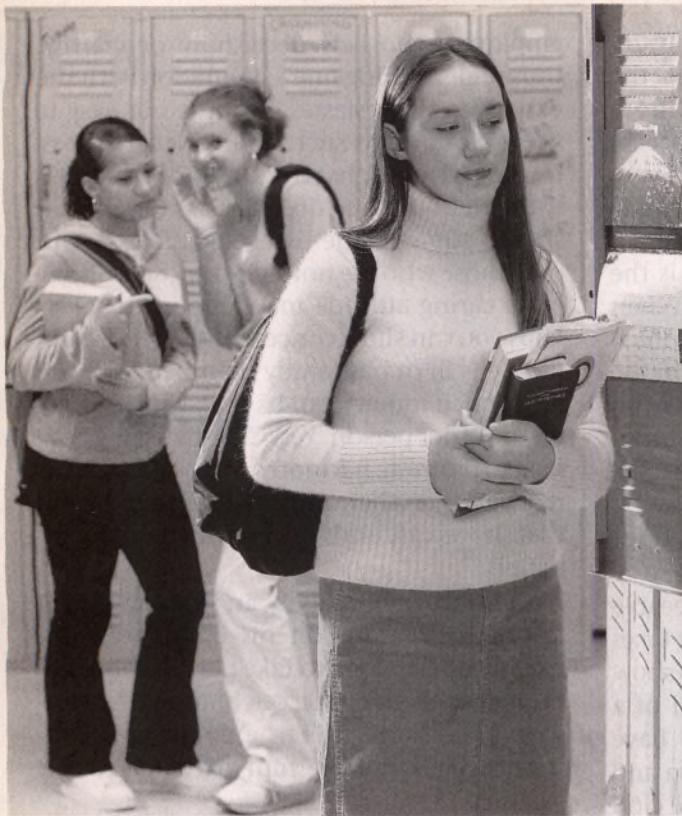
9, 10. Describe some problems that can arise in the workplace, and comment on how they may be handled with kindness.

employee who acts deceitfully or craftily, thus undermining one's reputation with the employer. (Ecclesiastes 4:4) It is not easy to show kindness at such times. Nevertheless, bearing in mind that the kind thing is usually the right thing to do, a servant of Jehovah should strive to the extent possible to win over those who are not well-disposed. Showing a caring attitude may help in this. Perhaps you can show concern if the fellow employee is ill or has family members who are ill. Even an inquiry can have a positive effect on the other person. Yes, Christians ought to seek to promote harmony and peace as far as it depends on them. Sometimes a kind word that shows care and concern will help the situation.

¹⁰ On other occasions, an employer may force his opinions on his employees and may want everyone to take part in some nationalistic event or in a celebration of an unscriptural nature. When a Christian's conscience does not let him participate, this

You can show kindness when illness strikes a coworker or his family





Jehovah supports those who loyally display kindness despite ridicule

ones to show kindness to fellow students. Young people often yearn to be recognized by classmates. Some boys act in a macho fashion in order to be well-thought-of by other students, going as far as bullying others in school. (Matthew 20:25) Other young people like to show off scholastically, in sports, or in other activities. In parading their prowess, they often treat classmates and other students unkindly, erroneously thinking that this in itself somehow makes them superior. A young Christian has to beware that he or she does not imitate those individuals. (Matthew 20:26, 27) The apostle Paul said that "love is long-suffering and kind" and that love does "not brag, does not get puffed up." Hence, a Christian is under obligation, not to follow

the poor example of those who act unkindly, but to adhere to Scriptural admonition in his dealings with schoolmates.—1 Corinthians 13:4.

¹² Young ones should also treat their teachers with kindness. Many students enjoy exasperating their teachers. They think that they are smart when they undermine respect for their teachers by engaging in activities that violate school rules. By means of intimidation, they may get others to join them. When a young Christian refuses to go along, he or she may be targeted for ridicule or abuse. Facing such situations over the course of a school year tests a Christian's resolve to show kindness. Bear in mind,

may lead to a confrontation. At that moment it might not be wise to go into detail about how wrong it would be to comply with the employer's wishes. After all, to those who do not share the Christian's beliefs, what is being done may seem to be the right thing to do. (1 Peter 2:21-23) Perhaps you could kindly explain your reasons for not personally participating. Do not repay sarcastic comments with sarcastic comments. It is well for a Christian to follow the fine advice of Romans 12:18: "If possible, as far as it depends upon you, be peaceable with all men."

Kindness at School

¹¹ It can be a real challenge for young

11. What challenges do young ones face in displaying kindness to schoolmates?

12. (a) Why may it be a challenge for young ones to be kind to their teachers? (b) Who can young ones look to for help when pressured to be unkind?

though, how important it is to be a loyal servant of Jehovah. Be assured that he will support you by means of his spirit in these difficult moments in life.—Psalm 37:28.

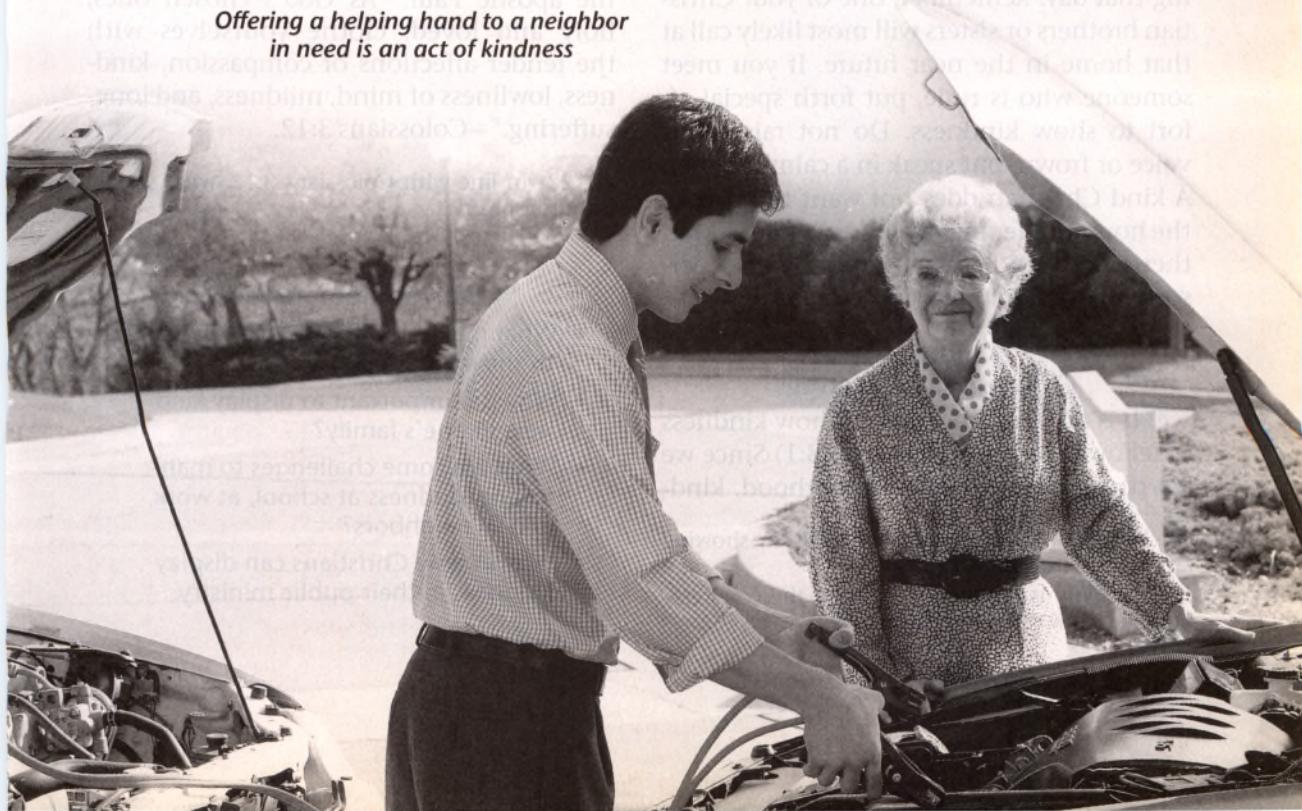
Kindness to Neighbors

¹³ Whether you live in a house, an apartment, a trailer park, or elsewhere, you can think of ways to show kindness and to express concern for the welfare of neighbors. Again, this is not always easy.

¹⁴ What if your next-door neighbors are prejudiced against you because of your race, nationality, or religion? What if they are rude at times or ignore you altogether? As a servant of Jehovah, expressing kindness to the extent possible will be beneficial. You will stand out as refreshingly different, truly

13-15. What can interfere with showing kindness to one's neighbors, and how may these challenges be met?

Offering a helping hand to a neighbor in need is an act of kindness



a praise to Jehovah—the one exemplary in kindness. You never know when the neighbor might have a change of attitude as a result of your kindness. He might even become a praiser of Jehovah.—1 Peter 2:12.

¹⁵ How might kindness be shown? For one thing, by conduct within the family as all exhibit the fruitage of the spirit. Neighbors may note this. At times, you may be able to do your neighbor a favor. Remember that kindness means taking an active interest in the welfare of others.—1 Peter 3:8-12.

Kindness in Our Ministry

¹⁶ Kindness should characterize our Christian ministry as we make a concerted effort to reach people in their homes, at their businesses, and in public places. We should

16, 17. (a) Why is kindness important in our public ministry? (b) How can kindness be manifested in various avenues of the field ministry?

remember that we represent Jehovah, who is always kind.—Exodus 34:6.

¹⁷ What is included in your efforts to show kindness in your ministry? As an example, while engaged in street witnessing, you can show kindness by being brief and considerate when you approach people. Sidewalks are usually busy with pedestrian traffic, so be careful that you do not block the sidewalks. Also, when you witness in business territory, show your kindness by being brief, remembering that storekeepers have to attend to customers.

¹⁸ In the house-to-house ministry, use discretion. Do not overstay your welcome, especially if the weather is poor. Can you discern when a person is growing impatient or even irritated by your presence? Perhaps in your part of the world, Jehovah's Witnesses call very often. If that is the case, show special consideration, always being kind and pleasant. (Proverbs 17:14) Try to acknowledge a householder's reason for not listening that day. Remember, one of your Christian brothers or sisters will most likely call at that home in the near future. If you meet someone who is rude, put forth special effort to show kindness. Do not raise your voice or frown, but speak in a calm manner. A kind Christian does not want to provoke the householder into a battle of words. (Matthew 10:11-14) Perhaps some day that person will listen to the good news.

Kindness at Congregation Meetings

¹⁹ It is no less important to show kindness to fellow believers. (Hebrews 13:1) Since we are part of a worldwide brotherhood, kind-

ness is essential in our dealings with one another.

²⁰ If a congregation is sharing a Kingdom Hall with one, two, or more congregations, it is important to deal kindly with those in the other congregations, according them dignity in your dealings with them. Rivalry is not conducive to cooperation when it comes to arranging for meeting times and such necessities as cleaning or renovating. Be kind and considerate even though there may be some differences of opinion. In this way kindness will triumph, and Jehovah will truly bless the interest you show in the welfare of others.

Continue to Show Kindness

²¹ Kindness is such an all-embracing quality that it touches every aspect of our lives. We should therefore make it an integral part of our Christian personality. Showing kindness to others ought to become a habit.

²² May all of us be kind to others each day and thus individually apply the words of the apostle Paul: "As God's chosen ones, holy and loved, clothe yourselves with the tender affections of compassion, kindness, lowliness of mind, mildness, and long-suffering."—Colossians 3:12.

21, 22. In line with Colossians 3:12, what should be our resolve?

Do You Remember?

- What makes it difficult for a Christian to show kindness?
- Why is it important to display kindness in one's family?
- What are some challenges to manifesting kindness at school, at work, and to neighbors?
- Explain how Christians can display kindness in their public ministry.

Informal Witnessing in MEXICO'S ENGLISH-SPEAKING FIELD

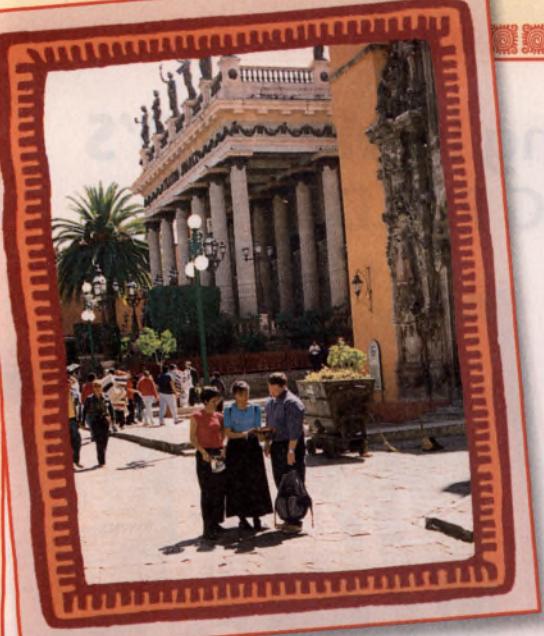
TAKING advantage of the time he spent waiting for his traveling companions in Athens, the apostle Paul engaged in informal witnessing. The Bible reports: "He began to reason . . . every day in the marketplace with those who happened to be on hand." (Acts 17:17) On his journey from Judea to Galilee, Jesus witnessed informally to a Samaritan woman beside a well. (John 4:3-26) Do you avail yourself of every opportunity to speak about the good news of God's Kingdom?

The English-speaking field in Mexico especially lends itself to informal witnessing. Tourists visit the resorts, university students come and go, and foreigners who have retired in Mexico frequent parks and restaurants. Many of Jehovah's Witnesses who know English have become adept at striking up conversations with such ones. In fact, they are quite alert to speak to anyone who looks foreign or who speaks English. Let us see how they do it.

Many times those from abroad who are serving in the English field simply introduce themselves to those who are obviously foreigners and ask where they are from. This logically leads to the question of what the Witness is doing in Mexico and gives him the opportunity to share Christian beliefs. For example, Gloria, who is serving where the need is great in the English field in Oaxaca, finds it especially easy to start conversations that way. While returning home from preaching informally in the town square, Gloria was stopped by a couple from England. The woman exclaimed: "I can't believe that I am seeing a black woman walking on the streets of



Oaxaca!" Instead of taking offense, Gloria laughed, and they began to chat about why she was in Mexico. The woman invited Gloria to her home for a cup of coffee. After making an appointment, Gloria offered the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines, but the woman declined, saying that she was an atheist. Gloria answered that she enjoyed speaking with atheists and would like to hear her opinion of the article "Places of Worship—Do We Need Them?" The woman accepted, saying: "If you can convince me, then you will really have accomplished something." Several interesting conversations over coffee followed. The couple later left for England, but the discussions continued by electronic mail.



Gloria was also drawn to Saron, a student from Washington, D.C., who was in Oaxaca doing volunteer work with indigenous women to complete her master's degree. After commanding Saron for her efforts, Gloria explained why she was in Mexico. This led to a fine conversation about the Bible and what God will do not only for the poor but for everyone. Saron commented that it was ironic that while she had never talked to the Witnesses in the United States, one of the first people she met in Mexico was one of Jehovah's Witnesses! Saron accepted a Bible study and began attending Christian meetings right away.

Many foreigners have moved to the beach resorts in Mexico, seeking some kind of paradise. Laurel uses this to start conversations in Acapulco, asking people if Acapulco is more like a paradise than where they come from and what they like about it. Then she explains that soon the whole earth will be a real paradise. This approach to a Canadian woman whom she met in a veterinarian's office led to a Bible study. Might a similar approach be effective where you live?

'In the Streets and Public Squares'

Often a conversation is started in the streets and public squares by asking: "Do you speak English?" Many Mexicans do because of their profession or because they have lived in the United States.

A Witness couple approached an elderly lady who was in a wheelchair being pushed by a nurse. They asked the lady if she spoke English. She answered that she did because she for many years lived in the United States. She accepted *The Watchtower* and *Awake!*, which she had never read before, and gave them her name, Consuelo, and address. Calling at the address four days later, they found that it was a nursing home run by Catholic nuns. At first, it was difficult to contact Consuelo because the nuns were suspicious and said that Consuelo could not receive them. The couple urged the nuns to let Consuelo know that they were there and wanted to greet her. Consuelo had the couple come right in. Since then, this 86-year-old woman has been enjoying a regular Bible study, despite negative comments by the nuns. She has also attended some Christian meetings.

Proverbs 1:20 says: "True wisdom itself keeps crying aloud in the very street. In the public squares it keeps giving forth its voice." Notice how that happened in the square of San Miguel de Allende. Early one morning, Ralph approached a middle-aged man who was sitting on a bench. The man was very surprised to be offered *The Watchtower* and *Awake!* and told Ralph his story.

He was a Vietnam veteran who as a result of the emotional stress of seeing so much death had suffered a nervous breakdown during his military service. He had been sent from the front line to a camp base. There, he was assigned to wash the bodies of dead soldiers in preparation for their shipment to the United States. Now, 30 years later, he still suffered

from constant nightmares and feelings of dread. That morning, while sitting in the square, he had been praying silently for help.

The veteran accepted the literature as well as an invitation to the Kingdom Hall. After attending the meeting, he said that during those two hours at the Kingdom Hall, he experienced peace for the first time in 30 years. This man was in San Miguel de Allende for only a couple of weeks, but he enjoyed several Bible studies and attended all the meetings until he returned home. Arrangements were made for his study to be continued.

Witnessing Informally at Work and School

Are you making yourself known as one of Jehovah's Witnesses at your workplace? Adrián, who sells vacation apartments in Cape San Lucas, does so. As a result, his workmate Judy relates: "Just three years ago, if you had told me that I would become one of Jehovah's Witnesses, I would have said, 'Not in a million years!' But I decided I wanted to read the Bible. I thought, 'How hard can it be, since I love to read?' Well, I don't think that I got through more than about six pages before I realized that I needed help. The only person I could think of was a workmate named Adrián. I liked to talk with him because he was the only really decent person there." Adrián immediately offered to come with his fiancée, Katie, and answer all of Judy's questions. Katie started a Bible study with her, and before too long Judy became a baptized Witness.

How about witnessing informally at school? Two Witnesses were taking Spanish lessons at the university but were absent one day to attend a Christian assembly. When they returned to class, they were asked to re-



late in Spanish what they had been doing. They took advantage of the opportunity to give a witness as best they could in Spanish. The teacher, Silvia, was very interested in Bible prophecy. She accepted a Bible study in English and is now a publisher of the good news. Several members of her family are also studying. Silvia says: "I found what I have been looking for all my life." Yes, informal witnessing can produce fine fruitage.

Using Other Opportunities

Being hospitable can lead to giving a witness. Jim and Gail, who are serving in San Carlos, Sonora, found that to be true. A woman who was walking her dogs at 6:00 a.m. stopped to admire their yard. Jim and Gail invited her in for coffee. For the first time in 60 years, she heard about Jehovah and the prospect of everlasting life. A Bible study was started.

Adrienne likewise treats strangers with kindness. She was eating in a restaurant in Cancún when a young boy approached and asked if she was from Canada. When she replied that she was, he explained that he and his mother were trying to assist his sister with a school report on Canadians. The mother, who spoke English, came over. After patiently answering her questions about Canadians, Adrienne said: "But there is a really important reason why I came here from Canada—to help people learn about the Bible. Would you be interested in that?" The woman replied that she would. She had left her church ten years before and had been trying to study the Bible on her own. She gave Adrienne her address and phone number, and a rewarding Bible study was started.

'Cast Your Bread Upon the Waters'

Speaking about Bible truth on every occasion often results in giving a witness to people who have had little or no opportunity to hear the Kingdom message. In a busy café in the port town of Zihuatanejo, a Witness invited two foreigners to have a seat at her table, as the café was full. This couple had been sailing from place to place for seven years. They expressed their negative feelings about Jehovah's Witnesses. After the encounter in the café, the Witness visited the couple on their boat and invited them to her home. They accepted over 20 magazines and 5 books and promised to look the Witnesses up at their next port of call.

Jeff and Deb noticed a family with a beautiful baby girl at a food court in a shopping center in Cancún. When they offered a comment about the baby, her parents invited them to share a pizza. It turned out that this family was from India. They had never heard of Jehovah's Witnesses, nor had they seen our literature. They left the shopping center with some Witness publications.

Something similar happened on an island off the coast of Yucatán. A newly married Chinese couple asked Jeff to take pictures of them, which he gladly did. He then found out that although they had lived in the United States for the past 12 years, they had never seen or heard of Jehovah's Witnesses! A pleasant conversation ensued. Jeff encouraged them to look up the Witnesses on returning home.

There may be a special event in your area that could afford an opportunity to witness informally. When the president of the United States came to visit the president of Mexico at his ranch near Guanajuato, reporters from all over the world covered the event. One Witness family decided to take advantage of this opportunity to preach in English. The response was favorable. For example, one reporter had covered several wars, such as those in Kosovo and Kuwait. A colleague had died in his arms after being shot by a sniper. Upon hearing about the resurrection, the reporter thanked God with tears in his eyes for letting him know that life has a purpose. He said that although he would not see the Witness couple again, he would carry this good news from the Bible in his heart.

As can be seen, the end result of such witnessing is often not known. However, wise King Solomon said: "Send out your bread upon the surface of the waters, for in the course of many days you will find it again." He also said: "In the morning sow your seed and until the evening do not let your hand rest; for you are not knowing where this will have success, either here or there, or whether both of them will alike be good." (Ecclesiastes 11:1, 6) Yes, zealously "send out your bread" upon many waters and "sow your seed" generously, as did Paul and Jesus and as do these modern-day Witnesses in Mexico's English-speaking field.

Do You Remember?

Have you appreciated reading the recent issues of *The Watchtower*?

Well, see if you can answer the following questions:

- **What indicates that Jesus had brothers and sisters?**

The Bible says so at Matthew 13:55, 56 and Mark 6:3. The Greek word (*adelphos*) found there is used to designate "some sort of physical or legal relationship [and] means only full or half-brothers." (*The Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, January 1992)—12/15, page 3.

- **What changed face of war has been in evidence, and what have often been the root causes?**

In recent years the wars that have plagued mankind have mainly been civil wars—wars between opposing groups of citizens of the same country. Ethnic and tribal hatred, religious differences, injustice, and political turmoil have been factors. Another factor has been greed for power and money.—1/1, pages 3-4.

- **How do we know that Jesus did not intend for Christians to repeat by rote the words of the model prayer?**

Jesus set out this example of prayer in his Sermon on the Mount. Some 18 months later, he repeated the essence of his earlier instruction about prayer. (Matthew 6:9-13; Luke 11:1-4) Noticeable is the fact that he did not repeat it word for word, which indicates that he was not giving a liturgical prayer to be recited by rote.—2/1, page 8.

- **After the Flood, where did the dove find the olive leaf that it brought to the ark?**

We do not know the salinity or temperature of the floodwaters. But olive trees have been known to sprout again even after being cut down. So some may have survived the floodwaters and put forth leaves thereafter.—2/15, page 31.

- **During the Nigerian civil war, with the blockade of Biafra, how did Jehovah's Witnesses in that area receive spiritual food?**

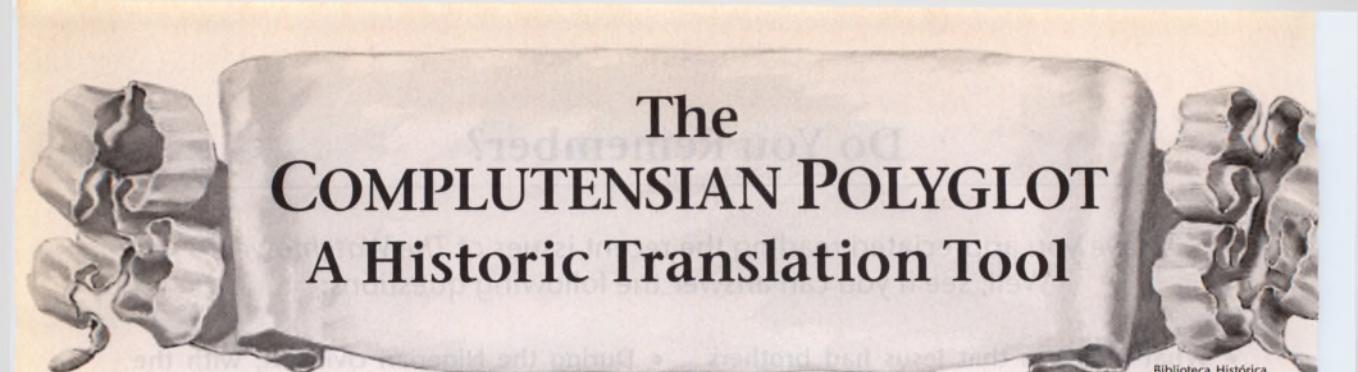
A civil servant was assigned a post in Europe and another worked at the Biafran airstrip. Both were Witnesses. They accepted the risky task of channeling spiritual food into Biafra, thus benefiting many brothers until the war ended in 1970.—3/1, page 27.

- **What was accomplished with the Peace of Westphalia, and how was religion involved?**

The Reformation split the Holy Roman Empire into three faiths—Catholic, Lutheran, and Calvinist. The Protestant Union and the Catholic League were formed in the early 17th century. Then a religious conflict erupted in Bohemia and escalated into an international power struggle. Catholic and Protestant rulers jockeyed for political supremacy and commercial gain. Finally, peace talks were held in the German province of Westphalia. After almost five years, the Treaty of Westphalia was signed in 1648, ending the Thirty Years' War and marking the birth of modern Europe as a continent of sovereign states.—3/15, pages 20-3.

- **What is the meaning of the mark, or name, of "the wild beast"—the number 666?**

This mark is mentioned at Revelation 13:16-18. The beast refers to human rulership, and the beast's bearing "a man's number" indicates that governments reflect the fallen human condition. The 6 plus 60 plus 600 shows that it is utterly deficient in God's eyes. Those who bear this mark give worshipful honor to the political State, or they look to it for salvation.—4/1, pages 4-7.



The COMPLUTENSIAN POLYGLOT A Historic Translation Tool

Biblioteca Histórica,
Universidad Complutense
de Madrid

IN ABOUT 1455, there was a revolution in Bible publishing. Johannes Gutenberg used a printing press to produce the first Bible ever printed using movable type. Finally, the bonds that had tied the Bible to scarce handwritten documents were broken. At last, Bibles could be produced in large quantities and at relatively little expense. Before long, the Bible would become the most widely distributed book in the world.

Gutenberg's Bible was in Latin. But European scholars soon realized that they needed a reliable text of the Bible in its original languages—Hebrew and Greek. The Catholic Church considered the Latin *Vulgate* the only acceptable version of the Bible, yet there were two major drawbacks. In the 16th century, most people could not understand Latin. Furthermore, over a period of a thousand years, the text of the *Vulgate* had accumulated a notable number of copyist errors.

Both translators and scholars needed a Bible in the original languages, as well as an improved Latin translation. In 1502, cardinal Jiménez de Cisneros, political and spiritual adviser to Isabella I of Spain, decided to satisfy their needs with just one publication. This historic translation tool became known as the Complutensian Polyglot. Cisneros aimed to have a Polyglot, or multilingual Bible, containing the best text in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, along with some

portions in Aramaic. Printing was still in its infancy, so this achievement would also turn out to be a milestone in the art of printing.

Cisneros began his formidable task by buying up ancient Hebrew manuscripts, of which there were many in Spain. He also collected diverse Greek and Latin manuscripts. These would provide the basis for the Polyglot text. Cisneros entrusted the actual compilation to a team of scholars whom he organized at the newly founded University of Alcalá de Henares, Spain. Among the scholars asked to collaborate was Erasmus of Rotterdam, but this famous linguist declined the invitation.

The scholars took ten years to compile the monumental work, after which the actual printing took another four years. Technical difficulties abounded, since Spanish printers had no Hebrew, Greek, or Aramaic type fonts available. Thus, Cisneros enlisted the services of a master printer, Arnaldo Guillermo Brocario, to prepare the type fonts in these languages. Finally, the printers began production in 1514. The six volumes were completed on July 10, 1517, just four months before the death of the cardinal. Some six hundred copies of the complete work were published, paradoxically at the very time when the Spanish Inquisition was at its height.*

* Six hundred copies were made on paper, and six copies on parchment. In 1984 a limited facsimile edition was printed.

Composition of the Work

Every page of the Polyglot provided a wealth of information. In the four volumes corresponding to the Hebrew Scriptures, the text of the *Vulgate* appeared in the center of each page; the Hebrew text formed the outer column; and the Greek text, along with an interlinear translation into Latin, the inside column. In the margins, the roots of many Hebrew terms appeared. And in the lower part of each page corresponding to the Pentateuch, the editors also included the *Targum of Onkelos* (an Aramaic paraphrase of the first five books of the Bible) together with a Latin translation.

The fifth volume of the Polyglot contained the Greek Scriptures in two columns. One presented the Greek text, and the other the equivalent Latin text from the *Vulgate*. The correspondency between the texts in both languages was established by means of small letters that directed the reader to the equivalent word in each column. The Greek text of the Polyglot was the first complete collection of the Greek Scriptures, or "New Testament," ever printed, followed soon thereafter by the edition prepared by Erasmus.

The scholars exercised such care in the proofreading of the text of the fifth volume that only 50 printing errors appeared. Because of such scrupulous care by these scholars, modern critics have judged it superior to the famous Greek text of Erasmus. The elegant Greek characters matched the simple beauty of the older uncial manuscripts. In his book *The Printing of Greek in the Fifteenth Century*, R. Proctor states: "To



Cardinal Jiménez de Cisneros

Spain belongs the honour of having produced as her first Greek type, what is undoubtedly the finest Greek fount ever cut."

The sixth volume of the Polyglot contained various aids for Bible study: a Hebrew and Aramaic dictionary, an interpretation of Greek, Hebrew, and Aramaic names, a Hebrew grammar, and a Latin index for the dictionary. Not surprisingly, the Complutensian Polyglot has been acclaimed as a "monument to typographical art and to Scriptural science."

Cisneros intended this work "to revive the hitherto dormant study of the scriptures," yet he had no desire to make the Bible available to the public at large. He thought that "the Word of God had to be enveloped in discreet mysteries far from the reach of the common man." He also believed that "the Scriptures ought to be restricted to the three ancient languages that God permitted on the inscription written above the head of his crucified Son."* For this reason, the Complutensian Polyglot did not include any translation into Spanish.

The *Vulgate* Versus the Original Languages

The very nature of the Polyglot produced some disagreements among the scholars involved. The famous Spanish scholar Antonio de Nebrija[#] was put in charge of revising the

* Hebrew, Greek, and Latin.—John 19:20.

[#] Nebrija is considered the pioneer of the Spanish humanists (liberal scholars). In 1492 he published the first *Gramática castellana* (Grammar of the Castilian Language). Three years later he decided to devote the rest of his life to the study of the Holy Scriptures.

text of the *Vulgate* that would appear in the Polyglot Bible. Although the Catholic Church considered Jerome's *Vulgate* to be the only authorized version, Nebrija saw the need to compare the *Vulgate* with the original Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek texts. He wanted to correct the evident mistakes that had crept into the existing copies of the *Vulgate*.

To resolve any discrepancies between the *Vulgate* and the original tongues, Nebrija urged Cisneros: "Light up once more the two unlit torches of our religion, the Hebrew and the Greek languages. Reward those who devote themselves to this task." And he also made the following suggestion: "Each time that a variation appears in the Latin manuscripts of the New Testament, we ought to go back to the Greek manuscripts. Every time there is a disagreement between various Latin manuscripts or between Latin and Greek manuscripts of the Old Testament, we ought to search for accuracy in the authentic Hebrew source."

How did Cisneros respond? In his prologue to the Polyglot Bible, Cisneros left no



Antonio de Nebrija

doubt as to his opinion. "We have placed the Latin translation of the blessed Jerome between that of the Synagogue [the Hebrew text] and that of the Oriental Church [the Greek text], just as the thieves were hung, one on each side of Jesus, who represents the Roman, or Latin, Church." Thus, Cisneros did not allow Nebrija to correct the Latin *Vulgate* in accord with the text of the original languages. Finally, Nebrija decided to abandon the project rather than put his name to a deficient revision.

Comma Johanneum

Although the Polyglot Bible of Alcalá de Henares did prove to be a gigantic step forward in producing a refined text in the original languages of the Bible, tradition occasionally prevailed over scholarship. The *Vulgate* was held in such high esteem that the editors felt obliged on several occasions to correct the Greek text of the "New Testament" to ensure that it corresponded to the Latin rather than the other way around. One of these examples is the famous spurious text known as the *comma Johanneum*.^{*} None of the early Greek manuscripts contained this phrase, which evidently was inserted several centuries after John wrote his letter; nor did it appear in the oldest Latin manuscripts of the *Vulgate*. So Erasmus eliminated this interpolation in his Greek "New Testament."

The editors of the Polyglot felt loath to

* The spurious addition found in some translations of the Bible at 1 John 5:7 reads "in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

Does Neutrality Hinder Christian Love?

Youths, Are You Building
for the Future?

Ancient Sports and the Importance
of Winning

part with a verse that had been a part of the traditional *Vulgate* text for centuries. Thus, they maintained the spurious reading in the Latin and decided to translate it and insert it into the Greek text so that the two columns would harmonize.

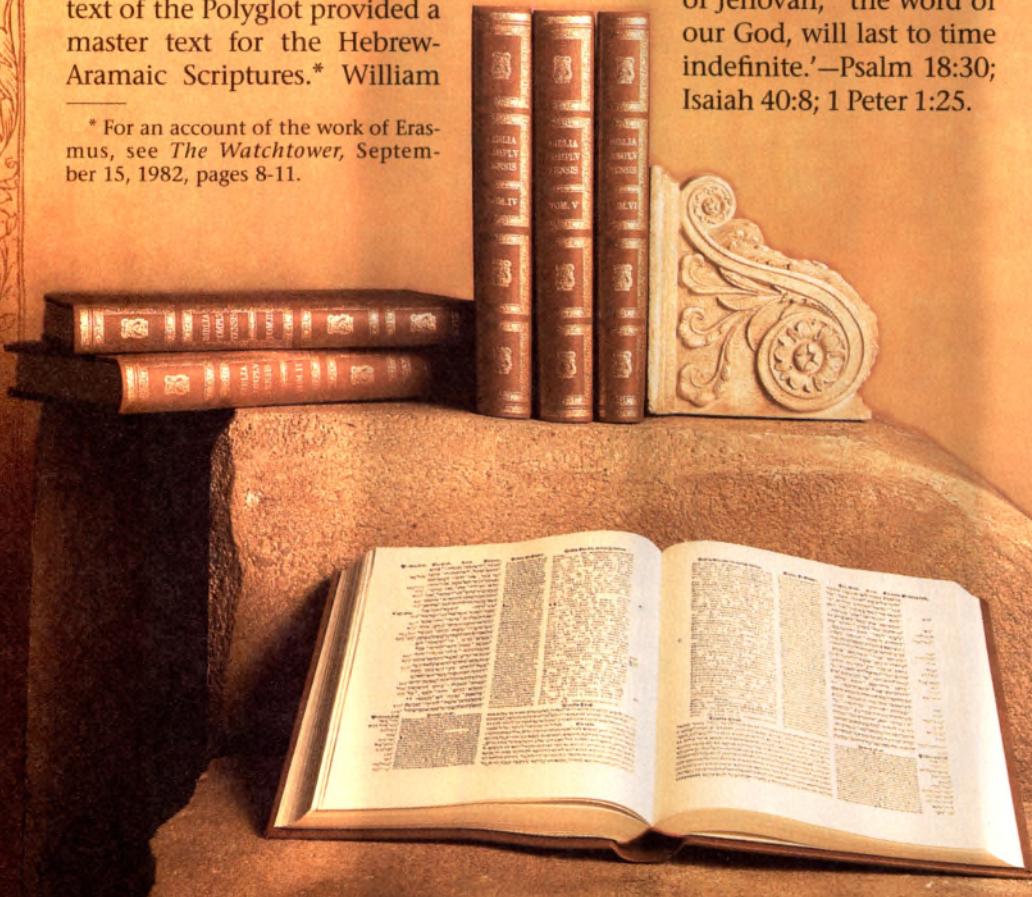
A Basis for New Bible Translations

The value of the Complutensian Polyglot does not depend merely on the fact that it contained the first printed edition of the complete Greek Scriptures with that of the *Septuagint*. Just as the Greek "New Testament" of Erasmus became the Received Text of the Greek Scriptures (the basis for many translations into other languages), the Hebrew text of the Polyglot provided a master text for the Hebrew-Aramaic Scriptures.* William

* For an account of the work of Erasmus, see *The Watchtower*, September 15, 1982, pages 8-11.

Tyndale used this Polyglot as the basic Hebrew text for his translation of the Bible into English.

Thus, the scholarly work of the team that produced the Complutensian Polyglot contributed notably to the progress of Scriptural scholarship. The publication of it came at a time when a growing interest in the Bible throughout Europe had begun to encourage its translation into the common language of the people. The Polyglot proved to be one more link in a chain of initiatives that contributed to the refinement and preservation of the Greek and Hebrew text. All of this is in harmony with the divine purpose that 'the refined saying of Jehovah,' 'the word of our God, will last to time indefinite.'—Psalm 18:30; Isaiah 40:8; 1 Peter 1:25.



WITH HELP FROM THE BIBLE, HE RESISTED TEMPTATION

Temptations abound in the world today. Upholding Bible standards is not easy. For instance, it may be a challenge to heed the Bible's counsel: "Flee from fornication." —1 Corinthians 6:18.

One of Jehovah's Witnesses, whom we will call Sebastian, worked for a Scandinavian company in Poland. He had to fight hard to maintain his integrity.

Sebastian became known as one of Jehovah's Witnesses. His supervisors, appreciating his industriousness and fine character, rewarded him with various privileges. It turned out, however, that these privileges included business meetings where questionable entertainment was involved.

Soon Sebastian began to have doubts. "My boss knows that I am one of Jehovah's Witnesses. That is why he trusts me and counts on me. If I refuse to participate, I will lose the job, which was so hard to find. What if I am only an observer?"

Then Sebastian found out more. He would be expected to "take care" of foreign customers by providing "girls" for immoral purposes to accompany them in the evening. What would he do?

Sebastian decided to remind the supervisor about his Bible-based attitude toward immorality. Soon it became clear that Sebastian did not fit in and that sooner or later he would have to quit his job. He found a new job with a lower salary but without such temptations. Now he has a clean conscience.

What would you do if someone pressured you to share in or to condone immorality? Would you be willing to make a drastic change? That is what Joseph of old did, as reported at Genesis 39:7-12.