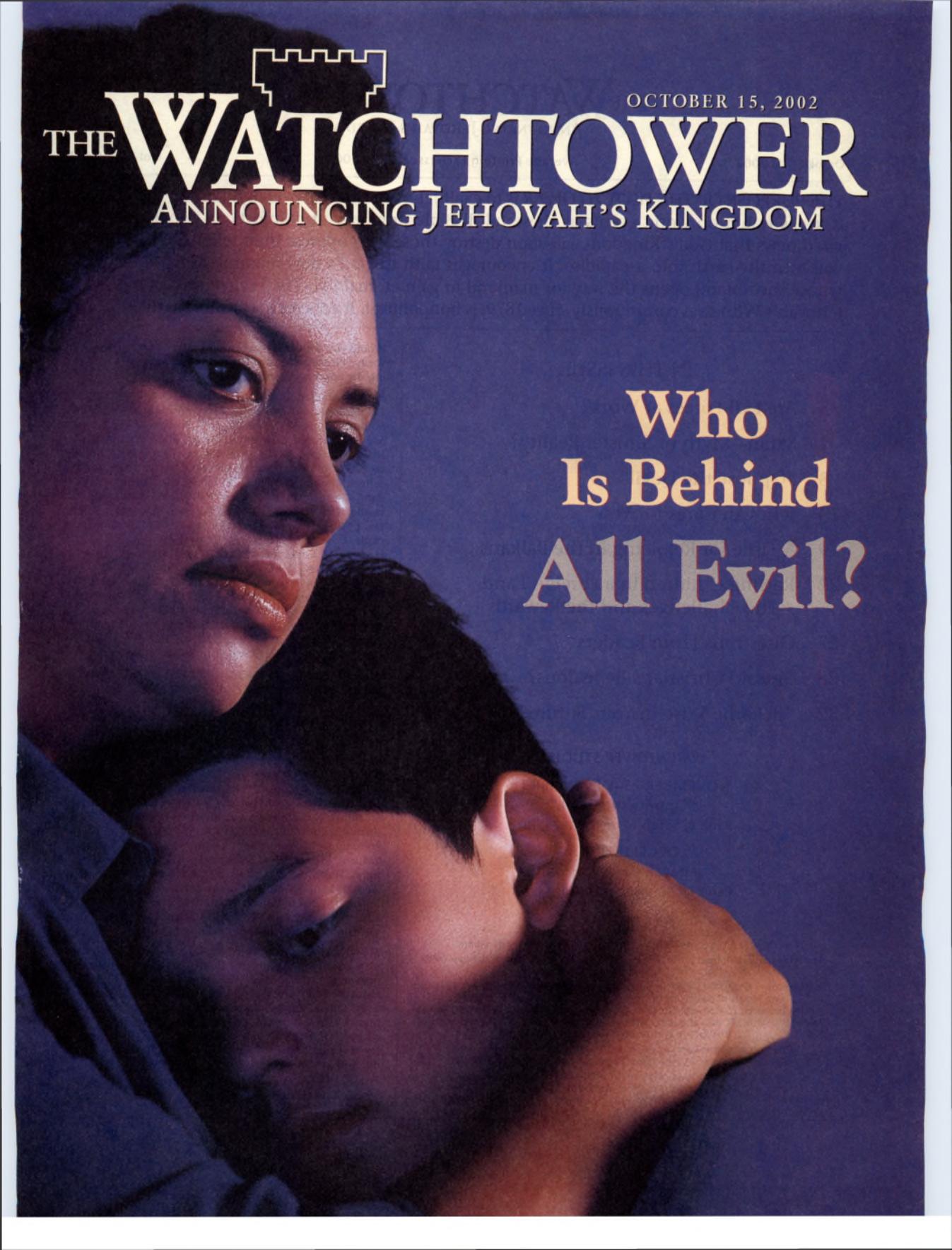




OCTOBER 15, 2002

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



Who
Is Behind
All Evil?

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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*"The world is overcome by vertigo,
as if occult powers were conscientiously
trying to block all the emergency exits."*
—Jean-Claude Souléry, journalist.

*'The individual's feelings of impotence
tend to elicit a sense of overwhelming
evil at work.'—Josef Barton, historian.*

Are Evil Forces at Work?

THE sheer horror of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks caused many to reflect. Writing in England's *Financial Times*, Michael Prowse stated: "No animal would or could act in so barbarous a fashion." A *New York Times* editorial observed that beyond the planning that the assault required, "it is just as important to consider the intensity of the hatred it took to bring it off. It is a hatred that exceeds the conventions of warfare, that knows no limits, abides by no agreements."

People of various persuasions reflected on the possibility that some malignant power is at work. A businessman from Sarajevo who witnessed the horrors of the ethnic hatred in Bosnia declared: "After a year of the Bosnian war I believe Satan pulls the strings. This is pure madness."

When asked if he believed in the Devil, historian Jean Delumeau replied: "How could I deny the power of evil when I see what is occurring and what has occurred

since I was born: The second world war, with over 40 million victims; Auschwitz and the death camps; the genocide in Cambodia; the bloody tyranny of the Ceausescu regime; torture as a system of government in many places throughout the world. The list of horrors is endless. . . . So I believe that we are justified in calling such acts 'diabolic,' not that they are inspired by a Devil with horns and cloven feet but by a Devil that is the symbol of the spirit and power of evil operating in the world."

Like Jean Delumeau, many people characterize as "diabolic" the horrendous things that are occurring today in human society, from the family level right up to the international scene. But what does this mean? Are such horrors to be attributed to abstract powers of evil, or are there personal malevolent forces at work pushing humans to commit heinous crimes that go beyond habitual human badness? Are such forces masterminded by a prince of evil—Satan the Devil?

Satan

Myth or Sinister Reality?

THE origin of evil has intrigued thinkers from earliest times. A *Dictionary of the Bible*, by James Hastings, states: "At the dawn of human consciousness man found himself confronted by forces which he was unable to control, and which exercised a baleful or destructive influence." The same reference work also says: "Early mankind instinctively sought for causes, and interpreted the forces and other manifestations of nature as personal."

According to historians, belief in demon gods and evil spirits can be traced back to the earliest history of Mesopotamia. The ancient Babylonians believed that the underworld, or "land of no return," was presided over by Nergal, a violent divinity known as "the one who burns." They also feared demons, whom they tried to appease by means of magic incantations. In Egyptian mythology, Set was the god of evil, "represented as having the features of a fantastic beast with a thin, curved

snout, straight, square-cut ears and a stiff forked tail."—*Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology*.

Although the Greeks and the Romans had benevolent and malevolent divinities, they had no predominant evil god. Their philosophers taught the existence of two opposing principles. For Empedocles, they were Love and Discord. For Plato, the world had two "Souls," one causing good and the other evil. As Georges Minois states in his book *Le Diable* (The Devil), "classical [Greco-Roman] pagan religion knew of no Devil."

In Iran, Zoroastrianism taught that the supreme divinity Ahura Mazda, or Ormazd, created Angra Mainyu, or Ahriman, who chose to do evil and thus became the Destructive Spirit, or Destroyer.

In Judaism, there was a simple presentation of Satan as God's Adversary who brought about sin. But after many centuries, that became tainted with pagan ideas. The *Encyclopaedia Judaica* states: "A great change had taken place . . . by the last centuries B.C.E. In this period the [Jewish] religion . . . took on many traits of a dualistic system in which God and the forces of good and truth were opposed in heaven and on earth by powerful forces of evil and deceit. This seems to have been under the influence of Persian religion." *The Concise Jewish Encyclopedia* declares: "Protection against d[emons] was af-



The Babylonians believed in Nergal (far left), a violent divinity; Plato (left) believed in the existence of two opposing "Souls"

Cylinder: Musée du Louvre, Paris; Plato: National Archaeological Museum, Athens, Greece



Irenaeus, Origen, and Augustine taught that the ransom was paid to the Devil

founded by observance of the commandments and by the use of amulets."

Apostate Christian Theology

Even as Judaism adopted non-Biblical concepts concerning Satan and the demons, apostate Christians elaborated on unscriptural ideas. *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* states: "One of the more extreme of ancient theological ideas is that God redeemed his people by paying Satan for their release." This idea was propounded by Irenaeus (second century C.E.). It was further developed by Origen (third century C.E.), who claimed that "the devil had acquired a legal claim on men" and who regarded "the death of Christ . . . as a ransom paid to the devil."—*History of Dogma*, by Adolf Harnack.

To quote *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, "for about a thousand years [the idea that the ransom was paid to the Devil] played a conspicuous part in the history of theology," and it remained a part of church belief. Other Church Fathers, including Augustine (fourth-fifth centuries C.E.), adopted the idea that the ransom was paid to Satan. Finally, by the 12th century C.E., Catholic theologians

Anselm and Abelard came to the conclusion that Christ's sacrifice was offered not to Satan but to God.

Medieval Superstitions

Although most of the Catholic Church councils remained remarkably silent on the subject of Satan, in 1215 C.E., the Fourth Lateran Council presented what the *New Catholic Encyclopedia* terms a "solemn profession of faith." Canon 1 states: "The devil and the other demons were created good by nature, by God, but of their own doing they became evil." It adds that they busy themselves trying to tempt mankind. This latter thought obsessed many people during the Middle Ages. Satan was behind anything that seemed unusual, such as unexplained illness, sudden death, or bad crops. In 1233 C.E., Pope Gregory IX issued several bulls against heretics, including one against Luciferians, supposed Devil worshipers.

Belief that people could be possessed by the Devil or his demons soon gave rise to a collective paranoia—a hysterical fear of sorcery and witchcraft. From the 13th to the 17th century, fear of witches swept across Europe and reached North America with the European colonists. Even the Protestant reformers Martin Luther and John Calvin approved of witch-hunts. In Europe witch trials based on mere rumor or malicious denunciations were conducted by both the Inquisition and secular courts. Torture was commonly used to extort confessions of "guilt."

Those found guilty could be sentenced to death either by burning or, in England and Scotland, by hanging. As to the number of victims, *The World Book Encyclopedia* states: "From 1484 to 1782, according to some historians, the Christian church put to death about 300,000 women for witchcraft." If Satan was behind this medieval tragedy, who were his instruments—the victims or their fanatic religious persecutors?



Fear of witches led to the execution of hundreds of thousands

French dictionary of Catholicism, admits that "many Christians today refuse to attribute evil in the world to the devil." In recent years Catholic theologians have been walking a tightrope, precariously balanced between official Catholic doctrine and modern-day thinking. "Liberal Christian theology," says the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, "tends to treat the biblical language about Satan as 'picture thinking' not to be taken literally—as a mythological attempt to express the reality and extent of evil in the universe." Regarding Protestants, the same reference work states: "Modern liberal Protestantism tends to deny the necessity of belief in a personal devil." But should true Christians consider what the Bible says about Satan as mere "picture thinking"?

What the Scriptures Teach

Human philosophy and theology have not offered a better explanation of the origin of evil than that given in the Bible. What the Scriptures say about Satan is fundamental to understanding the origin of evil and of human suffering, as well as why the worst imaginable violence gets worse each year.

Some may ask: 'If God is the good and loving Creator, how could he create a wicked spirit creature like Satan?' The Bible lays down the principle that all of Jehovah God's works are perfect and that all of his intelligent creatures are endowed with free will. (Deuteronomy 30:19; 32:4; Joshua 24:15; 1 Kings 18:21) The spirit person who became Satan must, therefore, have been created perfect and must have deviated from the way of truth and righteousness by deliberate choice.—John 8:44; James 1:14, 15.

Current Belief or Disbelief

The 18th century witnessed the blossoming of rationalistic thought, known as the Enlightenment. The *Encyclopædia Britannica* states: "The philosophy and theology of the Enlightenment endeavoured to push the figure of the devil out of Christian consciousness as being a product of the mythological fantasy of the Middle Ages." The Roman Catholic Church reacted to this and reaffirmed its belief in Satan the Devil at the First Vatican Council (1869-70), reiterating this rather timidly at the Second Vatican Council (1962-65).

Officially, as the *New Catholic Encyclopedia* concedes, "the Church is committed to a belief in angels and demons." However, *Théo*, a

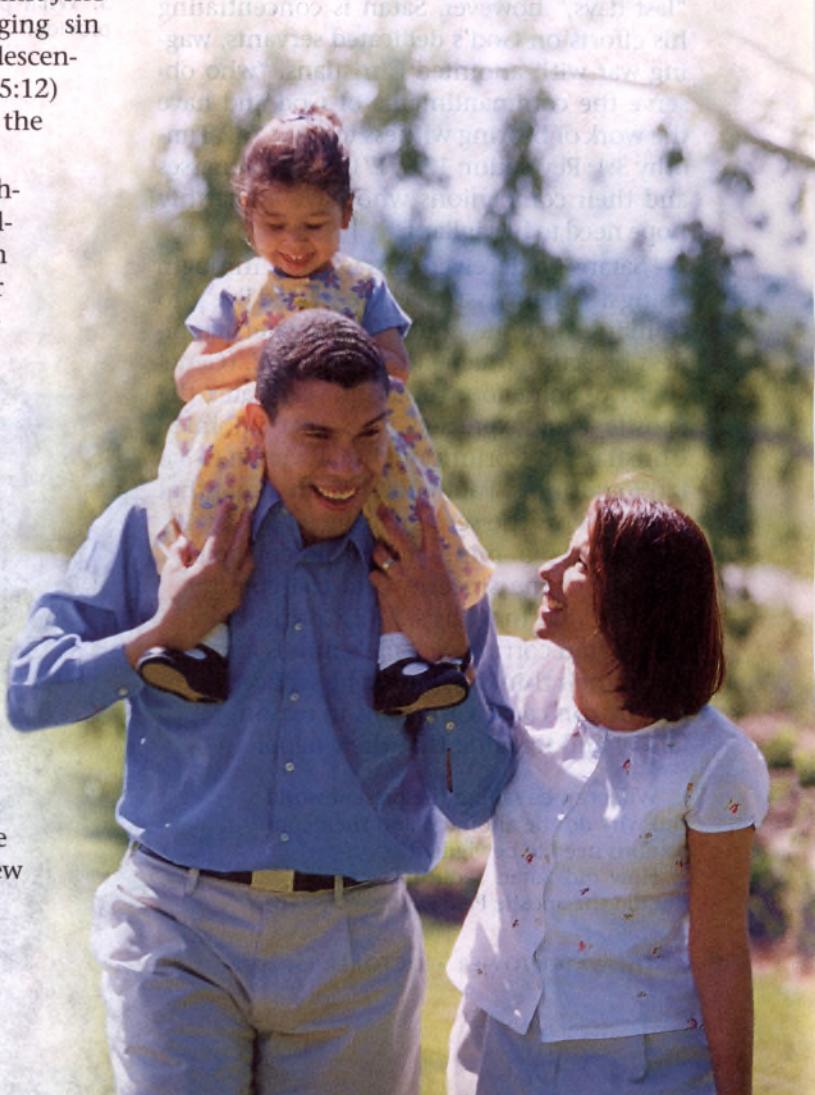
In many ways, Satan's rebellious course parallels that of "the king of Tyre," who was described poetically as "perfect in beauty" and 'faultless in his ways from the day of his being created until unrighteousness was found in him.' (Ezekiel 28:11-19) Satan did not contest Jehovah's supremacy or his Creatorship. How could he, since he had been created by God? Satan did, however, challenge the way Jehovah was exercising his sovereignty. In the garden of Eden, Satan insinuated that God was depriving the first human couple of something to which they had a right and upon which their well-being depended. (Genesis 3:1-5) He succeeded in causing Adam and Eve to rebel against Jehovah's righteous sovereignty, bringing sin and death upon them and their descendants. (Genesis 3:6-19; Romans 5:12) Thus the Bible shows that Satan is the root cause of human suffering.

Sometime before the Flood, other angels joined Satan in his rebellion. They materialized in human bodies to satisfy their cravings for sexual pleasures with the daughters of men. (Genesis 6:1-4) At the Flood, these renegade angels returned to the spirit realm but not to their "original position" with God in heaven. (Jude 6) They were abased to a condition of dense spiritual darkness. (1 Peter 3:19, 20; 2 Peter 2:4) They became demons, no longer serving under Jehovah's sovereignty but living in subjection to Satan. While apparently unable to materialize again, the demons can still exercise great power over the minds and lives of humans, and they are doubtless responsible for much of the violence we are witnessing today.—Matthew 12:43-45; Luke 8:27-33.

The End of Satan's Rule Is Near

It is clear that evil forces are at work in the world today. The apostle John wrote: "The whole world is lying in the power of the wicked one."—1 John 5:19.

Fulfilled Bible prophecy, however, shows that the Devil is intensifying earth's woes because he knows that he has only "a short period of time" left to wreak havoc before being confined. (Revelation 12:7-12; 20:1-3) The end of Satan's rule will usher in a righteous new world, where tears, death, and pain "will be no more." Then, God's will shall "be done on earth as it is in heaven."—Revelation 21:1-4; Matthew 6:10, *New International Version*.



"OPPOSE THE DEVIL"

"Oppose the Devil, and he will flee from you."—JAMES 4:7.

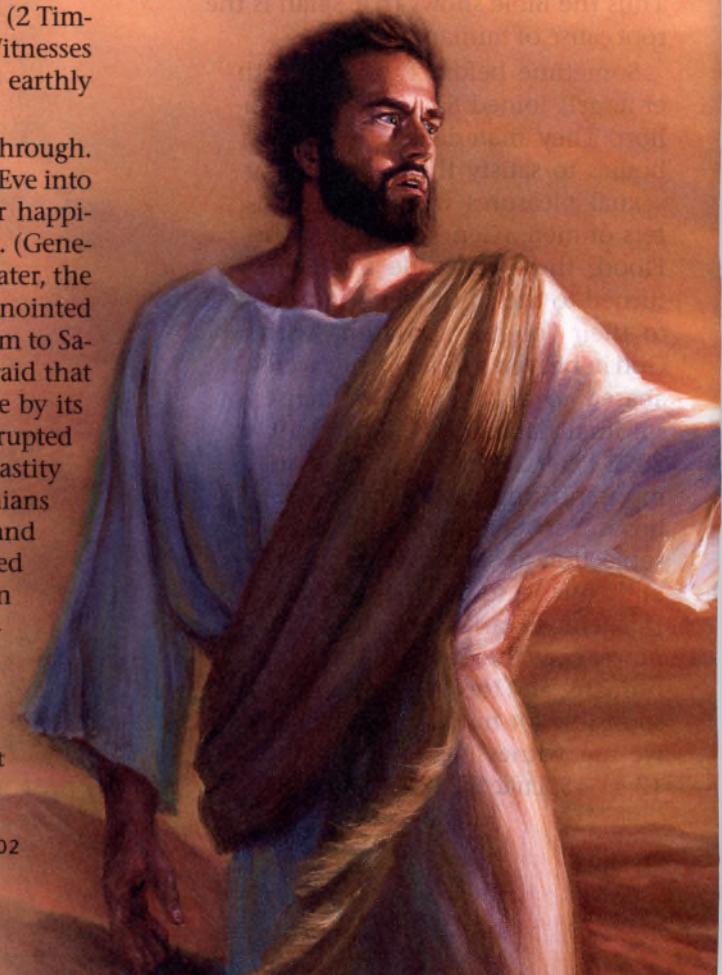
GOD has disappeared, but the Devil remains." Those words of the French author André Malraux could well be applied to the world in which we live. The works of men certainly seem to reflect the wiles of the Devil more than the will of God. Satan is leading men astray "with every powerful work and lying signs and portents and with every unrighteous deception for those who are perishing." (2 Thessalonians 2:9, 10) In these "last days," however, Satan is concentrating his efforts on God's dedicated servants, waging war with anointed Christians, "who observe the commandments of God and have the work of bearing witness to Jesus." (2 Timothy 3:1; Revelation 12:9, 17) These Witnesses and their companions who have an earthly hope need to be vigilant.

² Satan is a deceiver through and through. Using a serpent as a cover, he tricked Eve into thinking that she could find greater happiness by acting independently of God. (Genesis 3:1-6) Some four thousand years later, the apostle Paul expressed fears that anointed Christians in Corinth might fall victim to Satan's craftiness. Paul wrote: "I am afraid that somehow, as the serpent seduced Eve by its cunning, your minds might be corrupted away from the sincerity and the chastity that are due the Christ." (2 Corinthians 11:3) Satan corrupts people's minds and warps their thinking. Just as he seduced Eve, he can cause Christians to reason falsely and imagine that their happy-

ness depends on something Jehovah and his Son disapprove of.

³ Satan can be compared to a birdcatcher who sets traps to catch unsuspecting victims. To avoid Satan's traps, we need to 'dwell in the secret place of the Most High,' a figurative place of protection that Jehovah provides for those who recognize his universal sovereignty in what they do. (Psalm 91:1-3) We need

3. What protection from the Devil does Jehovah provide?



1. What can be said of the present world, and why do the anointed and their companions need to be vigilant?
2. How did Satan seduce Eve, and what fear did the apostle Paul express?

all the protection God provides through his Word, his spirit, and his organization so that we "may be able to stand firm against the machinations of the Devil." (Ephesians 6:11) The Greek word for "machinations" can also be translated "crafty acts," or "tricks." Without a doubt, the Devil uses many tricks and crafty acts in his efforts to ensnare Jehovah's servants.

Traps Satan Set for the Early Christians

⁴ Christians who lived in the first and second centuries C.E. were living at a time when the Roman Empire was at its zenith. The *Pax Romana* (Roman Peace) enabled commerce to flourish. This prosperity brought much leisure time to the ruling class, and the rulers saw to it that the masses got plenty of entertainment so that they would not rebel. Dur-

4. In what kind of world did the early Christians live?

Jesus firmly opposed the Devil



ing some periods, public holidays were as numerous as working days. The leaders used public funds to give the people bread and circuses, keeping their stomachs full and their minds diverted.

⁵ Did this situation constitute a danger for the early Christians? Judging from the warnings written by early postapostolic writers, such as Tertullian, most of the leisure activities at that time were fraught with spiritual and moral dangers for true Christians. For one thing, most of the public festivals and games were held in honor of pagan gods. (2 Corinthians 6:14-18) At the theaters, even many of the classical plays were either grossly immoral or bloodily violent. As time passed, public taste for the classics waned, and they were replaced by lewd pantomime shows. In his book *Daily Life in Ancient Rome*, historian Jérôme Carcopino says: "In these plays the actresses were permitted to undress entirely . . . Blood was shed copiously. . . . [The mime] plumb[ed] the depths of a perversion which had conquered the masses of the capital. They were not sickened by such exhibitions because the ghastly butcheries of the amphitheatre had long since debased their feelings and perverted their instincts."—Matthew 5: 27, 28.

⁶ In the amphitheaters, gladiators fought each other to the death or fought wild animals, either killing them or being killed by them. Condemned criminals and, eventually, many Christians were thrown to ferocious beasts. Even in those early times, Satan's trick was to blunt people's repugnance to immorality and violence until these things became commonplace and were sought after by the populace. The

5, 6. (a) Why was it inappropriate for Christians to frequent Roman theaters and amphitheaters? (b) What trick did Satan use, and how could Christians avoid it?

only way to keep out of that trap was to stay away from the theaters and amphitheaters.—1 Corinthians 15:32, 33.

⁷ Chariot races held in vast oblong arenas called circuses were doubtless very exciting, but they were unacceptable for Christians because the crowds often got violent. A third-century writer reported that some of the spectators came to blows, and Carcopino states that "astrologers and prostitutes had their place of business" under the arcades of the circus building. Clearly, the Roman circus was no place for Christians.—1 Corinthians 6:9, 10.

⁸ What of the famous Roman baths? Certainly, there was nothing wrong with bathing to keep clean. But many of the Roman baths were huge establishments that included massage rooms, gymnasiums, gaming rooms, and places to eat and drink. Although, theoretically, times were set aside for each sex to use the baths, mixed bathing was often tolerated. Clement of Alexandria wrote: "The baths are opened promiscuously

7, 8. (a) Why would a Christian have been unwise to attend chariot races? (b) How could Satan have used the Roman baths to entrap Christians?

to men and women; and there they strip for licentious indulgence." Thus, a legitimate institution could easily have been used by Satan as a trap for Christians. Wise ones abstained.

⁹ Gambling was a favorite pastime among the people when the Roman Empire was at its height. The early Christians could avoid the betting that went on at the chariot races by simply staying away from the circuses. Minor gambling was also done illicitly in the back rooms of inns and taverns. Players bet on the odd or even number of pebbles or knucklebones held in the other player's hand. Gambling added spice to people's lives, for it offered the hope of making easy money. (Ephesians 5:5) Furthermore, barmaids at such drinking places were often prostitutes, adding the danger of sexual immorality. Such were some of the snares that Satan set for Christians who lived in the cities

9. What snares did the early Christians have to avoid?



First-century Christians rejected violent and immoral entertainment

of the Roman Empire. Are things very different today?

Satan's Snares Today

¹⁰ In the main, Satan's tricks have not changed over the centuries. In order for Christians living in the corrupt city of Corinth not to be "overreached by Satan," the apostle Paul gave them strong counsel. He said: "We are not ignorant of [Satan's] designs." (2 Corinthians 2:11) In many developed countries, the situation today is similar to that prevailing in the Roman Empire in its heyday. Many people have more leisure time than ever. State lotteries give even the poor a glimmer of hope. There is plenty of cheap entertainment to occupy people's minds. Sports stadiums are full, people are gambling, crowds sometimes get violent, and players often do. Degrading music fills people's ears, and lewd shows occupy theater stages as well as movie and TV screens. In some countries, mixed bathing in saunas and hot springs is popular, not to mention nude bathing on some beaches. Just as in the early centuries of Christianity, Satan tries to entice God's servants by means of worldly leisure activities.

¹¹ In a world where stress is common, it is normal to feel the need to unwind or to get away from it all. However, just as the Roman baths included features that were potentially dangerous for the early Christians, some vacation facilities and resorts have proved to be a trap Satan has used to lead modern-day Christians into immorality or overdrinking. Paul wrote to the Christians in Corinth: "Do not be misled. Bad associations spoil useful habits. Wake up to soberness in a righteous way and do not practice sin, for some are

10. How does the situation today resemble conditions that prevailed in the Roman Empire?

11. What snares lie in the desire to unwind and relax?

without knowledge of God."—1 Corinthians 15:33, 34.

¹² We have seen in the case of Eve how Satan used cunning to corrupt her thinking. (2 Corinthians 11:3) Today, one of the Devil's snares is to lead Christians into thinking that if they go as far as possible in trying to show that Jehovah's Witnesses are just like other people, they will succeed in drawing some to Christian truth. Sometimes, they go too far, and the reverse occurs. (Haggai 2:12-14) Another of Satan's tricks is to embolden dedicated Christians, both young ones and adults, to live double lives and 'grieve God's holy spirit.' (Ephesians 4:30) Some have fallen into this trap through the abuse of the Internet.

¹³ Another of Satan's snares is disguised occultism. No true Christian would deliberately dabble in Satanism or spiritism. Yet, some unwittingly let their guard down when it comes to films, TV series, video games, and even children's books and comics that highlight violence or uncanny practices. Anything that smacks of the occult needs to be kept at a distance. The wise proverb states: "Thorns and traps are in the way of the crooked one; he that is guarding his soul keeps far away from them." (Proverbs 22:5) Since Satan is "the god of this system of things," anything that is very popular could possibly hide one of his traps.—2 Corinthians 4:4; 1 John 2:15, 16.

Jesus Opposed the Devil

¹⁴ Jesus provided a fine example of opposing the Devil and causing him to flee. After being baptized and fasting for 40 days, Jesus was tempted by Satan. (Matthew 4:1-11) The first temptation sought to use the natural

12. What are some tricks used by Satan to ensnare Jehovah's servants today?

13. What disguised snare is one of the Devil's crafty acts, and what counsel in Proverbs is appropriate here?

14. How did Jesus resist the Devil's first temptation?

hunger that Jesus felt after fasting. Satan invited Jesus to perform his first miracle to satisfy a physical need. Quoting Deuteronomy 8:3, Jesus refused to make selfish use of his powers and placed spiritual food above physical food.

¹⁵ An interesting thought with regard to this temptation is that the Devil did not seek to have Jesus commit a sexual sin. Hunger, which naturally arouses a yearning for food, seemed to be the strongest physical desire to use in tempting Jesus in this instance. What temptations does the Devil use to lure God's people today? They are many and varied, but he is using sexual temptations as one of the main crafty acts in his effort to break the integrity of Jehovah's people. By imitating Jesus, we can oppose the Devil and resist temptations. Just as Jesus thwarted Satan's advances by recalling appropriate scriptures, when tempted we can recall such texts as Genesis 39:9 and 1 Corinthians 6:18.

¹⁶ Next, the Devil challenged Jesus to leap off the temple wall and test God's ability to protect him by means of His angels. Quoting Deuteronomy 6:16, Jesus refused to put his

15. (a) What natural desire did Satan exploit to tempt Jesus? (b) What is one of the Devil's main crafty acts against God's servants today, but how can we oppose him?

16. (a) How did Satan tempt Jesus a second time? (b) In what ways might Satan try to tempt us to test Jehovah?

How Would You Answer?

- What snares of Satan did the early Christians have to avoid?
- What crafty acts does Satan use today to try to ensnare Jehovah's servants?
- How did Jesus oppose the Devil's temptations?
- What spiritual armor enables us to oppose the Devil?

Father to the test. Satan may not tempt us to jump from a temple battlement, but he can tempt us to test Jehovah. Are we tempted to see how closely we can imitate worldly fads in our dress and grooming without being counseled? Are we tempted in the area of questionable entertainment? We might then be testing Jehovah. If we have such inclinations, instead of fleeing from us, Satan may linger with us, incessantly trying to lure us into taking sides with him.

¹⁷ When Satan offered Jesus all the kingdoms of the world in exchange for a single act of worship, Jesus again opposed him by quoting Scripture, taking his stand firmly for the exclusive worship of his Father. (Deuteronomy 5:9; 6:13; 10:20) Satan may not offer the kingdoms of the world to us, but he constantly tempts us with materialistic glitter, even a vision of a little personal kingdom. Do we respond as Jesus did, giving our exclusive devotion to Jehovah? If so, what happened to Jesus will happen to us. Matthew's account states: "Then the Devil left him." (Matthew 4:11) Satan will leave us if we take a firm stand against him by remembering appropriate Bible principles and putting them into practice. The disciple James wrote: "Oppose the Devil, and he will flee from you." (James 4:7) A Christian wrote to the branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses in France: "Satan is truly cunning. In spite of my best intentions, I find it very difficult to master my feelings and my desires. Nevertheless, with courage, patience, and above all, Jehovah's help, I have managed to pull through and hold fast to the truth."

Fully Equipped to Oppose the Devil

- ¹⁸ Jehovah has supplied us with a full suit
17. (a) How did the Devil tempt Jesus for the third time? (b) How can James 4:7 prove to be true for us?
18. What spiritual armor equips us to oppose the Devil?

of spiritual armor to enable us "to stand firm against the machinations of the Devil." (Ephesians 6:11-18) Our love for the truth will gird our loins, or prepare us, for Christian activity. Our determination to hold to Jehovah's standards of righteousness will be like a breastplate protecting our heart. If our feet are shod with the good news, they will regularly take us into the preaching work, and this will strengthen and protect us spiritually. Our strong faith will be like a large shield, protecting us from "the wicked one's burning missiles," his crafty attacks and temptations. Our confident hope in the fulfillment of Jehovah's promises will be like a helmet protecting our thinking abilities and giving us peace of mind. (Philippians 4:7) If we become ex-

pert at handling God's Word, it will be like a sword we can use to help free people from spiritual bondage to Satan. We can also wield it to defend ourselves, even as Jesus did when tempted.

¹⁹ By keeping on this "complete suit of armor from God" and carrying on prayer continually, we can be confident of Jehovah's protection when Satan attacks us. (John 17:15; 1 Corinthians 10:13) But James showed that it is not enough to 'oppose the Devil.' We must also, and above all, 'subject ourselves to God,' who cares for us. (James 4:7, 8) How we can do this will be considered in the following article.

19. In addition to 'opposing the Devil,' what is necessary?

JEHOVAH CARES FOR YOU

"Throw all your anxiety upon [God], because he cares for you."—1 PETER 5:7.

J EHOVAH and Satan are complete opposites. Any person who feels drawn to Jehovah can only be repulsed by the Devil. This contrast is pointed up in a standard reference work. With regard to Satan's activities as outlined in the Bible book of Job, the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (1970) says: 'Satan's task is to roam through the earth seeking out acts or persons to be reported adversely; his function thus is the opposite of that of the "eyes of the Lord," which roam through the earth strengthening all that is good (II Chron. xvi, 9). Satan is cynical about unselfish human goodness and is

1. In what important respect are Jehovah and Satan complete opposites?

permitted to test it under God's authority and control and within the limits God sets.' Yes, what a contrast!

—Job 1:6-12; 2:1-7.

² The word "Devil" comes from a Greek word meaning "false accuser," "slanderer." The book of Job reveals that Satan accused Jehovah's faithful servant Job of serving Him out of self-interest, saying: "Is it for nothing that Job has feared God?" (Job 1:9) The account in the book of

Job shows that in spite of his tests and trials, Job drew ever closer to Jehovah. (Job 2, 3. (a) How is the meaning of the word "Devil" well illustrated in what happened to Job? (b) How does the Bible show that Satan continues to accuse Jehovah's servants on earth?

10:9, 12; 12:9, 10; 19:25; 27:5; 28:28) After his ordeal, he said to God: "In hearsay I have heard about you, but now my own eye does see you."—Job 42:5.

³ Has Satan ceased accusing God's faithful servants since the time of Job? No. The book of Revelation shows that in this time of the end, Satan continues to accuse Christ's anointed brothers and assuredly also their faithful companions. (2 Timothy 3:12; Revelation 12:10, 17) Hence, the dire need of all of us as true Christians is to subject ourselves to our caring God, Jehovah, serving him out of deep love and thus proving Satan's accusation to be false. So doing, we will make Jehovah's heart rejoice.—Proverbs 27:11.

Jehovah Seeks to Help Us

⁴ The Devil roves about in the earth, seeking to accuse and devour someone. (Job 1: 7, 9; 1 Peter 5:8) In contrast, Jehovah seeks to help those who need his strength. The prophet Hanani told King Asa: "As regards Jehovah, his eyes are roving about through all the earth to show his strength in behalf of those whose heart is complete toward him." (2 Chronicles 16:9) What a difference between Satan's hateful scrutiny and Jehovah's loving care!

⁵ Jehovah is not spying on us to catch our every fault and failing. The psalmist wrote: "If errors were what you watch, O Jah, O Jehovah, who could stand?" (Psalm 130:3) The implied answer is: no one. (Ecclesiastes 7:20) If we draw near to Jehovah with complete hearts, his eyes will be upon us, not to condemn us, but to observe our efforts and answer our prayers for help and forgiveness. The apostle Peter wrote: "The eyes of Jehovah are upon the righteous ones, and his ears are toward their supplication; but the face of Je-

4, 5. (a) In contrast with Satan, what does Jehovah look for on earth? (b) If we are to experience Jehovah's favor, what is necessary on our part?

hovah is against those doing bad things."—1 Peter 3:12.

⁶ David was imperfect and sinned grievously. (2 Samuel 12:7-9) But he poured out his heart to Jehovah and drew near to him in fervent prayer. (Psalm 51:1-12, superscription) Jehovah heard his prayer and forgave him, although David bore unpleasant consequences for his sin. (2 Samuel 12:10-14) This should be for us both a comfort and a warning. It is comforting to know that Jehovah is willing to forgive our sins if we are truly repentant, but it is sobering to realize that sins often bring dire consequences. (Galatians 6:7-9) If we want to draw close to Jehovah, we should stay as far away as possible from anything that displeases him.—Psalm 97:10.

Jehovah Draws His People to Him

⁷ David wrote in one of his psalms: "Jehovah is high, and yet the humble one he sees; but the lofty one he knows only from a distance." (Psalm 138:6) In a similar vein, another psalm says: "Who is like Jehovah our God, him who is making his dwelling on high? He is condescending to look on heaven and earth, raising up the lowly one from the very dust." (Psalm 113:5-7) Yes, the almighty Creator of the universe condescends to look down upon the earth, and his eyes see "the humble one," "the lowly one," people who are "sighing and groaning over all the detestable things that are being done." (Ezekiel 9:4) He draws such ones to himself by means of his Son. While on earth, Jesus stated: "No man can come to me unless the Father, who sent me, draws him . . . No one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father."—John 6:44, 65.

6. How is David's case both a comfort and a warning for us?
7. What kind of people does Jehovah watch for, and how does he draw them to himself?

⁸ All humans should come to Jesus and put faith in the ransom sacrifice because they were born sinners, alienated from God. (John 3:36) They need to be reconciled to God. (2 Corinthians 5:20) God did not wait for sinners to plead with him to provide some arrangement whereby they might find peace with him. The apostle Paul wrote: "God recommends his own love to us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. . . . For if, when we were enemies, we became reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more, now that we have become reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."—Romans 5:8, 10.

⁹ The apostle John confirmed the sublime truth that God is reconciling humans to himself, writing: "By this the love of God was made manifest in our case, because God sent forth his only-begotten Son into the world that we might gain life through him. The love is in this respect, not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent forth his Son as a propitiatory sacrifice for our sins." (1 John 4:9, 10) The initiative was God's, not man's. Do you not feel drawn to a God who showed so much love for "sinners," "enemies" at that?—John 3:16.

Need for Seeking Jehovah

¹⁰ Of course, Jehovah does not force us to come to him. We must seek him, "groping for him and really find him, although, in fact, he is not far off from each one of us." (Acts 17:27) We must recognize Jehovah's right to call for our subjection. The disciple James wrote: "Subject yourselves, therefore, to God; but oppose the Devil, and he will flee from you. Draw close to God, and he will draw close

8, 9. (a) Why do we all need to come to Jesus?
(b) What is so remarkable about the ransom arrangement?

10, 11. (a) What must we do to seek Jehovah?
(b) How should we view Satan's system of things?

to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you indecisive ones." (James 4:7, 8) We should not hesitate to take a firm stand against the Devil and for Jehovah.

¹¹ This means distancing ourselves from Satan's wicked system of things. James also wrote: "Do you not know that the friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever, therefore, wants to be a friend of the world is constituting himself an enemy of God." (James 4:4) Conversely, if we want to be Jehovah's friends, we must expect Satan's world to hate us.—John 15:19; 1 John 3:13.

¹² When Satan's world opposes us in some particular way, we need especially to approach Jehovah in prayer, asking for his help. David, who felt Jehovah's saving hand so many times, wrote for our comfort: "Jehovah is near to all those calling upon him, to all those who call upon him in trueness. The desire of those fearing him he will perform, and their cry for help he will hear, and he will save them. Jehovah is guarding all those

12. (a) What comforting words did David write?
(b) What warning did Jehovah give by means of the prophet Azariah?

In spite of his trials, Job came to appreciate that Jehovah cared for him



loving him, but all the wicked ones he will annihilate." (Psalm 145:18-20) This psalm shows that Jehovah can save us when we are tested individually and that he will save his people collectively at the time of "the great tribulation." (Revelation 7:14) Jehovah will stay close to us if we stay close to him. Guided by "the spirit of God," the prophet Azariah stated what we can take as an overall truth: "Jehovah is with you as long as you prove to be with him; and if you search for him, he will let himself be found by you, but if you leave him he will leave you."—2 Chronicles 15:1, 2.

Jehovah Must Be Real to Us

¹³ The apostle Paul wrote of Moses that "he continued steadfast as seeing the One who is invisible." (Hebrews 11:27) Of course, Moses never actually saw Jehovah. (Exodus 33:20) But Jehovah was so real to him that it was as if

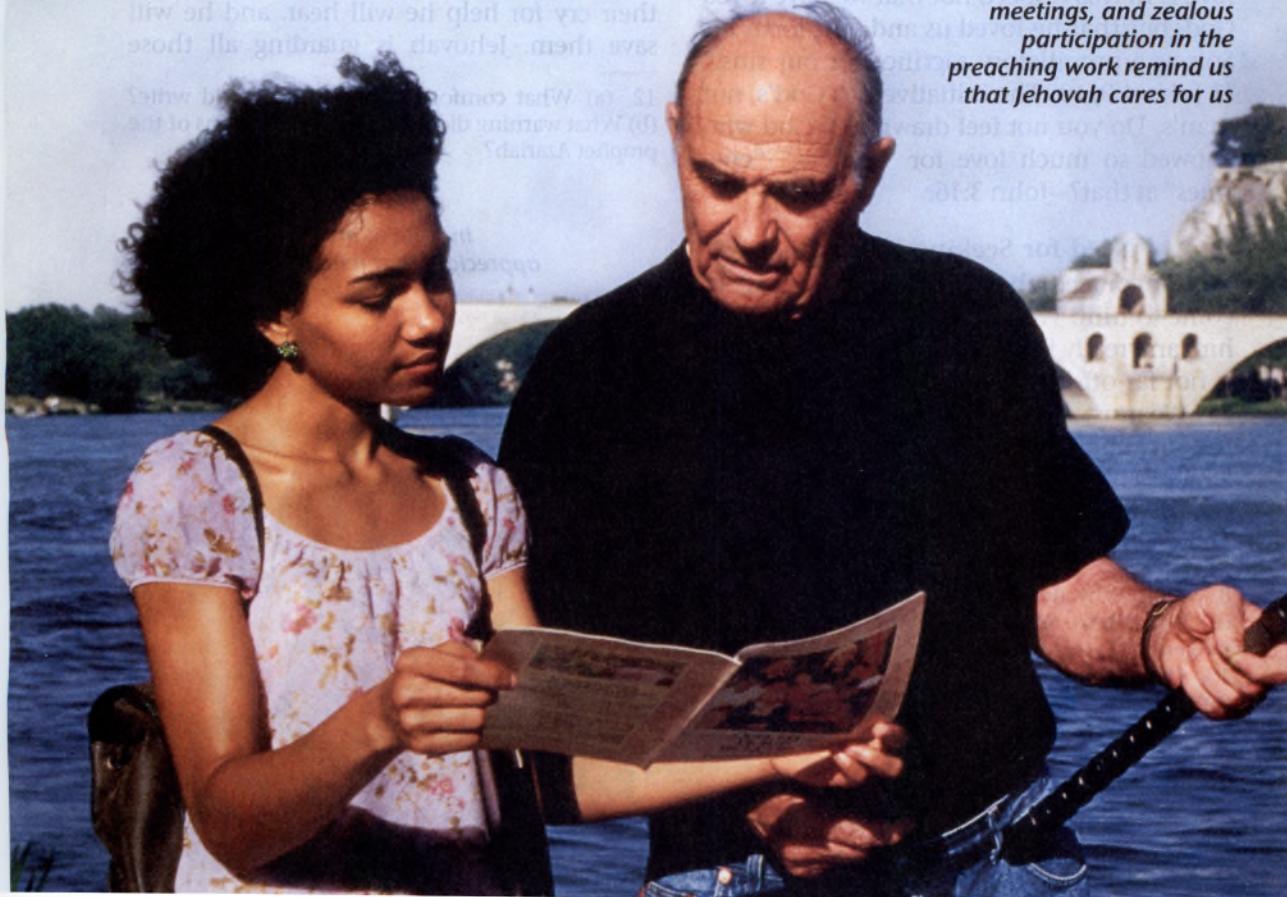
13. How can we show that Jehovah is real to us?

he saw Him. Similarly, after his trials, Job's eyes of faith saw Jehovah more distinctly, as a God who allows his faithful servants to undergo trials but who never forsakes them. (Job 42:5) It was said of Enoch and Noah that they 'walked with God.' They did this by seeking to please God and obey him. (Genesis 5:22-24; 6:9, 22; Hebrews 11:5, 7) If Jehovah is as real to us as he was to Enoch, Noah, Job, and Moses, we will "take notice of him" in all our ways, and he will "make [our] paths straight."—Proverbs 3:5, 6.

¹⁴ Just before the Israelites were due to enter the Promised Land, Moses counseled them: "After Jehovah your God you should walk, and him you should fear, and his commandments you should keep, and to his

14. What does it mean to "cling" to Jehovah?

Daily Bible reading, regular attendance at Christian meetings, and zealous participation in the preaching work remind us that Jehovah cares for us



voice you should listen, and him you should serve, and to him you should cling." (Deuteronomy 13:4) They were to follow Jehovah, fear him, obey him, and cling to him. With regard to the word here translated "cling," one Bible scholar states that "the language indicates a very close and intimate relationship." The psalmist stated: "The intimacy with Jehovah belongs to those fearful of him." (Psalm 25:14) This precious, close relationship with Jehovah will be ours if he is real to us and if we love him so much that we dread to displease him in any way.—Psalm 19:9-14.

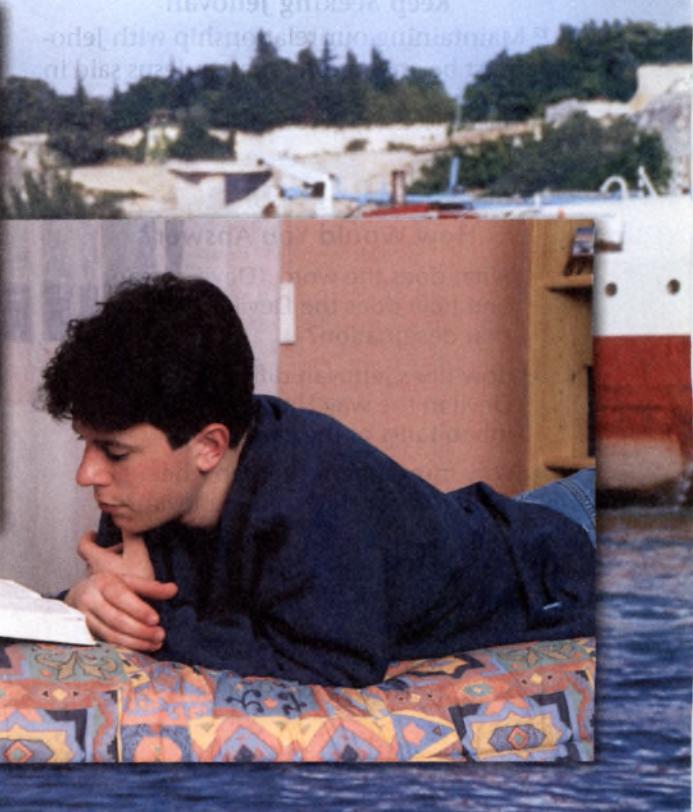
Are You Aware of Jehovah's Care?

¹⁵ One of Satan's crafty acts is to try to get us to lose sight of the fact that our God, Jehovah, is constantly taking care of his faithful

15, 16. (a) How does Psalm 34 show that Jehovah cares for us? (b) What should we do if we have trouble remembering Jehovah's acts of goodness toward us?

servants. King David of Israel was well aware of Jehovah's protective arm even when he faced a most perilous moment. When he was compelled to feign insanity in front of King Achish of Gath, he composed a song, a very beautiful psalm, which included these expressions of faith: "O magnify Jehovah with me, you people, and let us exalt his name together. I inquired of Jehovah, and he answered me, and out of all my frights he delivered me. The angel of Jehovah is camping all around those fearing him, and he rescues them. Taste and see that Jehovah is good, O you people; happy is the able-bodied man that takes refuge in him. Jehovah is near to those that are broken at heart; and those who are crushed in spirit he saves. Many are the calamities of the righteous one, but out of them all Jehovah delivers him."—Psalm 34:3, 4, 7, 8, 18, 19; 1 Samuel 21:10-15.

¹⁶ Are you convinced of Jehovah's saving power? Are you aware of his angelic protection? Have you personally tasted and seen



that Jehovah is good? When was the last time that you were particularly conscious that Jehovah had been good to you? Try to recall. Was it at that last home you visited in the ministry, just as you were feeling you could do no more? Perhaps you then had a wonderful conversation with the householder. Did you remember to thank Jehovah for having given you the extra strength you needed and for blessing you? (2 Corinthians 4:7) On the other hand, you may have trouble recalling some particular act of goodness that Jehovah performed in your behalf. You may have to think back a week, a month, a year, or more. If this is the case, why not make a conscious effort to draw closer to Jehovah and try to see how he guides and directs you? The apostle Peter admonished Christians: "Humble yourselves . . . under the mighty hand of God . . . while you throw all your anxiety upon him, because he cares for you." (1 Peter 5:6, 7) Indeed, you will be amazed at how much he cares for you!—Psalm 73:28.

Keep Seeking Jehovah

¹⁷ Maintaining our relationship with Jehovah must be an ongoing matter. Jesus said in

17. What is necessary if we are to keep seeking Jehovah?

How Would You Answer?

- What does the word "Devil" mean, and how does the Devil live up to that designation?
- How does Jehovah differ from the Devil in the way He observes the inhabitants of the earth?
- Why must a person accept the ransom in approaching Jehovah?
- What does it mean to "cling" to Jehovah, and how can we keep seeking him?

prayer to his Father: "This means everlasting life, their taking in knowledge of you, the only true God, and of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ." (John 17:3) Taking in knowledge of Jehovah and his Son requires constant effort on our part. We need the help of prayer and holy spirit to comprehend "the deep things of God." (1 Corinthians 2:10; Luke 11:13) We also need the guidance of "the faithful and discreet slave" to feed our minds with spiritual food given "at the proper time." (Matthew 24:45) Through that channel, Jehovah has counseled us to read his Word daily, attend our Christian meetings regularly, and have a meaningful share in preaching the "good news of the kingdom." (Matthew 24:14) By doing so, we will keep seeking our caring God, Jehovah.

¹⁸ Satan is doing all in his power to bring persecution, opposition, and pressure from all quarters upon Jehovah's people. He tries to disrupt our peace and destroy our fine standing with our God. He does not want us to continue our work of finding honesthearted ones and assisting them to come over to Jehovah's side of the issue of universal sovereignty. But we must be determined to stay loyal to Jehovah, trusting in him to deliver us from the wicked one. By letting God's Word guide us and by staying active with his visible organization, we can be sure that he will always be there to support us.—Isaiah 41:8-13.

¹⁹ May we all, therefore, take our stand firmly against the Devil and his crafty acts, all the while seeking our dear God, Jehovah, who will not fail to 'make us firm, make us strong.' (1 Peter 5:8-11) Thus we will 'keep ourselves in God's love, while we are waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ with everlasting life in view.'—Jude 21.

18, 19. (a) What should we be determined to do? (b) If we take our stand firmly against the Devil and keep seeking Jehovah, how will we be blessed?



A Time for Rejoicing IN THE Balkans

It was 1922. A meeting by the Earnest Bible Students, as Jehovah's Witnesses were then known, was being held in Innsbruck, Austria. In the audience was Franz Brand, a young man from Apatin in Vojvodina, Serbia. The moment the speaker mentioned God's name, Jehovah, a mob started booing, making it impossible for him to continue, and the meeting was broken up. Yet, what Franz heard made a deep impression on him, and he took up the preaching of the Kingdom good news. These were the humble beginnings of exciting spiritual growth in one of the Balkan countries.

TO MOST people today, the name Yugoslavia conveys the image of war and carnage. Haunting images of terrible massacres, desperate refugees, destroyed homes, and anguished orphans come to mind. Words cannot describe the excruciating pain and misery caused by the war that ravished the Balkan Peninsula from 1991 to 1995, destroying all hope for a prosperous and carefree future by human efforts. As a result of the war, the people of the former Yugoslavia are laboring under economic hardship and abject poverty.*

In the face of such suffering, one would hardly expect to find happy people in this part of the world. Strange as it may seem,

though, such people do exist. In fact, they experienced a day of special rejoicing toward the end of the 20th century. What did Franz Brand, the young man mentioned at the outset, have to do with all of this?

Spiritual Growth in the Balkans

Franz Brand was excited about the new truths he had heard and decided that he must spread the good news. He found work as a barber in Maribor, a city in Slovenia near the border of Austria, and started to preach to his customers, who usually sat and listened quietly as they were being shaved. As a result of his efforts, there came to be a small group of Kingdom proclaimers in Maribor in the late 1920's. Bible talks were given in a restaurant, which was later appropriately named Novi svet (New World) Seafood Restaurant.

* The former Yugoslavia consisted of six republics—Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, and Slovenia.

In time, the good news spread throughout the whole land. The use of the "Photo-Drama of Creation" (an eight-hour presentation involving films, slides, and recordings) was instrumental in this expansion. Then in the 1930's when Jehovah's Witnesses came under severe persecution in Germany, the ranks in the Kingdom of Yugoslavia were fortified with German pioneers who fled their homeland. Setting aside personal comfort or convenience, they reached out to the most remote parts of this mountainous country to preach. At first, there seemed to be little response to their message. In the early 1940's, only 150 publishers reported field service.

In 1941, fierce persecution set in, which lasted until 1952. What a joy it was when finally on September 9, 1953, under General Tito's Communist regime, Jehovah's Witnesses were legally registered! That year, there were 914 publishers of the good news, and the number grew steadily. By 1991, the number of publishers had increased to 7,420, and 16,072 attended the Memorial that year.

From August 16 to 18, 1991, the first international convention of Jehovah's Witnesses in this country was held in Zagreb, Croatia. From within the country and abroad, 14,684 attended. This unforgettable convention prepared Jehovah's people for the trials ahead. Among the last vehicles to pass the checkpoint between Croatia and Serbia were the buses taking the Serbian delegates home. After the last bus rolled by, the border was closed and war began.

Jehovah's People Have Reasons to Rejoice

The years of war proved to be a time of severe testing for Jehovah's Witnesses in the Balkans. Nevertheless, they have reason to rejoice because Jehovah has blessed his peo-



The first group of publishers from Maribor, Slovenia, preaching in distant territory

ple there with excellent increase. Since 1991, the number of Kingdom publishers in the area of the former Yugoslavia has increased by more than 80 percent. The 2001 service year saw a peak of 13,472.

The offices in Zagreb and Belgrade (Serbia) used to care for the work of Jehovah's Witnesses in all of the former Yugoslavia. With the increase and the political changes, it was necessary to establish new offices in Ljubljana (Slovenia), and Skopje (Macedonia), in addition to obtaining new offices in Belgrade and Zagreb. Approximately 140 members are serving in these offices. Most of them are young and full of zeal and love for Jehovah. A good number of them are involved in the translation of Bible study aids into Croatian, Macedonian, Serbian, and Slovenian. What a blessing it is that most of the magazines and literature of Jehovah's Witnesses in these languages are being published simultaneously with the original English edition! These publications help many people find comfort and hope.

A further reason for joy is the support unselfishly rendered by numerous full-time servants from other countries. A number of fine

Kingdom Halls have been built in recent years, adding to the joy of the congregations. Nevertheless, there was even more joy in store. How could that be?

A Unique Project

Many publishers often wondered, 'Will we ever have the *New World Translation* in our language?' Year after year, they cherished the hope of hearing an announcement to that effect at a district convention. Yet, how could such a tremendous project be tackled, considering that the translation teams for these languages were formed only a few years ago and there were relatively few translators?

After investigating matters, the Governing Body approved a joint project in which the Croatian, Macedonian, and Serbian translation teams would cooperate closely and thus benefit from one another's work and input. The Croatian team was to take the lead.

A Day of Rejoicing

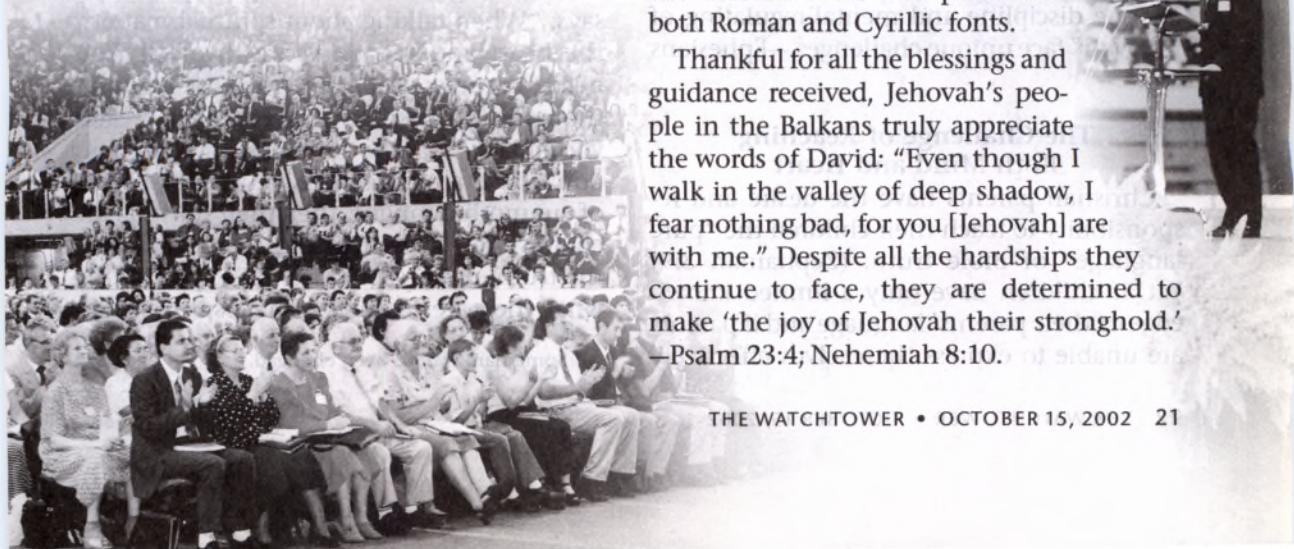
Jehovah's Witnesses in the Balkans will never forget July 23, 1999. The series of "God's Prophetic Word" District Conventions was to be held simultaneously in Belgrade, Sarajevo (Bosnia-Herzegovina), Skopje, and Zagreb. For some time it was uncertain whether the convention could be held in Belgrade because during the NATO bombings, no public meetings were allowed. How happy the brothers were at the prospect

of being able to associate with one another after months of uncertainty! However, reality surpassed their expectations.

On Friday afternoon a special announcement was made in all four convention cities. The 13,497 delegates were in silent anticipation of what was to come. When the speaker finally released the *New World Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures* in Croatian and Serbian and told the audience that the Macedonian translation was progressing well, the delegates could no longer contain themselves. Thunderous applause did not allow the speaker to finish the announcement. At the Sarajevo convention, a sudden silence fell upon the audience, who were completely taken by surprise. It was followed by prolonged applause. Tears of joy were running down many a cheek in Belgrade, and the speaker was interrupted by repeated applause before he could finish making the announcement. How very happy everybody was!

This gift was made doubly treasurable by the fact that Jehovah's Witnesses had secured the printing rights for a Croatian as well as a Serbian Bible translation. Thus, the *New World Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures* in these two languages was combined into one volume with a translation of the Hebrew Scriptures in the same language. Furthermore, the Serbian Bible was printed in both Roman and Cyrillic fonts.

Thankful for all the blessings and guidance received, Jehovah's people in the Balkans truly appreciate the words of David: "Even though I walk in the valley of deep shadow, I fear nothing bad, for you [Jehovah] are with me." Despite all the hardships they continue to face, they are determined to make 'the joy of Jehovah their stronghold.' —Psalm 23:4; Nehemiah 8:10.



millions of people migrate in hopes of making a fresh start in a new land. Europe now hosts over 20 million immigrants, the United States is home to more than 26 million foreign-born inhabitants, while more than 21 percent of Australia's total population was born overseas. Often, these immigrant families must struggle with a new language and must adjust to a new culture.

Frequently, children quickly learn the language of their new country and will start to think in the new language. For their parents it may take longer. As children grow up in a land foreign to their parents, language difficulties may create a communication gap that is not easily bridged.

Not only does the new language affect the way children think but the culture of the new country may also influence how they feel. Parents may find their children's reactions hard to understand. Therefore, immigrant parents who are trying to raise their children in "the discipline and mental-regulating of Jehovah" face unique challenges.—Ephesians 6:4.

The Challenge of Reaching Both Mind and Heart

Christian parents have the desire and responsibility to teach their children the "pure language" of Bible truth. (Zephaniah 3:9) Yet, if children have only a limited knowledge of their parents' language and if parents are unable to express themselves effectively

Raising Children in a Foreign Land

The Challenges and the Rewards

in the language that their children have become accustomed to, how can the parents inculcate Jehovah's law into their children's hearts? (Deuteronomy 6:7) The children may understand the words their parents speak, but if what is being said does not reach the heart, the children may become strangers in their own home.

Pedro and Sandra moved to Australia from South America, and they face this challenge while raising their two teenage boys.* Pedro says: "When talking about spiritual matters, the heart and emotions are involved. You need to express deeper and more meaningful thoughts, so there is a need for a greater vocabulary." Sandra adds: "If our children don't have a comprehensive understanding of our mother tongue, then their spiritual life could suffer. They might lose the feeling for the truth, not grasping the principle behind what they are learning. Their spiritual dis-

* Some names have been changed.



cernment might be stunted, and their relationship with Jehovah could suffer."

Gnanapirakasam and Helen migrated to Germany from Sri Lanka and now have two children. They agree: "We think it is very important that our children speak our mother tongue while learning German. It is important for them to be able to communicate with us about their emotions, to speak from heart to heart."

Miguel and Carmen, who emigrated from Uruguay to Australia, say: "Parents in our situation must work harder. They must either learn the new language so well that they can comprehend and explain spiritual matters in that language or teach their children to master the parents' language."

A Family Decision

Fundamental to the spiritual health of any immigrant family is deciding which language the family will use to be "taught by Jehovah." (Isaiah 54:13) If a congrega-

tion that speaks the family's mother tongue is close by, the family may choose to support this congregation. On the other hand, they may choose to attend a congregation that speaks the dominant language of the country to which they have migrated. What factors will influence this decision?

Demetrios and Patroulla, who emigrated from Cyprus to England and raised five children there, explain what affected their decision: "Initially, our family attended the Greek-speaking congregation. While this greatly assisted us parents, it proved to be a hindrance to the spiritual development of our children. Although they had a basic understanding of the Greek language, they had difficulty with the finer points. This became evident in their rather slow spiritual development. As a family, we transferred to an English-speaking congregation, and the good results for our children were almost immediate. They have been strengthened spiritually. The decision to move was not an easy one, but in our case, it proved to be a wise one."

The family still maintained a grasp of the parents' mother tongue and reaped rich rewards. Their children comment: "Having a knowledge of more than one language is an asset. Although English is our first language, we have found that our knowledge of Greek has made possible strong and close family relationships, especially with our grandparents. It has also made us more sympathetic toward immigrants, and it gave us the confidence that we could learn another language. So when we grew older, our family moved to assist an Albanian-speaking congregation."

Christopher and Margarita also moved from Cyprus to England, and they raised

Speaking only in your mother tongue at home gives your children a basic knowledge of that language



three children there. They chose to support the Greek-speaking congregation. Their son, Nikos, who now serves as an elder in a Greek-speaking congregation, recalls: "We were encouraged to join the newly formed Greek-speaking congregation. Our family viewed it as a theocratic assignment."

Margarita observes: "When the two boys were seven and eight years of age, they joined the Theocratic Ministry School. As parents, we were somewhat concerned about their limited understanding of Greek. However, each assignment was a family project, and we spent many hours helping them to prepare their talks."

Their daughter Joanna says: "I can remember Dad teaching us Greek by writing the alphabet on a blackboard at home, and we had to learn it thoroughly. Many people spend years studying a language, but with Mum and Dad helping us, we learned Greek without spending too much time on it."

Some families will support a foreign-language congregation because the parents feel that to develop "spiritual comprehen-



A common language preserves the bond between grandparents and grandchildren

sion" and to progress, they need to be taught in their mother tongue. (Colossians 1:9, 10; 1 Timothy 4:13, 15) Or the family may view their language skills as an asset to help other immigrants learn the truth.

On the other hand, a family may feel that it is in their best interests to attend a congregation where the dominant language of the country to which they have immigrated is spoken. (Philippians 2:4; 1 Timothy 3:5) Af-

ter discussing the situation with the family, it is up to the family head prayerfully to make the decision. (Romans 14:4; 1 Corinthians 11:3; Philippians 4:6, 7) What suggestions might help these families?

Some Practical Suggestions

Pedro and Sandra, mentioned earlier, say: "We have a Spanish-only rule at home to make sure that our mother tongue is not lost. It is a hard rule to keep, since our boys know we understand English. But if we didn't keep this rule, they might soon lose their comprehension of Spanish."

Miguel and Carmen, also quoted earlier, recommend: "If parents conduct a regular family study and each day discuss the day's text in the mother tongue, then the children will learn more than the basics of the language—they will learn to express spiritual ideas in that language."

Miguel also suggests: "Make witnessing fun. Our territory covers a large section of a big city, and much time is spent traveling by car to locate people who speak our language.

Studying the Bible with your children develops their "spiritual comprehension"



We use the time to play Bible games and to talk about important matters. I try to plan the witnessing trips so that we make several good return visits. Then, at the end of the day, the children have been involved in at least one meaningful conversation."

Coping With Cultural Differences

God's Word encourages youths: "Listen, my son, to the discipline of your father, and do not forsake the law of your mother." (Proverbs 1:8) Difficulties may arise, though, when a father's standard of discipline and a mother's "law" are influenced by a culture that is different from the one in which their children find themselves.

Of course, it is up to each family head to determine how he will preside over his own household, and he should not be unduly influenced by other families. (Galatians 6:4, 5) Still, good communication between parents and children may open the way to accepting new customs.

Many of the customs or practices prevalent in developed lands, however, are harmful to



the spiritual health of Christians. Sexual immorality, greed, and rebellion are often promoted through popular music and entertainment. (Romans 1:26-32) Christian parents cannot afford to abdicate their responsibility to control their children's choice of music and entertainment just because the parents have difficulty understanding the language. They must set firm guidelines. Yet, this may present a challenge.

Carmen says: "We often don't understand the lyrics of the music our children listen to. The tune might sound all right, but if the words have double meanings or if there are slang expressions that are immoral, we would not know." How have they coped with this situation? Miguel says: "We spend a lot of time teaching our children about the dangers of immoral music, and we try to help them choose music that would be approved by Jehovah." Yes, vigilance and reasonableness are needed to cope with cultural differences.

—Deuteronomy 11:18, 19; Philippians 4:5.

Reaping the Rewards

Raising children in a foreign land requires extra time and effort. There is no question about that. But both parents and children can reap additional rewards for their effort.

Azzam and his wife, Sara, emigrated from Turkey to Germany, where they raised three

children. Their oldest son now serves at the branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses in Selters, Germany. Azzam says: "A great benefit to the children is that they can develop qualities that are strengths in both cultures."

Antonio and Lutonadio moved from Angola to Germany and are raising nine children there. The family speaks Lingala, French, and German. Antonio says: "The ability to speak different languages helps our family to witness to people from many countries. This brings us great pleasure indeed."

Two children of a Japanese couple who moved to England feel that it is to their great advantage to know both Japanese and English. The young ones say: "Knowing two languages helped us to obtain employment. We have benefited from the large English-speaking conventions. At the same time, we have the privilege of serving in the Japanese-speaking congregation, where there is a great need."

You Can Succeed

Raising children while living among people who do not share one's cultural values is a challenge that God's servants have faced since Bible times. Moses' parents succeeded, though he was raised in Egypt. (Exodus 2:9, 10) A number of the exiled Jews in Babylon raised children who were willing to return to Jerusalem to reestablish true worship.

—Ezra 2:1, 2, 64-70.

Likewise today, Christian parents can succeed. They may have the reward of hearing their children say what one couple heard from their children: "We are a very close family because of the loving care of Dad and Mom, with whom we have always enjoyed good communication. We are happy to be a part of the earth-wide family that is serving Jehovah."

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

Apologizing—A Key to Making Peace

Christian Neutrals in the Last Days

Supporters of True Worship
—Then and Now

Questions From Readers

Would it be a form of interfaith to purchase a building from another religious group and convert it into a Kingdom Hall?

Generally, Jehovah's Witnesses avoid such dealings with other religions. Still, such a transaction may not constitute an act of interfaith. It may simply be viewed as a one-time business deal. The local congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses is not collaborating with another religious group to build a place of worship to be used by both parties.

What constitutes an act of interfaith in Jehovah's eyes? Consider the apostle Paul's direction: "Do not become unevenly yoked with unbelievers. For what fellowship do righteousness and lawlessness have? Or what sharing does light have with darkness? Further, what harmony is there between Christ and Belial? Or what portion does a faithful person have with an unbeliever? And what agreement does God's temple have with idols? . . . 'Therefore get out from among them, and separate yourselves,' says Jehovah, 'and quit touching the unclean thing'; 'and I will take you in.'" (2 Corinthians 6:14-17) What did Paul mean by the words "fellowship" and "sharing"?

The fellowship that Paul mentions clearly involves worship and spiritual dealings with idolaters and unbelievers. He warned the Corinthians against "partaking of . . . the table of demons." (1 Corinthians 10:20, 21) Thus, an act of interfaith is that of sharing in worship or of having spiritual communion with other religious organizations. (Exodus 20:5; 23:13; 34:12) When a building that was used by a religious organization is purchased, this is done simply to acquire the basic structure needed for a Kingdom Hall. Before being used as a Kingdom Hall, it is cleared of any relics of false worship. Being thus adjusted, it is dedicated to Jehovah for the sole purpose of worshiping him. There is no sharing or fellowship between true and false worship.

In working out the details regarding such a purchase, contact with the other party should be kept to a minimum and should be strictly business. Members of the Christian congregation do well to bear in mind Paul's warning not to become "unevenly yoked with unbelievers." Although we do not feel superior to those who profess other faiths, we avoid socializing with them or getting drawn into their worship.*

What of a congregation's renting a building that belongs to a religious organization? Renting usually incurs regular contact, which is to be avoided. Even to rent such a building for just one event, the body of elders should consider the following: Will there be any idols and religious symbols inside or outside the building? How will people in the community view our use of the facility? Will anyone in the congregation be stumbled by our using this building? (Matthew 18:6; 1 Corinthians 8:7-13) The elders evaluate these factors and then decide accordingly. Their own conscience and that of the congregation in general must also be taken into account in determining whether to purchase and convert such a building into a Kingdom Hall.

* See *The Watchtower*, April 15, 1999, pages 28 and 29, for information on the appropriateness of business dealings with organizations that are disapproved by Jehovah.

This building, which was a synagogue, was purchased and renovated into a Kingdom Hall



Should Christians Be JEALOUS?

JEALOUSY—is it a quality that Christians should cultivate? As Christians, we are encouraged to “pursue love,” and we are told that “love is not jealous.” (1 Corinthians 13:4; 14:1) On the other hand, we are also told that “Jehovah . . . is a jealous God” and are commanded to “become imitators of God.” (Exodus 34:14; Ephesians 5:1) Why the seeming contradiction?

It is because the Hebrew and Greek words translated “jealousy” in the Bible carry a wide range of meanings. They can have either a positive or a negative connotation, depending on how the words are used. For instance, the Hebrew word translated “jealousy” can mean “insistence on exclusive devotion; toleration of no rivalry; zeal; ardor; jealousy [righteous or sinful]; envying.” The corresponding Greek word has a similar meaning. These words can refer to a warped, distorted emotion toward a suspected rival or one believed to be enjoying an advantage. (Proverbs 14:30) They can also refer to a positive expression of a God-given quality—wanting to protect a loved one from harm.—2 Corinthians 11:2.

The Superlative Example

Jehovah sets the superlative example in exercising proper jealousy. His motives are pure and clean, prompted by the desire to keep his people from spiritual and moral corruption. Of his ancient people, figura-

tively spoken of as Zion, he said: “I will be jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and with great rage I will be jealous for her.” (Zechariah 8:2) Just as a loving father is ever alert to protect his children from harm, Jehovah is alert to protect his servants from physical and spiritual danger.

To safeguard his people, Jehovah provided his Word, the Bible. It contains much encouragement for them to walk wisely, and it is rich in examples of those who did. At Isaiah 48:17, we read: “I, Jehovah, am your God, the One teaching you to benefit yourself, the One causing you to tread in the way in which you should walk.” How comforting it is to know that his jealousy moves him to care for and to watch over us! If he were not jealous in this good way, we would suffer all kinds of harm because of our inexperience. Jehovah’s expressions of jealousy are in no way selfish.

So, then, what makes the difference between godly jealousy and improper jealousy? To find out, let us consider the example of Miriam and that of Phinehas. Notice what moved them.

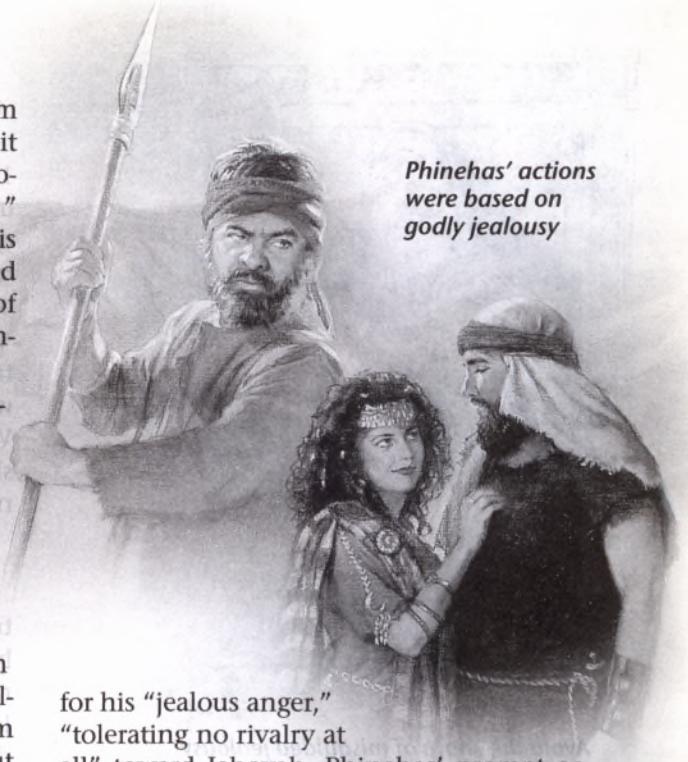
Miriam and Phinehas

Miriam was the older sister of Moses and Aaron, the leaders of the Israelites during the Exodus. While the Israelites were in the wilderness, Miriam became jealous of her brother Moses. The Bible record reads: “Now Miriam and Aaron began to speak against

Moses on account of the Cushite wife whom he had taken . . . And they kept saying: 'Is it just by Moses alone that Jehovah has spoken? Is it not by us also that he has spoken?'" Apparently, Miriam took the lead in this move against Moses, for Jehovah disciplined Miriam, not Aaron, with a week-long case of leprosy for her disrespectful conduct.—Numbers 12:1-15.

What prompted Miriam to act against Moses? Was it concern for true worship and a desire to protect fellow Israelites from harm? Evidently not. It appears that Miriam had allowed an improper desire for more prestige and authority to well up in her heart. As a prophetess in Israel, she enjoyed great respect from the people, particularly the women. She led them in music and song after Israel's miraculous salvation at the Red Sea. Now, though, Miriam might have become unduly concerned about losing some of her prominence to a suspected rival, the wife of Moses. Moved by selfish jealousy, she stirred up contention against Moses, the one appointed by Jehovah.—Exodus 15:1, 20, 21.

Phinehas, on the other hand, had a different motive for his actions. Shortly before entering the Promised Land, when Israel was encamped on the Plains of Moab, Moabite and Midianite women lured many Israelite males into immorality and idolatry. To cleanse the camp and turn back Jehovah's burning anger, the judges of Israel were instructed to kill all the men who had thus deflected. For immoral purposes, the Simeonite chieftain Zimri brazenly brought the Midianite woman Cozbi into the camp "before the eyes of all the assembly of the sons of Israel." Phinehas acted decisively. Impelled by feelings of jealousy, or zeal, for Jehovah's worship and a desire to maintain the moral purity of the camp, he executed the fornicators in their tent. He was commended



*Phinehas' actions
were based on
godly jealousy*

for his "jealous anger," "tolerating no rivalry at all" toward Jehovah. Phinehas' prompt action stopped the punishing scourge that had already claimed the lives of 24,000, and Jehovah rewarded him with a covenant for the priesthood to remain in his line to time indefinite.—Numbers 25:4-13; *The New English Bible*.

What was the difference between these two expressions of jealousy? Miriam acted against her brother out of selfish jealousy, while Phinehas executed justice based on godly jealousy. There are times when we, like Phinehas, should feel compelled to speak up or to take some action in defense of Jehovah's name, his worship, and his people.

Misguided Jealousy

Is it possible, though, to hold feelings of misplaced or misguided jealousy? Yes, it is. This was the general case with the Jews in the first century. They jealously guarded the God-given Law and their traditions. In their efforts to protect the Law, they formed innumerable detailed regulations and restrictions



Avoid the snare of misguided jealousy

that became a heavy burden on the people. (Matthew 23:4) Unable or unwilling to recognize that God had now replaced the Mosaic Law with the reality that it had foreshadowed, their jealousy wrongly moved them to vent uncontrolled rage at the followers of Jesus Christ. The apostle Paul, who himself was once jealously loyal to the Law in a misguided sense, pointed out that people who were defending the Law had "a zeal [jealousy] for God; but not according to accurate knowledge."—Romans 10:2; Galatians 1:14.

Even many of the Jews who became Christians had a hard time ridding themselves of this inordinate zeal for the Law. After his third missionary tour, Paul gave a report to the first-century governing body on the conversion of the nations. At that time, thousands of Christian Jews were "all zealous for the Law." (Acts 21:20) This was years after the governing body had ruled that the Gentile Christians did not have to be circum-

cised. Issues related to observing the Law had been causing strife in the congregation. (Acts 15:1, 2, 28, 29; Galatians 4:9, 10; 5:7-12) Lacking full understanding of how Jehovah now dealt with his people, some Jewish Christians insisted on their own viewpoints, criticizing others.—Colossians 2:17; Hebrews 10:1.

We, then, must avoid the snare of jealously trying to protect our own cherished ideas or ways that are not solidly based on God's Word. We do well to accept the fresh light shed on the Word of God through the channel that Jehovah is using today.

Be Jealous for Jehovah

Godly jealousy, however, has its place in true worship. When we tend to be unduly concerned with our own reputation or rights, godly jealousy turns our attention to Jehovah. It moves us to seek out avenues to declare the truth about him, defending his ways and his people.

Akiko, a full-time minister of Jehovah's Witnesses, was sternly rebuffed by a householder who had misconceptions about God's law on blood. Akiko tactfully defended God's Word, even mentioning the medical complications and problems associated with blood transfusions. Moved by an ardent desire to talk about Jehovah, she turned the conversation to what she discerned was the real basis for the woman's objections—her lack of belief in the existence of a Creator. Akiko reasoned with the householder on how creation supported belief in a Creator. Her bold defense led not only to the removing of unfounded prejudices but also to a home Bible study with the woman. Today the formerly irate householder is a praiser of Jehovah.

Proper jealousy, or zeal, for true worship compels us to be alert and to seize opportunities to talk about and defend our faith at work, in school, at the store, and while traveling. Midori, for example, makes it a point to

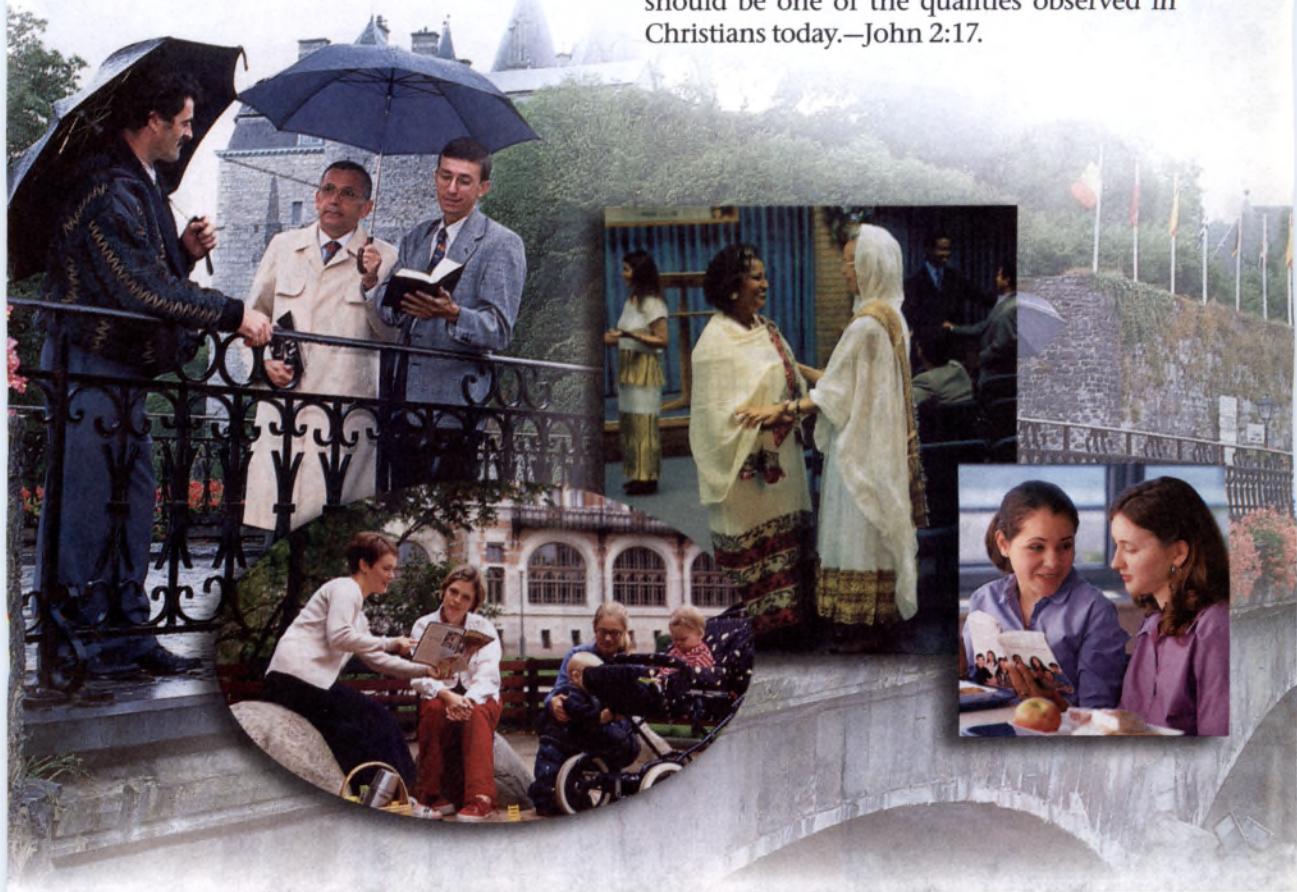
speak about her faith to her workmates. One colleague who was in her 40's said that she wanted nothing to do with Jehovah's Witnesses. Later, during another conversation, the woman complained of her daughter's developing a personality problem. Midori showed her the book *Questions Young People Ask—Answers That Work*,* and she offered to arrange a study in the book with the daughter. A study was started, but the mother did not sit in on the discussion. Midori decided to show the woman the video *Jehovah's Witnesses—The Organization Behind the Name*.* This cleared up many of her misimpressions. Moved by what she saw, she said: "I want to be like Jehovah's Witnesses." She joined her daughter in studying the Bible.

* Published by Jehovah's Witnesses.

Godly jealousy moves us to share our faith and cherish our brotherhood

Proper jealousy has its place in the Christian congregation too. It fosters a warm spirit of love and concern and moves us to resist disruptive influences that would harm our spiritual brothers, such as damaging gossip and apostate thinking. Godly jealousy moves us to support the decisions of the elders, who on occasion find it necessary to reprove wrongdoers. (1 Corinthians 5:11-13; 1 Timothy 5:20) Writing about his jealous feelings for fellow believers in the Corinthian congregation, Paul said: "I am jealous over you with a godly jealousy, for I personally promised you in marriage to one husband that I might present you as a chaste virgin to the Christ." (2 Corinthians 11:2) So, too, our jealousy moves us to do all we can to protect the doctrinal, spiritual, and moral purity of all in the congregation.

Yes, properly motivated jealousy—godly jealousy—has a wholesome influence on others. It elicits Jehovah's approval and should be one of the qualities observed in Christians today.—John 2:17.



"Become Wise in Your Future"

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"The greatest part of mankind employ their first years to make their last miserable." So said Jean de La Bruyère, a 17th-century French essayist. Indeed, an indecisive young person may vacillate, experiencing discontent and regrets. On the other hand, a headstrong youth may persist in an unwise course, robbing him of joy later in life. Either way, sins of omission or commission can lead to considerable misery.

How can such an eventuality be avoided? In warning against youthful indecisiveness, God's Word advises young people: "Remember, now, your Grand Creator in the days of your young manhood, before the calamitous days proceed to come, or the years

have arrived when you will say: 'I have no delight in them.'" (Ecclesiastes 12:1) If you are a youth, take positive steps to learn about "your Grand Creator" while you are young.

How, then, does the Bible help young people to avoid youthful folly? It says: "Listen to counsel and accept discipline, in order that you may become wise in your future." (Proverbs 19:20) The Bible also clearly shows that rejection of godly wisdom as a result of neglect or rebellion in youth, or at any age, bears bitter fruit. (Proverbs 13:18) Conversely, heeding divine directives results in "length of days and years of life and peace," a satisfying and fulfilling life.—Proverbs 3:2.



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