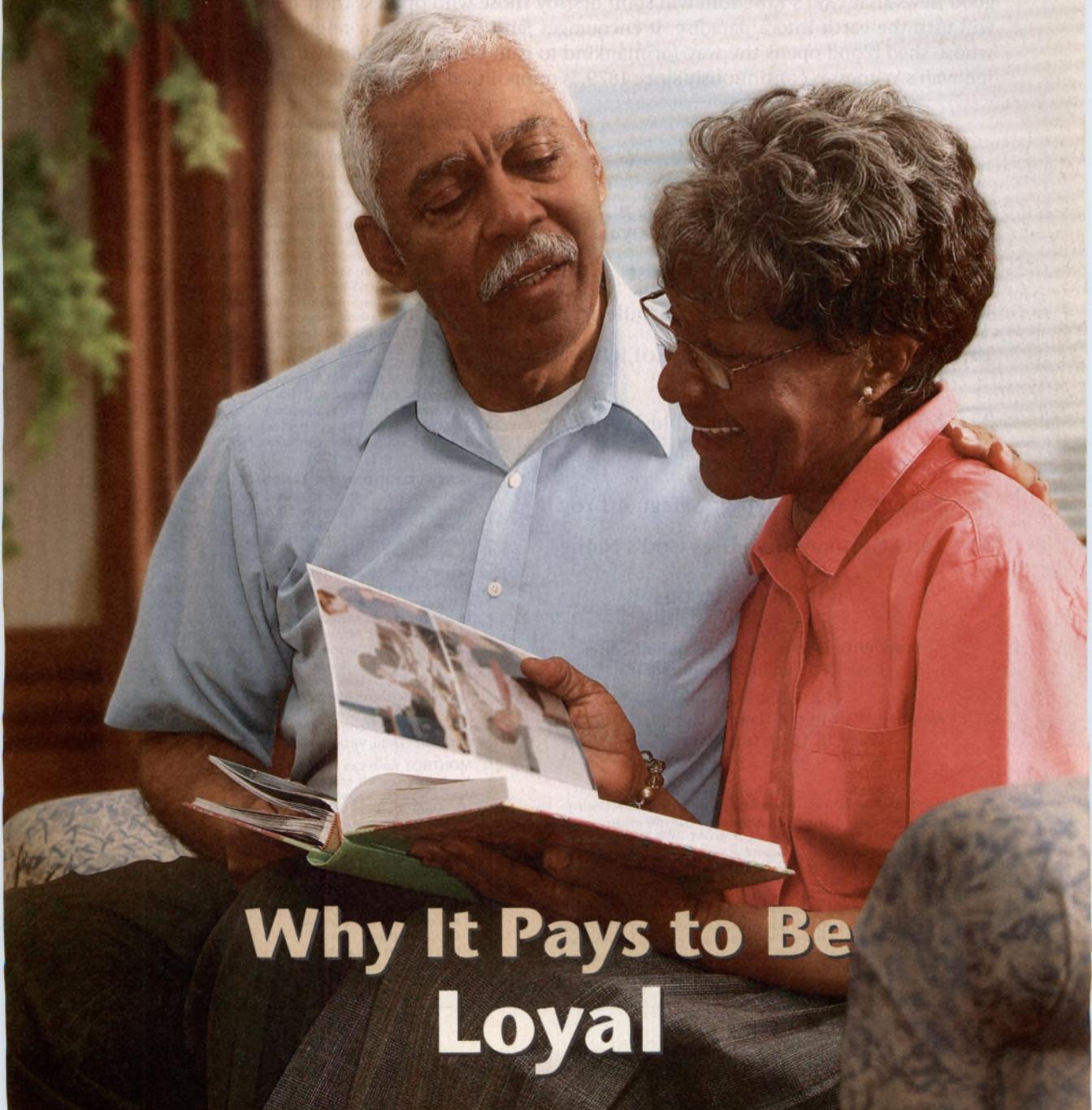


SEPTEMBER 1, 2005

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



**Why It Pays to Be
Loyal**

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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Does It Pay to Be Loyal?

"**Y**OU are paying far too much for health insurance," said Karl, an insurance representative.* "If you switch to my company, you will save 15 euros a month, which is a lot."

"That might be true," replied Jens. "But I have had my health insurance with the same company for several years. They were very helpful in the past, and I want to stay loyal to them."

"Loyalty is a fine quality," answered Karl. "Still, being loyal is costing you money!"

Karl was right. Often, being loyal, or faithful, to someone else may cost money.[#] It also demands time, energy, and emotional commitment. Is loyalty worth it?

More Widely Praised Than Practiced

In a survey carried out in Germany by the Allensbach Opinion Research Institute, 96 percent of those who responded viewed faithfulness as a desirable quality. A second Allensbach survey carried out among 18- to 24-year-olds showed that 2 out of 3 respondents regarded faithfulness as being "in," that is, they viewed it favorably.

Although loyalty, or faithfulness, is widely praised, things are different when it comes to actually *being* loyal, or *being* faithful. In several European lands, for example, married couples or family members frequently show little loyalty to one another. Friends are often disloyal to one another. And the loyalty that in times past bonded employer and employee

* Some names have been changed in this and in the next article.

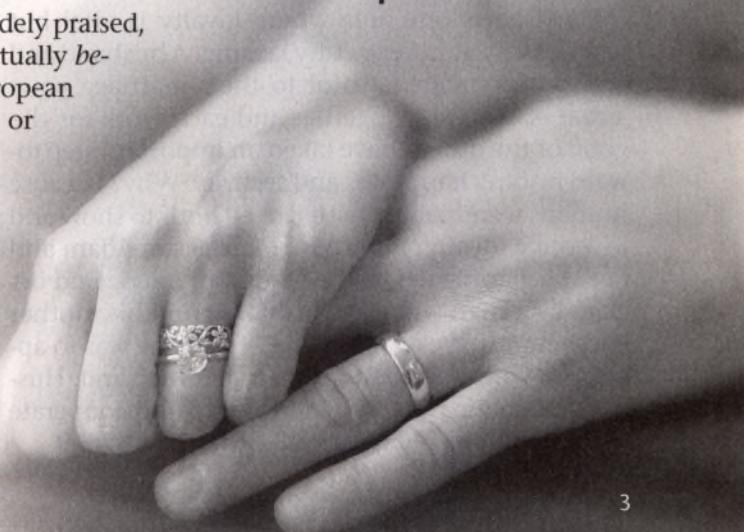
[#] While "loyalty" and "faithfulness" are not always used in the same context, they are sometimes used interchangeably in these articles.

or a business and its customers has basically disappeared. Why?

Sometimes the hectic pace of life leaves little time or emotional stamina for commitments that demand loyalty. People who have been disappointed and let down in human relationships perhaps now shy away from being faithful to anyone. Others may prefer a here-today-and-gone-tomorrow kind of life that does not demand loyalty.

Whatever the reason, loyalty is a virtue more often praised than practiced. Hence, the questions: Does it pay to be loyal? If so, to whom do we owe loyalty, and in what ways? What are the benefits of being loyal?

**Loyalty is a virtue
more often praised
than practiced**



There Are Benefits to Being Loyal

IN SOME countries, children love to tease a playmate by sticking burs onto his woolen pullover. The burs attach themselves to the wool, and whatever the playmate does—whether he walks, runs, shakes, or jumps—the burs cling. The only way to get rid of them is to pull them off one by one. To youngsters, that is all great fun.

Of course, not everyone appreciates burs on his clothes, but everyone is amazed at their ability to stick. A person who is loyal has a similar quality. The loyal one stays close to someone in an enduring relationship. He sticks faithfully to the duties and obligations of that relationship even when circumstances make it difficult. The word “loyalty” brings to mind virtues like trueness, allegiance, and devotion. However, while you might appreciate it when people are loyal to you, do you have the strength of character to be loyal to others? If so, to whom should you be loyal?

Faithfulness in Marriage—A Basic Need

Marriage is one area where loyalty is vital but where, sadly, it is frequently lacking. A husband and wife who remain faithful to their marriage vows—that is, who stay together and each work for the good of the other—have taken an important step toward finding happiness and security. Why? Because humans were created with a need both to show and to receive loyalty. When the marriage of Adam and Eve was performed in the garden of Eden, God declared: “A man will leave his father and his mother and he must stick to his wife.” The same was to apply to a wife; she was to stick to her husband. Husband and wife were to be faithful to and cooperate with each other.—Genesis 2:24; Matthew 19:3-9.



Of course, that was thousands of years ago. Does that mean that loyalty in marriage today is old-fashioned? Most would answer no. Researchers in Germany found that 80 percent considered faithfulness in marriage to be very important. A second survey set out to discover the most desirable characteristics in men and women. A group of men were asked to list the five qualities they most admired in women, and a group of women listed the five qualities they most admired in men. The virtue most highly prized by both men and women was faithfulness.

Yes, loyalty is part of a strong foundation for a successful marriage. Yet, as we saw in the preceding article, loyalty is more often praised than practiced. For example, the high divorce rate in many lands gives evidence of widespread disloyalty. How can marriage partners counteract this trend and stay loyal to each other?

Loyalty Makes Marriage Durable

Loyalty is shown when marriage mates look for opportunities to confirm their devotion to each other. For example, it is usually better to say "our" rather than "my"—"our friends," "our children," "our home," "our experiences," and so on. When making plans and decisions—whether regarding housing, employment, child rearing, entertainment, vacations, or religious activities—husband and wife do well to take into account the feelings and opinions of the other mate.—Proverbs 11:14; 15:22.

Loyalty is shown when each mate makes the other feel needed and wanted. A married person feels insecure when the mate acts in a too friendly manner with someone of the opposite sex. The Bible counsels men to stick "with the wife of [their] youth." A husband ought not to allow his heart to desire the ad-

miring attention of a woman other than his wife. Surely he should avoid becoming physically involved with another woman. The Bible warns: "Anyone committing adultery with a woman is in want of heart; he that does it is bringing his own soul to ruin." That same high standard of faithfulness is expected of a wife.—Proverbs 5:18; 6:32.

Is faithfulness in marriage worth the effort? Of course it is. It makes the marriage more stable and lasting, and each of the partners benefits as an individual. For instance, when a husband is faithfully committed to the well-being of his wife, she has a feeling of security that brings out the best in her. The same is true of the husband. His resolve to be loyal to his wife helps him to develop a commitment to righteous principles in all areas of his life.

If a husband and wife go through a difficult period, loyalty will make both feel secure. On the other hand, in a marriage lacking loyalty, a frequent reaction to problems is to separate or seek a divorce. Such a step, far from solving problems, often means a transition to other problems. Back in the 1980's, a well-known fashion consultant parted from his wife and family. Did he find happiness as a single man? Twenty years later, he admitted that the parting left him "lonely and disturbed and lying awake at night wanting to say good night to [his] children."

Loyalty Between Parents and Children

When parents are loyal to each other, there is a good possibility that this quality will rub off on their children. Later in life, children raised in a loyal, loving family will find it easier to act responsibly toward their mates as well as toward their parents as these suffer the disabilities of old age.—1 Timothy 5:4, 8.

Loyal family members care for one another's needs



Of course, it is not always the parents who become infirm first. Sometimes a child needs faithful care. This was the situation of Herbert and Gertrud—both Jehovah's Witnesses—for over 40 years. Their son, Dietmar, suffered all his life from muscular dystrophy. For the last seven years before his death in November 2002, Dietmar needed care and attention around the clock. His parents lovingly cared for his needs. They even installed medical equipment in their home and underwent medical training. A fine example of family loyalty!

Loyalty Is Vital for Friendship

"A person can be happy without a marriage mate, but it's difficult to be happy without a friend," observes Birgit. Perhaps you agree. Whether you are married or single, the loyalty of a good friend will warm your heart and enrich your life. Of course, if you are married, your closest friend should be your marriage mate.

A friend is not just an acquaintance. We may have many acquaintances—neighbors, colleagues, and people we meet now and again. True friendship requires an investment of time, energy, and emotional commitment. It is an honor to be someone's friend. Friendship brings privileges, but it also involves responsibilities.

Having good communication with our friends is a must. Such communication might be dictated partly by need. "If one of us has a problem, my girlfriend and I telephone once or twice a week. It's great to know she's there and is willing to listen," explains Birgit. Distance need not be a barrier to friendship. Gerda and Helga live thousands of miles apart, but they have been good friends for over 35 years. "We write regularly," explains Gerda, "relating experiences and describing our innermost feel-

ings, be they joyful or sad. Mail from Helga makes me extremely happy. We are simply on the same wavelength."

Loyalty is vital for friendship. An act of disloyalty can shatter even long-term relationships. It is common for friends to advise each other even on confidential matters. Friends will speak from the heart without fear of being belittled or having their confidences betrayed. The Bible states: "A true companion is loving all the time, and is a brother that is born for when there is distress."—Proverbs 17:17.

Since our friends influence how we think, feel, and act, it is important that we make friends with people whose way of life is compatible with our own. For example, be careful to cultivate friendship with individuals who have the same beliefs, the same moral viewpoint, and the same standards of right and wrong as you do. Such friends will help you to reach your goals. Besides, why would you want to be close to someone

The loyalty of a good friend will warm your heart

whose standards and morals you do not share? The Bible shows the importance of choosing the right friends when it says: "He that is walking with wise persons will become wise, but he that is having dealings with the stupid ones will fare badly."—Proverbs 13:20.

Loyalty Can Be Learned

When a child learns to stick burs on someone's clothing, he will likely want to play the game over and over again. The same can be said of a person who is loyal. Why? Be-



cause the more we practice showing loyalty, the easier it becomes. If a person learns early in life to be loyal within the family, he will later find it easier to develop friendships based on loyalty. In due course, such strong and durable friendships may pave the way for loyalty in marriage. This will also help him to be loyal in the most important friendship of all.

Jesus said that the greatest commandment is to love Jehovah God with our whole heart, soul, mind, and strength. (Mark 12: 30) This means that we owe God total loyalty. Being loyal to Jehovah God brings rich rewards. He will never let us down or disappoint us, for he says of himself: "I am loyal." (Jeremiah 3:12) Indeed, loyalty, or faithfulness, to God brings everlasting rewards.
—1 John 2:17.





ENDURING AS A SOLDIER OF CHRIST

AS TOLD BY
YURII KAPTOLA

"Now I am convinced that you really do have faith!"
 Those words came from an unlikely source—an officer in the Soviet army—and they gave me a boost at just the right time. I was facing a long prison sentence and had fervently implored Jehovah for support. I was facing a long struggle that would require endurance and resolve.

I WAS born on October 19, 1962, and grew up in the western part of Ukraine. In that same year, my father, who was also named Yurii, came in contact with Jehovah's Witnesses. Soon he became the first worshipper of Jehovah in our village. His activity did not go unnoticed by officials who opposed Jehovah's Witnesses.

Most of our neighbors, however, respected my parents for their Christian qualities and concern for others. My parents took every opportunity to instill in my three sisters and me a love of God from an early age,

and this helped me to face the many challenges I encountered at school. One such challenge arose when each student was required to wear a badge identifying him as one of Lenin's October Children. Because of my Christian neutrality, I did not put the badge on and therefore stood out as being different.—John 6:15; 17:16.

Later, when I was in the third grade, all students were required to join a Communist youth organization called the Young Pioneers. One day our class was taken out to the school yard for the enrollment cere-

mony. I dreaded it, expecting to be ridiculed and berated. Everyone except me had brought his new red Pioneer scarf from home, and the students stood in a long row in front of the school principal, the teachers, and senior class members. When the senior class members were told to tie the scarves around our necks, I lowered my head and looked down, hoping that no one would pay any attention to me.

Taken to Faraway Prisons

When I was 18, I was sentenced to three years' imprisonment for maintaining Christian neutrality. (Isaiah 2:4) I served the first year in the town of Trudovoye, in the Vinnitskaya District of Ukraine. While there, I met about 30 other Witnesses of Jehovah. We were assigned by twos to separate work detachments, as the authorities wanted to prevent us from associating with one another.

In August 1982, Eduard—another Witness—and I were sent by train in prison cars to the northern Ural Mountains along with a group of other prisoners. For eight days we endured extremely hot and cramped conditions until we arrived at Solikamsk Prison, in the Permskaya District. Eduard and I were assigned to different cells. Two weeks later, I was taken farther north to Vels, in the Krasnovishersky region.

Our transport arrived in the middle of the night, and it was pitch-black. Despite the darkness, an officer ordered our group to cross a river by boat. We could see neither the river nor the boat! Still, we groped around until we stumbled upon a boat and, although frightened, managed to make our way across the river. Once on the other shore, we headed for a light that was visible on a nearby hill, where we found a few tents. This was to be our new home. I

lived in a comparatively large tent with about 30 other prisoners. During the winter, we endured temperatures that sometimes plunged to minus 40 degrees Fahrenheit, and the tent offered little comfort. The inmates' primary job was to chop down trees, but I worked at building huts for prisoners.

Spiritual Food Reaches Our Isolated Settlement

I was the only Witness in that settlement; yet Jehovah did not abandon me. One day a package arrived from my mother, who still lived in western Ukraine. When a guard opened the parcel, the first thing he saw was a small Bible. He picked it up and began flipping through the pages. I tried to think of something to say that would prevent this spiritual treasure from being confiscated. "What is this?" the guard asked abruptly. Before I could think of an answer, an inspector standing nearby responded: "Oh! That's a dictionary." I said nothing. (Ecclesiastes 3:7) The inspector searched through the rest of the package and then handed it to me along with the precious Bible. I was so happy that I offered him some nuts from my parcel. When I received this package, I knew that Jehovah had not forgotten me. He generously reached out and cared for my spiritual needs.—Hebrews 13:5.

Preaching Without Letup

A few months later, I was surprised to receive a letter from a Christian brother who was imprisoned about 250 miles away. He asked me to seek out a man who had shown interest and might now be in my camp. Writing such an open letter was unwise, for our letters were censored. Not surprisingly, one of the officers summoned me to his office and strongly warned me not to preach. He then ordered me to sign

a document stating that I would stop sharing my beliefs with others. I replied that I did not understand why I should sign such a statement, since everybody already knew that I was one of Jehovah's Witnesses. I mentioned that other prisoners wanted to know why I had been imprisoned. What should I say to them? (Acts 4:20) The officer realized that he could not intimidate me, so he decided to get rid of me. I was sent to another camp.

I was transferred to the village of Vaya, 125 miles away. There the supervisors respected my Christian stand and assigned me to nonmilitary work—first as a carpenter, then as an electrician. But these jobs presented their own challenges. On one occasion, I was told to get my tools and go to the village club. When I arrived, the soldiers in the club were glad to see me. They were having problems getting the lights adorning various military emblems to work properly. They wanted me to help them fix things because they were preparing for the annual Red Army Day celebration. After prayerfully thinking about what to do, I told them that I could not do that kind of work. I gave them my tools and left. I was reported to the deputy director, and to my surprise he listened to the complaints against me and replied: "I respect him for that. He is a man of principle."

Encouragement From an Unlikely Source

On June 8, 1984, after exactly three years of confinement, I was released. Upon my return to Ukraine, I had to register with the militia as a former prisoner. The officials



told me that I would be tried again in six months and that it would be better for me to leave the district entirely. So I left Ukraine and eventually found work in Latvia. For a while I was able to preach and associate with the small group of Witnesses who lived in and around Riga, the capital. However, after only one year, I was again called up for military service. At the enlistment office, I told the officer that I had previously refused military service. In reply, he screamed: "Do you really know what you are doing? Let's see what you will say to the lieutenant colonel!"

He escorted me to a room on the second floor where the lieutenant colonel sat behind a long table. He carefully listened to me as I explained my position and then told me that I still had time to reconsider my decision before facing the enlistment committee. As we left the lieutenant colonel's office, the officer who had initially scolded me confessed: "Now I am convinced that you really do have faith!" When I appeared before a military committee, I repeated my neutral stand, and for the time being, they let me go.

During that time, I lived in a hostel. One evening, I heard a soft knock at the door. I

I was sentenced to forced labor for four years and imprisoned in Riga Central Prison

opened it and found a man dressed in a suit and carrying a briefcase. He introduced himself, saying: "I am from State Security. I know that you are having difficulties and that you are going to be tried in court." "Yes, that is right," I replied. The man went on: "We can help you if you agree to work for us." "No, that is not possible," I said. "I will remain loyal to my Christian beliefs." With no further effort to persuade me, he left.

Back to Prison, Back to Preaching

On August 26, 1986, the National Court of Riga sentenced me to four years' forced labor, and I was taken to the Riga Central Prison. They put me in a large cell together with 40 other prisoners, and I tried to preach to every inmate in that cell. Some claimed to believe in God; others just laughed. I had noticed that the men were gathered in groups, and after two weeks the leaders of these groups told me that I was not allowed to preach, since I did not go along with their unwritten rules. I explained that I was imprisoned for that very reason—I lived by different laws.

I continued to preach discreetly, and when I found some who were spiritually inclined, I was able to study the Bible with four of them. During our discussions, they wrote down basic Bible teachings in a notebook. A few months later, I was sent to a high-security camp in Valmiera, where I worked as an electrician. There I was able to study the Bible with another electrician who four years later became one of Jehovah's Witnesses.

On March 24, 1988, I was moved from the high-security camp to a nearby settlement camp. This was a real blessing, since it

allowed me more freedom. I was assigned to work on various construction sites, and I constantly looked for opportunities to preach. Frequently, I was away from the camp, preaching until late in the evening, but I never had any difficulties when I returned to the settlement.

Jehovah blessed my efforts. A few Witnesses lived in the area, but in the town itself there was only one, Vilma Krūmiņa—an elderly sister. Sister Krūmiņa and I began to conduct many Bible studies with young people. Occasionally, brothers and sisters traveled from Riga to share in the ministry, and some regular pioneers even came from Leningrad (now St. Petersburg). With Jehovah's help, we started several Bible studies, and soon I enrolled in the pioneer service, devoting 90 hours a month to the preaching work.

On April 7, 1990, my case came up for review at the People's Court in Valmiera. When the hearing began, I recognized the prosecutor. He was a young man with whom I had previously discussed the Bible! He recognized me and smiled but said nothing. I still recall what the judge said to me at the trial that day: "Yurii, the decision to imprison you four years ago was illegal. They should not have convicted you." All of a sudden, I was free!

A Soldier of Christ

In June 1990, I once again needed to register at the enlistment office in order to obtain a residency permit in Riga. I entered the same office with the same long table where four years earlier I had told the lieutenant colonel that I would not serve in the military. This time, he rose to greet me, shook my hand, and said: "It is a shame you had to go through all of this. I am sorry that it turned out that way."



With Karina in the ministry

the Russian congregation. The growth was so rapid that the following year our congregation was divided into three! When I look back, it is clear that Jehovah himself was directing his sheep to his organization.

In 1998, I was appointed to serve as a special pioneer in Jelgava, a town 25 miles southwest of Riga. That same year, I became one of the first from Latvia to be invited to attend the Ministerial Training School conducted in the Russian language at Solnechnoye, near St. Peters-

burg, Russia. While at school, I came to appreciate how important it is to have a loving attitude toward people in order to be successful in the ministry. What especially impressed me, above and beyond the things we were taught in the school, was the love and attention that we were shown by the Bethel family and the school instructors.

I reached another milestone in my life in 2001 when I married Karina, a lovely Christian woman. Karina joined me in special full-time service, and every day I am encouraged when I see my wife returning from field service looking so happy. Indeed, it is a great joy to serve Jehovah. The harsh experiences under the Communist regime taught me to trust in him completely. No sacrifice is too great for one who wishes to keep Jehovah's friendship and support his sovereignty. Helping others learn about Jehovah has given my life purpose. It has been a wondrous honor for me to serve Jehovah "as a fine soldier of Christ."—2 Timothy 2:3.

I replied: "I am a soldier of Christ, and I must live up to my commission. With help from the Bible, you too can enjoy what Christ has promised his followers—a happy life and an eternal future." (2 Timothy 2:3, 4) The colonel answered: "Not long ago I bought a Bible, and I am now reading it." I had with me the book *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth*.^{*} I opened it to the chapter discussing the sign of the last days and showed him how Bible prophecy is related to our time. With deep appreciation the colonel shook my hand again and wished me success in my work.

By this time the field was really white for harvesting in Latvia. (John 4:35) In 1991, I began to serve as a congregation elder. There were only two appointed elders in the entire country! A year later, the only congregation in Latvia was divided into two—one Latvian-speaking and one Russian-speaking. I was privileged to serve with

* Published by Jehovah's Witnesses but now out of print.

WALK WITH GOD IN THESE TURBULENT TIMES

"Enoch kept walking with the true God.

Then he was no more, for God took him."—GENESIS 5:24.

TURBULENT times! Those words well describe the years of unrest and violence that mankind has lived through since the birth of the Messianic Kingdom in 1914. During all that time, humans have been in "the last days." Such calamities as famines, diseases, earthquakes, and wars have plagued them on an unprecedented scale. (2 Timothy 3:1; Revelation 6:1-8) Those who worship Jehovah have not been exempt. To a greater or lesser degree, we all have to cope with the hardships and uncertainties of the times. Economic pressures, political unrest, crime, and sickness are among the things that make life very difficult.

² In addition, many of Jehovah's servants have endured wave after wave of intense persecution as Satan has kept waging war

1. What are some features of our times that make them calamitous?
2. What challenges have Jehovah's servants faced?

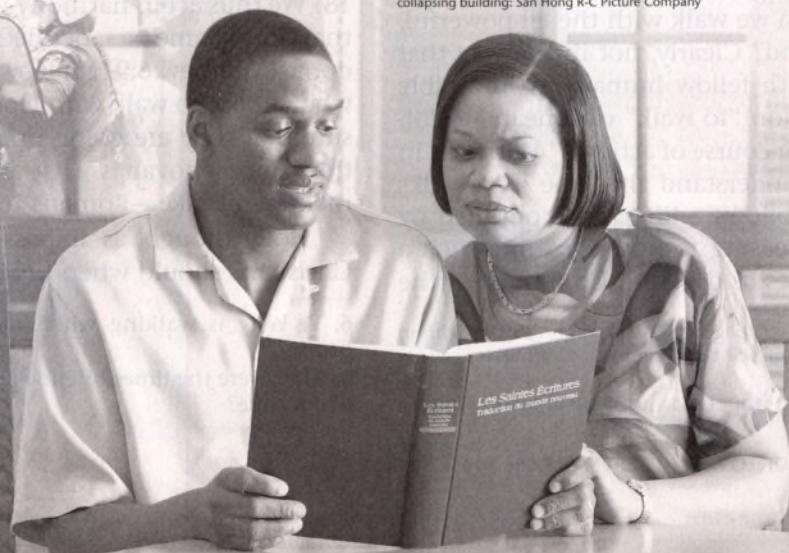
against those "who observe the commandments of God and have the work of bearing witness to Jesus." (Revelation 12:17) And while we have not all suffered direct persecution, all true Christians have to struggle against Satan the Devil and the spirit that he engenders among mankind. (Ephesians 2:2; 6:12) It takes constant vigilance not to be influenced by that spirit, since we encounter it at work, at school, and in any other place where we have to rub shoulders with those who have no interest in pure worship.

Walk With God, Not With the Nations

³ Back in the first century, Christians likewise fought hard against the spirit of this world, and that made them very different from those outside the Christian congregation. Paul described the difference when he

- 3, 4. In what way are Christians different from the world?

Woman, far right: FAO photo/B. Imevbore;
collapsing building: San Hong R-C Picture Company



wrote: "This, therefore, I say and bear witness to in the Lord, that you no longer go on walking just as the nations also walk in the unprofitableness of their minds, while they are in darkness mentally, and alienated from the life that belongs to God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the insensibility of their hearts. Having come to be past all moral sense, they gave themselves over to loose conduct to work uncleanness of every sort with greediness."—Ephesians 4:17-19.

⁴ How eloquently those words describe the deep spiritual and moral darkness of this world—both in Paul's day and in ours! As in the first century, Christians today do not 'go on walking as the nations do.' Rather, they enjoy the wonderful privilege of walking with God. True, some people may question whether it is reasonable to say that lowly, imperfect humans walk with Jehovah. However, the Bible shows that they can. Moreover, Jehovah expects them to do so. In the eighth century before our Common Era, the prophet Micah wrote the following inspired words: "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.

How and Why Walk With God?

⁵ How can we walk with the all-powerful, invisible God? Clearly, not in the way that we walk with fellow humans. In the Bible the expression "to walk" can mean "to follow a certain course of action."^{*} With this in mind, we understand that one who walks with God follows a life course outlined by God and pleasing to him. Pursuing such a course makes us different from most of the

* See Volume 1, page 220, paragraph 6, of *Insight on the Scriptures*, published by Jehovah's Witnesses.

5. How can an imperfect human walk with God?

people around us. Yet, it is the only proper choice for a Christian. Why? There are many reasons.

⁶ First, Jehovah is our Creator, the Source of our life, and the Provider of all that we need to sustain life. (Revelation 4:11) As a result, only he has the right to tell us how to walk. In addition, walking with God is the most beneficial course possible. For those who walk with him, Jehovah has made provision for the forgiveness of sin, and he offers the sure hope of everlasting life. Our all-loving heavenly Father also provides wise counsel that helps those who walk with him to make a success of life now, despite their being imperfect and living in a world that is lying in Satan's power. (John 3:16; 2 Timothy 3:15, 16; 1 John 1:8; 2:25; 5:19) A further reason for walking with God is that our willingness to do so contributes to the peace and unity of the congregation.—Colossians 3:15, 16.

⁷ Finally, and most important, when we walk with God, we show where we stand on the great issue that was raised back in the garden of Eden—the issue of sovereignty. (Genesis 3:1-6) We demonstrate by our life course that we stand squarely on Jehovah's side, and we fearlessly proclaim that he alone is the rightful Sovereign. (Psalm 83:18) We thus act in harmony with our prayer that God's name be sanctified and his will be done. (Matthew 6:9, 10) How wise are those who choose to walk with God! They can be sure that they are going in the right direction, since Jehovah is "wise alone." He never makes a mistake.—Romans 16:27.

⁸ How, though, is it possible to live as Christians should when times are so turbu-

6, 7. Why is walking with God the very best course?

8. How were the times of Enoch and Noah similar to our time?

lent and most people have no interest in serving Jehovah? We see the answer when we consider faithful men of old who kept their integrity during very difficult times. Two of these were Enoch and Noah. Both of them lived in times quite similar to our own. Wickedness was rampant. In Noah's day the earth was filled with violence and immorality. Yet, Enoch and Noah resisted the spirit of the world of their time and walked with Jehovah. How were they able to do so? To answer that question, we will in this article discuss the example of Enoch. In the following article, we will consider Noah.

Enoch Walked With God in Turbulent Times

⁹ Enoch was the first person described in the Scriptures as walking with God. The Bible record says: "After his fathering Methuselah Enoch went on walking with the true God." (Genesis 5:22) Then, after reporting the length of Enoch's life—which, while long compared with our life span, was short for those days—the record says: "Enoch kept walking with the true God. Then he was no

9. What information do we have about Enoch?

more, for God took him." (Genesis 5:24) Evidently, Jehovah transferred Enoch from the land of the living to the sleep of death before opposers could lay hold of him. (Hebrews 11:5, 13) Apart from those brief verses, there are few references to Enoch in the Bible. Nevertheless, from the information that we have and from other indications, we have good reason to say that Enoch's times were turbulent.

¹⁰ Consider, for example, how quickly corruption spread in the human race after Adam sinned. The Bible tells us that Adam's firstborn son, Cain, became the first human murderer when he killed his brother Abel. (Genesis 4:8-10) After Abel's violent death, another son was born to Adam and Eve, and they named him Seth. Of him, we read: "To Seth also there was born a son and he proceeded to call his name Enosh. At that time a start was made of calling on the name of Jehovah." (Genesis 4:25, 26) Sadly, that "calling on the name of Jehovah" was in an

^{10, 11. (a)} How did corruption spread after the rebellion of Adam and Eve? (b) What prophetic message did Enoch preach, and what response did he surely meet up with?

*By faith, "Enoch
kept walking
with the true God"*



apostate way.* Many years after the birth of Enosh, a descendant of Cain named Lamech composed a song for his two wives proclaiming that he had killed a young man who wounded him. He also warned: "If seven times Cain is to be avenged, then Lamech seventy times and seven."—Genesis 4:10, 19, 23, 24.

¹¹ Such brief facts as the foregoing indicate that the corruption introduced by Satan in the garden of Eden quickly led to the spread of wickedness among Adam's descendants. In such a world, Enoch was a prophet of Jehovah whose powerful inspired words resonate even today. Jude reports that Enoch prophesied: "Look! Jehovah came with his holy myriads, to execute judgment against all, and to convict all the ungodly concerning all their ungodly deeds that they did in an ungodly way, and concerning all the shocking things that ungodly sinners spoke against him." (Jude 14, 15) Those words will find their final fulfillment at Armageddon. (Revelation 16:14, 16) Still, we can be sure that even in Enoch's day, there were many "ungodly sinners" who heard Enoch's prophecy with annoyance. How loving that Jehovah took the prophet out of their reach!

* Before the days of Enosh, Jehovah spoke with Adam. Abel made an acceptable offering to Jehovah. God even communicated with Cain before jealous anger drove Cain to commit murder. Hence, this beginning of "calling on the name of Jehovah" must have been in a new way, not in pure worship.

How Would You Answer?

- What does it mean to walk with God?
- Why is walking with God the best course?
- What enabled Enoch to walk with God despite turbulent times?
- How can we imitate Enoch?

What Strengthened Enoch to Walk With God?

¹² Back in the garden of Eden, Adam and Eve listened to Satan, and Adam rebelled against Jehovah. (Genesis 3:1-6) Their son Abel followed a different course, and Jehovah looked with favor upon him. (Genesis 4:3, 4) Unhappily, the majority of Adam's offspring were not like Abel. However, Enoch, born hundreds of years later, was. What was the difference between Enoch and so many other descendants of Adam? The apostle Paul answered that question when he wrote: "By faith Enoch was transferred so as not to see death, and he was nowhere to be found because God had transferred him; for before his transference he had the witness that he had pleased God well." (Hebrews 11:5) Enoch was part of a great "cloud of [pre-Christian] witnesses," who were sterling examples of faith. (Hebrews 12:1) It was faith that enabled Enoch to endure in right conduct throughout a lifetime of over 300 years—more than three lifetimes for most of us today!

¹³ Paul described the faith of Enoch and other witnesses when he wrote: "Faith is the assured expectation of things hoped for, the evident demonstration of realities though not beheld." (Hebrews 11:1) Yes, faith is the confident expectation, based on assurances, that the things we hope for will come true. It involves an expectation so strong that it affects the focus of our life. That kind of faith enabled Enoch to walk with God even though the world around him did not.

¹⁴ True faith is based on accurate knowledge. What knowledge did Enoch have? (Romans 10:14, 17; 1 Timothy 2:4) Undoubtedly, he knew about the events

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12. What made Enoch different from his contemporaries?
 13. What kind of faith did Enoch have?
 14. Upon what accurate knowledge might Enoch's faith have been based?

in Eden. Probably, he also heard about what life had been like in the garden in Eden—which was perhaps still in existence, although barred to humans. (Genesis 3:23, 24) And he knew of God's purpose that Adam's offspring would fill the earth and make the whole planet like that original Paradise. (Genesis 1:28) In addition, Enoch surely cherished Jehovah's promise to produce a Seed that would crush Satan's head and undo the ill effects of Satan's deception. (Genesis 3:15) Indeed, Enoch's own inspired prophecy, preserved in the book of Jude, has to do with the destruction of Satan's seed. Since Enoch had faith, we know that he worshipped Jehovah as the one who "becomes the rewarder of those earnestly seeking him." (Hebrews 11:6) Hence, while Enoch did not possess all the knowledge that we do, he had enough to form the foundation of a firm faith. With such a faith, he kept his integrity during turbulent times.

Imitate Enoch's Example

¹⁵ Since, like Enoch, we want to please Jehovah during the turbulent times that exist today, we do well to follow Enoch's example. We need to gain and retain accurate knowledge of Jehovah and his purpose. But we need more. We need to allow that accurate knowledge to direct our course. (Psalm 119:101; 2 Peter 1:19) We need to be guided by God's thinking, always striving to please him with our every thought and action.

¹⁶ We have no record of who else in Enoch's time was serving Jehovah, but clear-



*We firmly believe
that Jehovah's
promises will
come true*

ly he was either alone or part of a small minority. We too are a minority in the world, but that does not dismay us. Jehovah will support us no matter who may be against us. (Romans 8:31)

Enoch courageously warned about the coming destruction of ungodly men. We too are courageous as we preach "this good news of the kingdom" despite mockery, opposition, and persecution. (Matthew 24:14) Enoch did not live as long as many of his contemporaries. Still, his hope was not in that world. He had his eye fixed on something far grander. (Hebrews 11:10, 35) We too have our eye fixed on the fulfillment of Jehovah's purpose. Hence, we do not use this world to the full. (1 Corinthians 7:31) Instead, we use our strength and resources primarily in Jehovah's service.

¹⁷ Enoch had faith that the Seed promised by God would appear in Jehovah's due time. It has now been almost 2,000 years since that Seed—Jesus Christ—appeared, provided the ransom, and opened the way for us, as well as for such faithful ancient witnesses as Enoch, to inherit everlasting life. That Seed, now enthroned as King of God's Kingdom, cast Satan out of heaven down to this earth, and we see the resulting tribulation all around us. (Revelation 12:12) Yes, there is far more knowledge available to us than was available to Enoch. May we, then, have firm faith as he did. May our confidence in the fulfillment of God's promises influence everything we do. May we, like Enoch, walk with God, although we live in turbulent times.

17. What knowledge do we have that Enoch did not have, so what should we do?

15, 16. How can we follow Enoch's course?

WE SHALL WALK IN THE NAME OF JEHOVAH OUR GOD

"We, for our part, shall walk in the name of Jehovah our God to time indefinite, even forever."—MICAH 4:5.

THE first man mentioned in the Bible as walking with God was Enoch. The second was Noah. The record tells us: "Noah was a righteous man. He proved himself faultless among his contemporaries. Noah walked with the true God." (Genesis 6:9) By Noah's time, mankind in general had deviated from pure worship. The bad situation was made worse by unfaithful angels who formed unnatural unions with women and produced offspring called Nephilim, "the mighty ones," or "the men of fame," of those days. No wonder the earth became filled with violence! (Genesis 6:2, 4, 11) Still, Noah proved himself faultless and was "a preacher of righteousness." (2 Peter 2:5) When God commanded him to build an ark for the preservation of life, Noah obediently "proceeded to do according to all that God had commanded him. He did just so." (Genesis 6:22) Truly, Noah walked with God.

² Paul included Noah in his list of faithful witnesses when he wrote: "By faith Noah, after being given divine warning of things not yet beheld, showed godly fear and constructed an ark for the saving of his household; and through this faith he condemned the world, and he became an heir of the righteousness that is according to faith." (He-

brews 11:7) What a splendid example! Certain that Jehovah's words would come true, Noah expended time, energy, and resources in order to fulfill God's commands. In a similar way, many today turn their backs on secular opportunities in this world and expend their time, energy, and resources in obeying Jehovah's commands. Their faith is noteworthy and will result in their own salvation as well as that of others.—Luke 16:9; 1 Timothy 4:16.

³ Exercising faith must have been as difficult for Noah and his family as it was for Enoch, Noah's great-grandfather, who was discussed in the preceding article. In Noah's day as in Enoch's, true worshippers were a small minority—just eight people proved faithful and survived the Flood. Noah preached righteousness in a violent and immoral world. Moreover, he and his family were building a huge wooden ark in preparation for a worldwide flood, although no one had seen such a flood before. That must have seemed very strange to those observing them.

⁴ Interestingly, when Jesus referred to the days of Noah, he did not speak of the violence, the false religion, or the immorality—grievous as those were. The error that Jesus highlighted was the refusal of people to

1. As regards morality, what was the situation in Noah's day, and how was Noah different?

2, 3. What fine example did Noah provide for us today?

4. What failing of Noah's contemporaries did Jesus highlight?



heed the warning being given. He said that they were "eating and drinking, men marrying and women being given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark."

Eating, drinking, marrying, being given in marriage—what was wrong with that? They were just living "normal" lives! But a flood was coming, and Noah was preaching righteousness. His words and his conduct should have been a warning to them. Still, they "took no note until the flood came and swept them all away."—Matthew 24:38, 39.

⁵ Looking back on those times, we see the wisdom of Noah's course. However, in the days before the Flood, it took courage to be different from everyone else. It took strong conviction for Noah and his family to build the huge ark and fill it with representatives of the animal kinds. Did some among those few faithful souls sometimes wish that they could be less conspicuous and just live "normal" lives? Even if such thoughts crossed their minds, they did not weaken in their integrity. After a great many years—longer than any one of us will have to endure in this

5. What qualities did Noah and his family need?

system of things—the faith of Noah led to his salvation through the Flood. However, Jehovah executed judgment on all those who were living "normal" lives and taking no note of the meaning of the times they were living in.

Violence Again Plagues Mankind

⁶ After the waters of the Flood receded, mankind had a fresh start. However, humans were still imperfect, and "the inclination of the heart of man" continued to be "bad from his youth up." (Genesis 8:21) Besides, although the demons could no longer materialize human bodies, they were still very active. The world of ungodly mankind quickly showed that it was "lying in the power of the wicked one," and just as today, true worshippers had to fight against "the machinations of the Devil."—1 John 5:19; Ephesians 6:11, 12.

⁷ At least from the time of Nimrod, the post-Flood earth once again became the scene of human violence. As a result of increasing population and the progress of technology, that violence has escalated over time. In earlier years, there were the sword, the spear, the bow and arrow, and the chariot. In more recent times came the musket and the cannon, then the rifle and the sophisticated artillery of the early 20th century. World War I brought to the fore more frightening weapons, such as the airplane, the tank, the submarine, and poison gas. In that war, these weapons took millions of lives. Was that unexpected? No.

⁸ In the year 1914, Jesus was enthroned as King of God's heavenly Kingdom, and "the Lord's day" began. (Revelation 1:10) In a vision reported in the book of Revelation,

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6. After the Flood, what situation still existed?
 7. How did violence escalate in the post-Flood world?
 8. How has Revelation 6:1-4 been fulfilled?



Just as in Noah's day, people today are consumed with their daily activities

Jesus is seen as a King riding forth victoriously on a white horse. Other horsemen follow him, each representing a different plague on mankind. One of them rides a fiery-colored horse, and to him it was granted "to take peace away from the earth so that they should slaughter one another; and a great sword was given him." (Revelation 6: 1-4) This horse and its rider picture warfare, and the great sword represents the unprecedented destructiveness of modern warfare with its powerful weapons. Those weapons today include nuclear devices, each one capable of destroying tens of thousands of people; rockets able to deliver those devices to targets thousands of miles away; as well as sophisticated chemical and biological weapons of mass destruction.

We Take Note of Jehovah's Warnings

⁹ In the days of Noah, Jehovah brought mankind to ruin because of the extreme violence of wicked humans abetted by the Nephilim. What of today? Is the earth any less violent than it was then? Hardly! Moreover, just as in Noah's day, people today are going about their business, trying to live a "normal" life, refusing to heed the warnings being sounded. (Luke 17:26, 27) Is there any

⁹. How does today's world compare with that existing before the Flood?

reason, then, to doubt that Jehovah will once again bring mankind to ruin? No.

¹⁰ Hundreds of years before the Flood, Enoch prophesied the destruction that must come in our day. (Jude 14, 15) Jesus too spoke of the coming "great tribulation." (Matthew 24:21) Other prophets warned of that time. (Ezekiel 38:18-23; Daniel 12:1; Joel 2:31, 32) And in the book of Revelation, we read a graphic description of that final destruction. (Revelation 19:11-21) As individuals, we imitate Noah and are active as preachers of righteousness. We take note of Jehovah's warnings and lovingly help our neighbors to do the same. Hence, like Noah, we walk with God. Indeed, it is vital that any who desire life keep on walking with God. How can we do that in view of the pressures that we face each day? We need to cultivate strong faith in the outworking of God's purpose.—Hebrews 11:6.

Keep Walking With God in Troublous Times

¹¹ In the first century, anointed Christians were spoken of as belonging to "The Way." (Acts 9:2) Their whole way of life centered on faith in Jehovah and Jesus Christ. They

10. (a) What warning is repeatedly given in Bible prophecy? (b) What is the only wise course today?
11. In what way do we imitate first-century Christians?

walked in the path their Master had trod. Today, faithful Christians do likewise.

¹² The importance of faith is seen in an event that took place during Jesus' ministry. On one occasion, Jesus miraculously fed a crowd of about 5,000 men. The people were amazed and delighted. Notice, though, what happened next. We read: "When the men saw the signs he performed, they began to say: 'This is for a certainty the prophet that was to come into the world.' Therefore Jesus, knowing they were about to come and seize him to make him king, withdrew again into the mountain all alone." (John 6:10-15) That night he traveled to another location. Jesus' refusal to accept the kingship likely disappointed many. After all, he had shown that he was wise enough to be king and that he had the power to satisfy the people's physical needs. However, it was not yet Jehovah's time for him to rule as King. Besides, Jesus' Kingdom was to be heavenly, not earthly.

¹³ Nevertheless, the crowds determinedly followed Jesus and found him, as John says, "across the sea." Why did they follow him after he avoided their efforts to make him a king? Many betrayed a fleshly viewpoint, speaking pointedly of the material provisions that Jehovah had made in the wilderness in Moses' day. The implication was that Jesus should continue to make material provisions for them. Jesus, perceiving their wrong motives, began to teach them spiritual truths that could help adjust their thinking. (John 6:17, 24, 25, 30, 31, 35-40) In response, some murmured against him, especially when he spoke this illustration: "Most truly I say to you, Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood,

12. What happened after Jesus miraculously fed a crowd?

13, 14. What viewpoint did many betray, and how was their faith tested?



As Kingdom preachers, "we are not the sort that shrink back"

you have no life in yourselves. He that feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has everlasting life, and I shall resurrect him at the last day."—John 6:53, 54.

¹⁴ Jesus' illustrations often moved people to show whether they truly desired to walk with God. This one was no exception. It provoked strong reactions. We read: "Many of his disciples, when they heard this, said: 'This speech is shocking; who can listen to it?'" Jesus went on to explain that they should look for the spiritual meaning of his words. He said: "It is the spirit that is life-giving; the flesh is of no use at all. The sayings that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life." Still, many would not listen, and the account reports: "Owing to this many of his disciples went off to the things behind and would no longer walk with him."—John 6:60, 63, 66.

¹⁵ Nevertheless, not all of Jesus' disciples reacted that way. Admittedly, the loyal disciples did not fully understand what Jesus had said. Still, their confidence in him remained very firm. Peter, one of those loyal disciples, expressed the feelings of all who remained

15. What right viewpoint did some of Jesus' followers have?

when he said: "Lord, whom shall we go away to? You have sayings of everlasting life." (John 6:68) What an excellent attitude, and what a fine example!

¹⁶ We today could be tested as those early disciples were. In our case, we might be disappointed that Jehovah's promises are not being fulfilled as quickly as we personally would like. We might feel that explanations of the Scriptures in our Bible-based publications are difficult to understand. The conduct of a fellow Christian might disappoint us. Would it be right to stop walking with God for these or similar reasons? Of course not! The disciples who abandoned Jesus betrayed a fleshly way of thinking. We must avoid doing the same.

"We Are Not the Sort That Shrink Back"

¹⁷ The apostle Paul wrote: "All Scripture is inspired of God." (2 Timothy 3:16) Through the pages of the Bible, Jehovah tells us clearly: "This is the way. Walk in it." (Isaiah 30:21) Obeying God's Word helps us to 'keep strict watch on how we walk.' (Ephesians 5:15) Studying the Bible and meditating on what we learn enable us to "go on walking in the truth." (3 John 3) Truly, as Jesus said, "the spirit . . . is life-giving; the flesh is of no use at all." The only reliable guidance by which to direct our steps is spiritual guidance, which comes through Jehovah's Word, his spirit, and his organization.

¹⁸ Today, those who become disgruntled because of fleshly thinking or unfulfilled expectations often turn to making the most of what this world has to offer. Losing their

16. How might we be tested, and what proper viewpoint should we cultivate?
17. How can we be helped to keep walking with God?
18. (a) What do some unwisely do? (b) What kind of faith do we cultivate?

sense of urgency, they see no need to "keep on the watch," and they choose to pursue selfish goals instead of putting Kingdom interests first. (Matthew 24:42) Walking in that way is most unwise. Notice the apostle Paul's words: "We are not the sort that shrink back to destruction, but the sort that have faith to the preserving alive of the soul." (Hebrews 10:39) Like Enoch and Noah, we live in turbulent times, but like them, we have the privilege of walking with God. Doing so, we have the assured expectation that we will see Jehovah's promises fulfilled, wickedness destroyed, and a righteous new world brought to pass. What a wonderful prospect!

¹⁹ The inspired prophet Micah said of the nations of the world that they would "walk each one in the name of its god." Then he spoke of himself and other faithful worshippers and said: "We, for our part, shall walk in the name of Jehovah our God to time indefinite, even forever." (Micah 4:5) If your determination is the same as Micah's, stay close to Jehovah however turbulent the times become. (James 4:8) May it be the heartfelt desire of each one of us to walk with Jehovah our God now and to time indefinite, even forever!

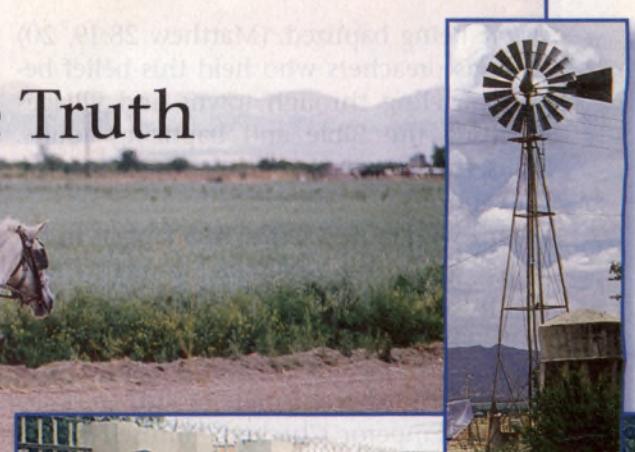
19. How does Micah describe the course of true worshippers?

How Would You Answer?

- What similarities are there between Noah's day and today?
- What course did Noah and his family follow, and how can we imitate their faith?
- What wrong viewpoint was betrayed by some of Jesus' followers?
- What are true Christians determined to do?

MENNONITES

Search for Bible Truth



ONE morning in November 2000, some missionaries of Jehovah's Witnesses in Bolivia glanced out the window of their small home and saw a group of plainly dressed men and women standing nervously at the gate. When the missionaries opened the gate, the visitors' first words were, "We want to find the truth from the Bible." The visitors were Mennonites. The men wore overalls, the women dark aprons, and they spoke among themselves in a German dialect. There was fear in their eyes. They kept looking to see if they had been followed. Nevertheless, even while climbing the steps to enter the house, one of the young men said, "I want to know the people who use God's name."

Inside, the visitors began to relax when they were served some refreshments. They had come from a distant, isolated farming colony. There, they had been receiving the *Watchtower* magazine by mail for six years. "We have read that there will be a paradise on earth. Is that true?" they asked. The Witnesses showed them the Bible's answer. (Isaiah 11:9; Luke 23:43; 2 Peter 3:7, 13; Revelation 21:3, 4) "You see!" said one farmer to

the others. "It is true. There *will* be a paradise on earth." Others kept saying: "I think we have found the truth."

Who are the Mennonites? What do they believe? To answer these questions, we must go back to the 16th century.

Who Are the Mennonites?

In the 1500's, the upsurge in Bible translation and printing in the common languages of Europe sparked renewed interest in Bible study there. Martin Luther and other Reformers rejected many teachings of the Catholic Church. Yet, the newly formed Protestant churches retained many non-Biblical practices. For instance, most expected every newborn infant to be baptized into the church. However, some searchers for Bible truth realized that a person becomes a member of the Christian congregation only by making an informed decision

before being baptized. (Matthew 28:19, 20) Zealous preachers who held this belief began traveling through towns and villages teaching the Bible and baptizing adults. Thus, they were called Anabaptists, meaning "rebaptizers."

One who looked to the Anabaptists in his search for truth was Menno Simons, a Catholic priest in the village of Witmarsum in the northern part of the Netherlands. By 1536 he had severed all ties with the church and had become a hunted man. In 1542 the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V himself promised 100 guilders as a reward for Menno's arrest. Nevertheless, Menno gathered some of the Anabaptists into congregations. He and his followers soon came to be called Mennonites.

Mennonites Today

In the course of time, persecution drove thousands of Mennonites from Western Europe to North America. There they had the opportunity to continue their search for truth and to spread their message to many others. But the burning zeal of their forebears for progressive Bible study and public preaching had largely been lost. Most clung to certain unbiblical teachings, such as the Trinity, the immortality of the human soul, and hellfire. (Ecclesiastes 9:5; Ezekiel 18:4;

Mark 12:29) Today, Mennonite missionary efforts tend to focus more on medical and social services than on evangelism.

It is estimated that there are now about 1,300,000 Mennonites living in 65 countries. Yet, present-day Mennonites lament their lack of unity, as Menno Simons did centuries ago. During World War I, differences of opinion about the world's conflicts caused major divisions. Many in North America refused military service on Biblical grounds. But *An Introduction to Mennonite History* says: "By 1914 non-resistance was largely a historical memory for the Mennonite churches in Western Europe." Today, some Mennonite groups have adopted modern ways to a greater or lesser extent. Others still fasten their clothes with hooks and eyes rather than with buttons and believe that men should not shave their beards.

Some Mennonite groups, determined to keep separate from the modern world, have moved their communities to places where local governments allow them to live without interference. In Bolivia, for instance, an estimated 38,000 Mennonites live in numerous remote colonies, each with different rules of conduct. Some colonies forbid motor vehicles, permitting only horses and buggies. Certain colonies forbid radio, TV, and music. Some even forbid learning the language of the country they live in. "So as to keep us under their control, the preachers don't let us learn Spanish," commented one colony resident. Many feel oppressed and live in dread of being expelled from the community—a terrible prospect for one who has never experienced life outside.

How a Seed of Truth Was Sown

It was under these circumstances that a Mennonite farmer named Johann saw a copy of the *Watchtower* magazine in his neighbor's home. Johann's family had emi-

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

Who Is Jesus Christ?

"The Fear of Jehovah—That Is Wisdom"

What Others Think of Us—Does It Matter?

grated from Canada to Mexico and later to Bolivia. But Johann had always desired help in his search for Bible truth. He asked to borrow the magazine.

Later, while in the city to sell his farm products, Johann approached a Witness who was offering *The Watchtower* in the market. She directed him to a German-speaking missionary, and soon Johann was receiving *The Watchtower* by mail in German. Each issue was carefully studied and passed from family to family in his colony until the magazine was worn-out. Sometimes families would get together and study a *Watchtower* magazine until midnight, looking up the cited Bible texts. Johann became convinced that Jehovah's Witnesses must be the ones who are unitedly doing God's will earth wide. Before he died, Johann told his wife and children: "You must always read *The Watchtower*. It will help you to understand the Bible."

Some of Johann's family began talking to their neighbors about the things they were learning from the Bible. "The earth will not be destroyed. Rather, God will make it a paradise," they said. "And God doesn't torment people in hell." Word of these conversations soon reached the church preachers, who threatened Johann's family with expulsion if they did not stop. Later, during a family discussion about the pressure the Mennonite elders were putting on them, one young man spoke up. "I don't know why we complain about our church elders," he said. "We all know which is the true religion, and we haven't done anything about it." These words touched the heart of the young man's father. Soon, ten of the family set out on a secret trip in search of Jehovah's Witnesses and ended up at the home of the missionaries, as mentioned at the outset.

The next day, the missionaries went to visit their new friends in the colony. The missionaries' motor vehicle was the only one on



*Happy response to receiving
Bible literature in German*

the road. As they slowly drove past horse-drawn buggies, they exchanged glances with the equally intrigued local residents. Soon they sat at a table with ten Mennonites, representing two families.

That day, it took four hours to study chapter 1 of the book *Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life*.^{*} For each paragraph, the farmers had looked up additional Bible texts and wanted to know if they were applying the texts correctly. Each study question was followed by a pause of several minutes while the farmers consulted in Low German before a spokesman finally answered for the group in Spanish. It was a memorable day, but a storm of trouble was brewing. They were about to face trials, just as Menno Simons had when he began his search for Bible truth nearly five centuries ago.

Facing Trials for the Truth

A few days later, the church elders came to the home of Johann's family with an ultimatum for the interested ones: "We heard that Jehovah's Witnesses visited you. You must forbid them to return, and unless you hand over their literature to be burned, you face expulsion." They had had just one Bible study with the Witnesses, so this presented a formidable test.

* Published by Jehovah's Witnesses.

"We cannot do as you ask," replied one of the family heads. "Those people came to teach us the Bible." How did the elders react? They expelled them for studying the Bible! This was a cruel blow indeed. The cart belonging to the colony cheese factory passed by the home of one family without collecting their milk, denying them their only source of income. One family head was dismissed from his job. Another was turned away from buying supplies at the colony store, and his ten-year-old daughter was expelled from school. Neighbors surrounded one home to take away the wife of one of the young men, asserting that she could not live with her expelled husband. Despite all of this, the families who studied the Bible did not give up their search for the truth.

The missionaries continued to make the long weekly drive to conduct the Bible study. How strengthening the families found those studies to be! Some family members traveled two hours by horse and buggy to be present. It was a moving occasion when the families first invited one of the missionaries to pray. In these colonies Mennonites never pray aloud, so they had never before heard anyone pray in their behalf. The men had tears in their eyes. And can you imagine their curiosity when the missionaries brought along a tape recorder? Music had never been allowed in their colony. They were so delighted with the beautiful *Kingdom Melodies* that they decided to sing Kingdom songs after each study! Nevertheless, the question remained, How could they survive in their new circumstances?

Finding a Loving Brotherhood

Cut off from their community, the families began making their own cheese.

The missionaries helped them to find buyers. A longtime Witness in North America who grew

up in a South American Mennonite colony heard about the families' plight. He had a special desire to help. Within a week, he flew down to Bolivia to visit them. In addition to providing much spiritual encouragement, he helped the families to buy their own pick-up truck so that they could get to meetings at the Kingdom Hall and also get their farm products to market.

"It was difficult after we were expelled from the community. We would travel to the Kingdom Hall with sad faces," recalls one family member, "but we returned joyful." Indeed, local Witnesses rose to the occasion and offered support. Some learned German, and several German-speaking Witnesses came from Europe to Bolivia to help conduct Christian meetings in German. Soon, 14 from the Mennonite community were preaching the good news of the Kingdom to others.

On October 12, 2001, less than a year after that first visit to the missionary home, 11 of these former Anabaptists were baptized again, this time in symbol of their dedication to Jehovah. Since then, more have taken this step. One later commented: "Since we have learned the truth from the Bible, we feel like slaves who have been set free." Another said: "Many Mennonites complain about a lack of love in their community. But Jehovah's Witnesses take an interest in one another. I feel safe among them." If you are searching for a better understanding of the truth from the Bible, you too may face difficulties. But if you seek Jehovah's help and show faith and courage as these families did, you too will be successful and find happiness.

Though music had always been forbidden, now they sing after each Bible study



Questions From Readers

What basis is there for saying that such phrases as “the one alone having immortality” and the one “whom not one of men has seen or can see” refer to Jesus rather than to Jehovah God?

The apostle Paul wrote: “This manifestation the happy and only Potentate will show in its own appointed times, he the King of those who rule as kings and Lord of those who rule as lords, the one alone having immortality, who dwells in unapproachable light, whom not one of men has seen or can see.”—1 Timothy 6:15, 16.

Bible commentators generally reason: ‘How could such phrases as “the one alone having immortality,” the “only Potentate,” and the one “whom not one of men has seen or can see” point to anyone *other* than the Almighty?’ Admittedly, such terms could be used to describe Jehovah. However, the context indicates that at 1 Timothy 6:15, 16, Paul was specifically referring to Jesus.

At the end of verse 14, Paul mentions “the manifestation of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Timothy 6:14) Hence, when Paul writes in verse 15 that “*this* manifestation the happy and only Potentate will show in its own appointed times,” he is referring to a manifestation of Jesus, not of Jehovah God. Who, then, is the “only Potentate”? It seems reasonable to conclude that Jesus is the Potentate referred to by Paul. Why? The context makes it evident that Paul is comparing Jesus with human rulers. Jesus truly is, as Paul wrote, “King of those [humans] who rule as kings and Lord of those [humans] who rule as lords.”* Yes, compared to them, Jesus is the “only Potentate.” Jesus has been given “rulership and

dignity and kingdom, that the peoples, national groups and languages should all serve even him.” (Daniel 7:14) No human potentate can make that claim!

What about the phrase “the one alone having immortality”? Again, a comparison is being drawn between Jesus and *human* kings. No earthly rulers can claim to have been granted immortality, but Jesus can. Paul wrote: “We know that Christ, now that he has been raised up from the dead, dies no more; death is master over him no more.” (Romans 6:9) Thus, Jesus is the first one to be described in the Bible as receiving the gift of immortality. Indeed, at the time of Paul’s writing, Jesus was the *only* one who had attained indestructible life.

It should also be kept in mind that it would have been wrong for Paul to say that Jehovah God *alone* had immortality, since Jesus too was immortal when Paul wrote those words. But Paul could say that Jesus alone was immortal in comparison with earthly rulers.

Further, it is certainly true that after Jesus’ resurrection and ascension to heaven, he can be described as one “whom not one of men has seen or can see.” Granted, his anointed disciples would behold Jesus after their own death and subsequent resurrection to heaven as spirit creatures. (John 17:24) But no man on earth would see Jesus in his glorified state. Hence, it can truthfully be stated that since Jesus’ resurrection and ascension, “not one of men” has actually seen Jesus.

True, at first glance, it may seem as if the descriptions found at 1 Timothy 6:15, 16 could apply to God. But the context of Paul’s words—along with the corroboration of other scriptures—shows that Paul was referring to Jesus.

* Similar expressions are applied to Jesus at 1 Corinthians 8:5, 6; Revelation 17:12, 14; 19:16.

LET JEHOVAH'S "SAYING" SAFE GUARD YOU

In 490 B.C.E. at the historic battle of Marathon, from 10 thousand to 20 thousand Athenians faced a greatly superior Persian army. A key factor in the Greek tactics was the phalanx—a block of soldiers marching in tight formation. Their shields presented an almost unbroken wall of armor, one bristling with spears. The phalanx gave the Athenians a famous victory over the vastly superior forces of the Persians.

True Christians are engaged in spiritual warfare. They contend with powerful foes—the invisible rulers of the present wicked system, who are described in the Bible as “the world rulers of this darkness, . . . the wicked spirit forces in the heavenly places.” (Ephesians 6:12; 1 John 5:19) God’s people continue to be victorious—but not in their own strength. All credit goes to Jehovah, who safeguards and instructs them, as stated

at Psalm 18:30: “The saying of Jehovah is a refined one. A shield he is to all those taking refuge in him.”

Yes, by means of his refined “saying,” which is contained in the Sacred Scriptures, Jehovah shields his loyal servants from spiritual harm. (Psalm 19:7-11; 119:93) Concerning the wisdom manifest in God’s Word, Solomon wrote: “Do not leave it, and it will keep you. Love it, and it will safeguard you.” (Proverbs 4:6; Ecclesiastes 7:12) How does divine wisdom safeguard us against harm? Consider the example of ancient Israel.

A People Shielded by Godly Wisdom

Jehovah’s Law protected and guided the Israelites in every facet of life. For example, the regulations on diet, hygiene, and quarantine spared them from many of the diseases that ravaged other nations. Only after

the discovery of bacteria in the 19th century did science



begin to catch up with God's Law. The laws on land ownership, repurchase, debt release, and usury brought social benefits in Israel by promoting a stable society and a just economy. (Deuteronomy 7:12, 15; 15:4, 5) Jehovah's Law even helped to preserve the health of Israel's soil! (Exodus 23:10, 11) Commandments against false worship safeguarded the people spiritually, shielding them from demon oppression, child sacrifice, and many other evils, besides the demeaning practice of humans' bowing down before lifeless idols.—Exodus 20:3-5; Psalm 115:4-8.

Clearly, Jehovah's "saying" proved to be "no valueless word" for Israel; rather, it meant life and length of days to all who heeded it. (Deuteronomy 32:47) The same is true today of those who observe Jehovah's wise sayings, even though Christians are no longer under the Law covenant. (Galatians 3:24, 25; Hebrews 8:8) In fact, instead of a code of laws, Christians have a broad range of Bible principles to guide and safeguard them.

A People Protected by Principles

Laws may have a limited application and may be just temporary. However, Bible principles, being fundamental truths, usually have a broad and permanent application. Consider, for instance, the principle stated at James 3:17, which says in part: "The wisdom from above is first of all chaste, then peaceable." How can that fundamental truth serve as a shield to God's people today?

To be chaste means to be morally clean. Hence, those who value chastity strive to avoid not just immorality but even things that lead up to it, including sexual fantasizing and pornography. (Matthew 5:28) Likewise, courting couples who have taken the principle at James 3:17 to heart avoid intimacies that may lead to a loss of self-control. As lovers of principle, they are not lured

away from chastity, perhaps thinking that as long as they do not break the letter of the law, their conduct has Jehovah's approval. They know that Jehovah "sees what the heart is" and responds accordingly. (1 Samuel 16:7; 2 Chronicles 16:9) Such wise ones safeguard their flesh against the many sexually transmitted diseases rampant today as well as preserve their mental and emotional well-being.

Godly wisdom is also "peaceable," says James 3:17. Satan, we know, tries to estrange us from Jehovah by sowing a spirit of violence in our hearts, in part by way of questionable literature, movies, music, and computer games—some of which incite players to simulate unimaginable brutality and slaughter! (Psalm 11:5) That Satan is succeeding is evident in the growing wave of violent crime. Concerning such crime, some years ago the Australian newspaper *The Sydney Morning Herald* quoted Robert Ressler, coiner of the term "serial killer." Ressler said that the killers he interviewed in the 1970's were inflamed by soft-core material that "pales by today's standards." Hence, Ressler expressed "a bleak outlook for the future—a new century in which multiple murderers multiply."

Indeed, just months after that news item appeared, a gunman killed 16 infants and their teacher at a kindergarten in Dunblane, Scotland, before killing himself. The following month another crazed gunman massacred 32 people in the quiet Tasmanian town of Port Arthur, Australia. In recent years the United States has been rocked by a number of school massacres, causing Americans to ask, Why? In June 2001, Japan made world headlines when a deranged man entered a school and knifed 8 children in the first and second grades to death and slashed 15 other people. To be sure, the reasons behind such evils are complex, but media violence

is increasingly seen as a contributing factor. "If a 60-second commercial can move mountains in the marketplace," wrote Australian columnist Phillip Adams, "don't tell me that a two-hour, mega-million movie doesn't modify attitudes." Interestingly, in the home of the Port Arthur gunman, police confiscated 2,000 violent and pornographic videos.

Those who cleave to Bible principles shield their mind and heart from all forms of entertainment that nurture a lust for violence. Hence, "the spirit of the world" finds no welcome mat in their thinking and desires. Instead, they are "taught by the spirit [of God]," and they strive to cultivate a love for its fruitage, which includes peace. (1 Corinthians 2:12, 13; Galatians 5:22, 23) This they do through regular Bible study, prayer, and upbuilding meditation. They also avoid fraternizing with individuals of violent bent, choosing instead to associate with those who, like them, yearn for Jehovah's peaceful new world. (Psalm 1:1-3; Proverbs 16:29) Yes, what protection godly wisdom affords!

Let Jehovah's "Saying" Guard Your Heart

When tempted in the wilderness, Jesus refuted Satan by accurately quoting God's Word. (Luke 4:1-13) However, he did not engage the Devil in a mere battle of wits. In resting his defense on the Scriptures, Jesus spoke from his heart, and that is why the Devil's strategy, which had worked so well in Eden, failed in Jesus' case. Satan's machinations will also fail with us if we fill our heart with Jehovah's sayings. Nothing could be more important, for "out of [the heart] are the sources of life."—Proverbs 4:23.

Furthermore, we must *continue* to guard our heart, never letting up. Satan, having failed in the wilderness, did not cease to test

Jesus. (Luke 4:13) He will also persist with us, trying a variety of strategies to break our integrity. (Revelation 12:17) Hence, let us imitate Jesus by cultivating a deep love for God's Word, at the same time praying incessantly for holy spirit and wisdom. (1 Thessalonians 5:17; Hebrews 5:7) For his part, Jehovah promises all who take refuge in him that they will come to no spiritual harm.—Psalm 91:1-10; Proverbs 1:33.

God's Word Safeguards the Congregation

Satan cannot prevent the foretold "great crowd" from surviving the great tribulation. (Revelation 7:9, 14) Nevertheless, he still feverishly tries to corrupt Christians so that at least some individuals will lose Jehovah's favor. That strategy worked in ancient Israel and led to the death of 24,000 on the very portals of the Promised Land. (Numbers 25:1-9) Of course, erring Christians who show true repentance receive loving help so as to be restored spiritually. But unrepentant sinners, like Zimri of old, endanger the moral and spiritual welfare of others. (Numbers 25:14) Like soldiers in a phalanx who have thrown away their shields, they expose not just themselves to harm but their companions as well.

Hence, the Bible commands: "Quit mixing in company with anyone called a brother that is a fornicator or a greedy person or an idolater or a reviler or a drunkard or an extortioner, not even eating with such a man. . . . Remove the wicked man from among yourselves." (1 Corinthians 5:11, 13) Do you not agree that this wise "saying" helps to safeguard the moral and spiritual purity of the Christian congregation?

In sharp contrast, many of Christendom's churches as well as apostates regard as obsolete those parts of the Bible that contradict modern, liberal views of morality. Hence,



'The wisdom from above is chaste, then peaceable'

they excuse all forms of gross sin, even among the clergy. (2 Timothy 4:3, 4) Note, however, that Proverbs 30:5, which also refers to Jehovah's shieldlike "saying," is followed by the command in verse 6: "Add nothing to [God's] words, that he may not reprove you, and that you may not have to be proved a liar." Yes, those who tamper with the Bible are really spiritual liars—the most reprehensible liars of all! (Matthew 15: 6-9) Let us be truly grateful, then, to be part of an organization that deeply respects God's Word.

Shielded by "a Sweet Odor"

Because God's people cleave to the Bible and share its comforting message with others, they diffuse an incenselike "sweet odor" of life that gives pleasure to Jehovah. But to unrighteous individuals, the bearers of that message emit, according to the J. B. Phillips' translation, "the deathly smell of doom." Yes, the figurative sense of smell of the wicked has been so distorted by Satan's system of things that they feel uncomfortable or even hostile in the presence of those diffusing the "sweet odor of Christ." On the other hand,

those zealously spreading the good news become "a sweet odor of Christ among those who are being saved." (2 Corinthians 2:14-16) Such honesthearted ones are often disgusted with the hypocrisy and religious lies that characterize false religion. Thus, when we open God's Word and share with them the Kingdom message, they feel drawn to Christ and want to learn more.—John 6:44.

So do not feel discouraged when some react negatively to the Kingdom message. Rather, view the "sweet odor of Christ" as a form of spiritual protection that repels many potentially harmful individuals from the spiritual estate inhabited by God's people, while attracting those of good heart.—Isaiah 35:8, 9.

Because the Greek soldiers at Marathon closed ranks and held on to their shields with all their might, they won despite overwhelming odds. Likewise, Jehovah's loyal Witnesses are assured of complete victory in their spiritual warfare, for that is their "heir-
editary possession." (Isaiah 54:17) Hence, let each of us continue to take refuge in Jehovah by maintaining "a tight grip on the word of life."—Philippians 2:16.

EARLY GERMAN BIBLE USES GOD'S NAME

A 1558 edition of Eck's Bible, with marginal reference to the name Jehovah at Exodus 6:3

GOD'S personal name, Jehovah, appears thousands of times in the New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures, published in the German language in 1971.* However, this was not the first German Bible to use the divine name. It seems likely that the first German Bible in which the name Jehovah appeared was published almost 500 years ago by Johann Eck, a prominent Roman Catholic theologian.

Johann Eck was born in 1486 in southern Germany. By the age of 24, he was professor of theology at the university of Ingolstadt, a position he held until his death in 1543. Eck was a contemporary of Martin Luther, and the two were friends for a time. However, Luther went on to become a leading figure of the Reformation, whereas Eck was a defender of the Catholic Church.

The duke of Bavaria commissioned Eck to translate the Bible into German, and the translation was published in 1537. According

* Published by Jehovah's Witnesses, initially in English in 1961. Now available in whole or in part in over 50 languages.

to the *Kirchliches Handlexikon*, his translation stuck faithfully to the original text and "deserves more recognition than it has received so far." Eck's translation of Exodus 6:3 reads: "I am the Lord, who appeared to Abraam, Isaac, and Jacob in the Almighty God: and my name Adonai, I have not revealed to them." Eck added a marginal comment to the verse: "The name Adonai Jehovah." Many Bible scholars believe that this was the first time God's personal name was used in a German Bible.

However, God's personal name has been known and used for thousands of years. Its earliest recorded use is in the Hebrew language, in which "Jehovah" is used to identify the only true God. (Deuteronomy 6:4) Almost 2,000 years ago, Jesus' statement that he had made God's name known was recorded in the Greek language. (John 17:6) Since then, the name has been published in countless tongues, and soon, in fulfillment of Psalm 83:18, all will know that the one whose name is Jehovah is the Most High over all the earth.