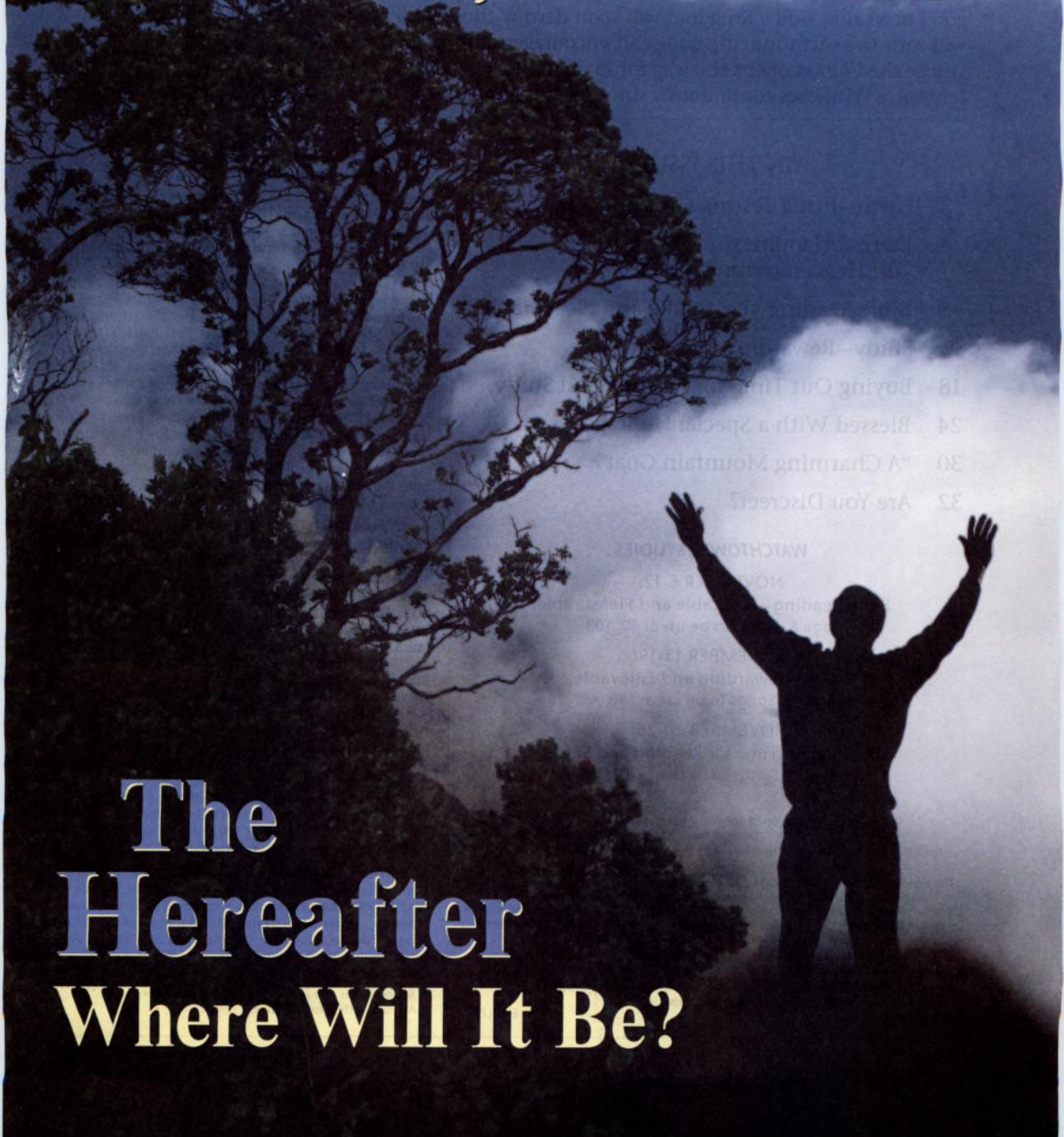
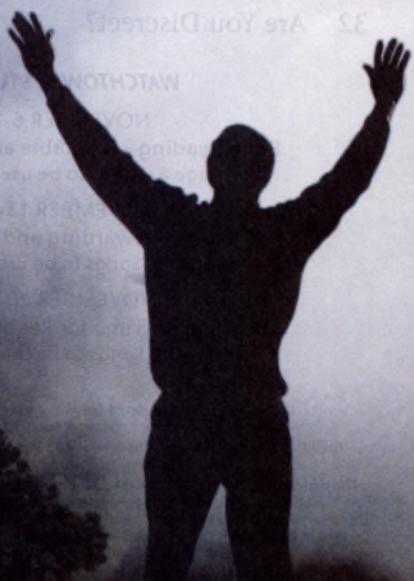


OCTOBER 1, 2000

# THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

# The Hereafter Where Will It Be?





# THE WATCHTOWER®

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

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

## IN THIS ISSUE

- 3 Earth—Just a Testing Ground?
- 4 Eternal Happiness  
—In Heaven or on Earth?
- 8 Bible Reading—Profitable and Pleasurable
- 13 Study—Rewarding and Enjoyable
- 18 Buying Out Time for Reading and Study
- 24 Blessed With a Special Heritage
- 30 "A Charming Mountain Goat"
- 32 Are You Discreet?

## WATCHTOWER STUDIES

### NOVEMBER 6-12:

Bible Reading—Profitable and Pleasurable.  
Page 8. Songs to be used: 40, 108.

### NOVEMBER 13-19:

Study—Rewarding and Enjoyable.  
Page 13. Songs to be used: 180, 46.

### NOVEMBER 20-26:

Buying Out Time for Reading and Study.  
Page 18. Songs to be used: 203, 198.

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# EARTH JUST A TESTING GROUND?

WHAT a relief! She passed. The student who had gone through a grueling two weeks of exams finally received a gratifying report. She could now move on to the job she had always wanted.

Many people view life on earth in a similar way. They think of it as a preliminary test that all must take. Those who "pass" move on to something better in some form of Hereafter. It would be sad, indeed, if the present life—a mere existence for many—were the best humans could expect. Though healthy and prosperous for most of his life, the Bible character Job observed: "Man, born of woman, is short-lived and glutted with agitation."—Job 14:1.

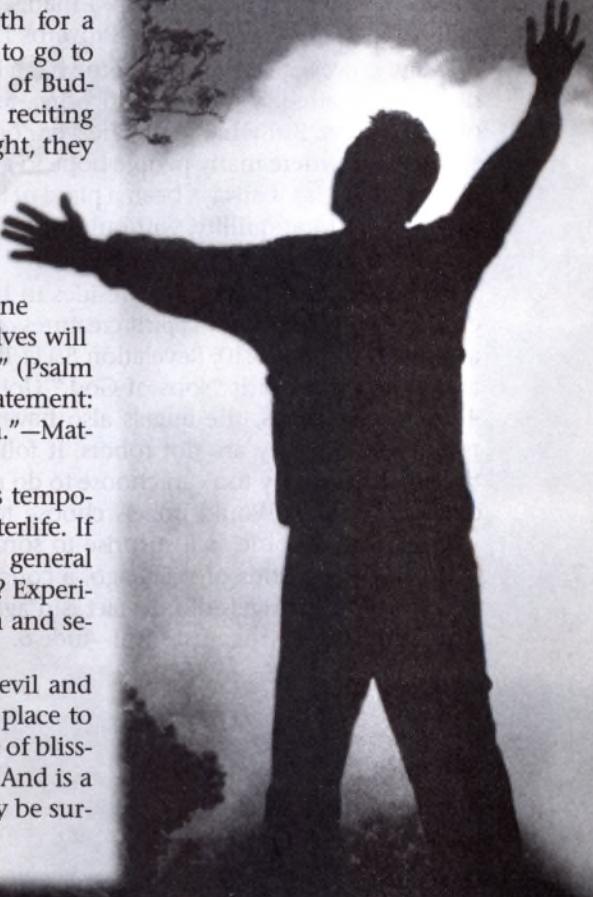
Reflecting the thinking of many, the *New Catholic Encyclopedia* states: "Heavenly glory is the destiny for which God intends man. . . . Man's happiness can be seen to lie in his possession of heavenly bliss." A recent Church of Christ survey in the United States claimed that 87 percent of respondents believe that they are likely to go to heaven after they die.

Many non-Christians also hope to depart the earth for a better place after death. Muslims, for example, hope to go to a heavenly paradise. Followers of the Pure Land sects of Buddhism in China and Japan believe that by endlessly reciting "Amitabha," the name of the Buddha of Unlimited Light, they will be reborn in the Pure Land, or Western Paradise, where they will live in supreme happiness.

Interestingly, the Bible, the most widely translated and distributed holy book in the world, does not present the earth as a place to escape from, a stepping-stone of sorts. For instance, it states: "The righteous themselves will possess the earth, and they will reside forever upon it." (Psalm 37:29) In the Bible is also found Jesus' famous statement: "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth."—Matthew 5:5, King James Version.

The generally held view that our earthly tenancy is temporary implies that death is the doorway to a blissful afterlife. If so, then death is surely a blessing. But do people in general view death that way, or do they try to prolong this life? Experience shows that when people enjoy reasonable health and security, they do not want to die.

Nonetheless, because life on earth is fraught with evil and suffering, heaven is still viewed by many as the only place to find true peace and happiness. Is heaven simply a place of blissful peace, totally immune from evil and disharmony? And is a Hereafter to be only in some heavenly realm? You may be surprised at the Bible's answers. Please read on.



# ETERNAL HAPPINESS IN HEAVEN OR ON EARTH?

DOES your happiness depend primarily on where you live? Most people would readily acknowledge that happiness depends more on factors like good health, a purpose in life, and fine relationships with others. A Bible proverb puts it this way: "Better is a dish of vegetables where there is love than a manger-fed bull and hatred along with it."—Proverbs 15:17.

Sadly, however, our earthly home has a long history of hatred, violence, and other forms of wickedness. But what about heaven, or the spirit realm, where many people hope to go after they die? Has it always been a place of blissful peace and tranquillity, without disturbance of any kind, as is commonly supposed?

The Bible teaches that God resides in heaven along with millions of spirit creatures called angels. (Matthew 18:10; Revelation 5:11) These are described as spirit "sons of God." (Job 38:4, 7) Like humans, the angels also have free moral agency; they are not robots. It follows, therefore, that they too can choose to do right or to do wrong. Would angels choose to do wrong? It may come as a surprise to some to learn that thousands of years ago, a considerable number of angels did, in fact, sin against God—they rebelled against him!—Jude 6.

## Rebels in Heaven

Sin appeared in the spirit realm because of the rebellion by an angel, who came to be called Satan (Resister) and Devil (Slanderer). This once-obedient angel chose to do wrong of his own free will. Thereafter he became a corrupting influence on other spirit creatures, so that by the time of Noah, prior to the Flood, a large number of them joined Satan in rebellion against God.—Genesis 6:2, footnote; 2 Peter 2:4.

These fallen angels were not evicted from heaven immediately. Rather, their access was tolerated—apparently with certain restrictions—for thousands of years.\* However, when God's toleration of these evildoers ended, they were "hurled" out of heaven, ultimately to be destroyed. A voice in heaven then said: "On this account be glad, you heavens and you who reside in them!" (Revelation 12:7-12) Evidently, the faithful angels rejoiced greatly that, at last, the heavens were rid of those vile troublemakers!

Considering these generally unknown details, it is apparent that there can be no true peace whenever intelligent creatures disregard God's laws and principles. (Isaiah 57:20, 21; Jeremiah 14:19, 20) On the other hand, when all obey God's law, peace and tranquillity prevail. (Psalm 119:165; Isaiah 48:17, 18) So if all humans loved and obeyed God and loved one another, would not the earth be a truly delightful, happy abode? The Bible answers yes!

But what about those who selfishly refuse to change their wicked ways? Will they forever

\* For a discussion of why God has tolerated evil in heaven and on earth, see the book *Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life*, published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., pages 70-9.



disturb the peace of those who truly want to do God's will? No, God dealt with the wicked angels in heaven, and he will also deal with the wicked people here on earth.

### An Earth Swept Clean

"The heavens are my throne, and the earth is my footstool," God said. (Isaiah 66:1) Being the very acme of holiness, God will not allow his "footstool" to be soiled by evil indefinitely. (Isaiah 6:1-3; Revelation 4:8) Just as he purged the heavens of wicked spirits, so he will rid the earth of all wicked people, as the following Bible passages show:

"Evildoers themselves will be cut off, but those hoping in Jehovah are the ones that will possess the earth."—Psalm 37:9.

"The upright are the ones that will reside in the earth, and the blameless are the ones that will be left over in it. As regards the wicked, they will be cut off from the very earth; and as for the treacherous, they will be torn away from it."—Proverbs 2:21, 22.

"It is righteous on God's part to repay tribulation to those who make tribulation for you, but, to you who suffer tribulation, relief along with us at the revelation of the Lord Jesus from heaven with his powerful angels in a flaming fire, as he brings vengeance upon those who do not know God and those who do not obey the good news about our Lord Jesus. These very ones will undergo the judicial punishment of everlasting destruction from before the Lord and from the glory of his strength."—2 Thessalonians 1:6-9.

"The world [of wicked mankind] is passing away and so is its desire, but he that does the will of God remains forever."—1 John 2:17.



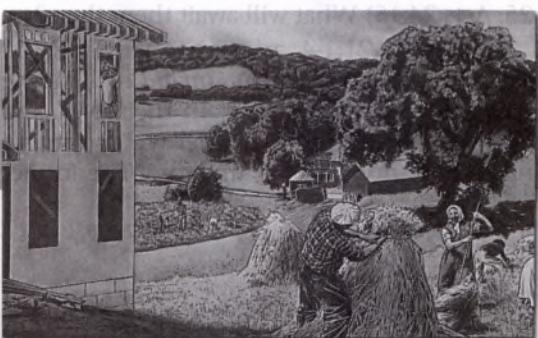
### Will the Earth Remain Peaceful?

Although the Scriptures clearly show that God's toleration of the wicked has its limits, how can we be sure that evil, once eliminated, will not recur? After all, following the Flood of Noah's day, it soon surfaced again to such an extent that God had to thwart mankind's wicked schemes by confusing their language.—Genesis 11:1-8.

Our main reason for confidence that evil will not arise again is that the earth will no longer be ruled by humans as it was soon after the Flood. Rather, it will be ruled by the Kingdom of God. Ruling from heaven, this Kingdom will be earth's sole government. (Daniel 2:44; 7:13, 14) It will act quickly against anyone who attempts to reintroduce evil. (Isaiah 65:20) In fact, it will eventually destroy the very originator of wickedness—Satan the Devil—along with the demons, the wicked angels that followed him.—Romans 16:20.

Additionally, mankind will have no causes for anxiety about food, clothing, shelter, and employment—the lack of which today drives some into a life of crime. Yes, the entire earth will be transformed into a productive paradise with an abundance for all.—Isaiah 65:21-23; Luke 23:43.

More important, the Kingdom will educate its subjects in a peaceful way of life while at the same time raising them to the very pinnacle of human perfection. (John 17:3; Romans 8:21) Thereafter, humankind will no longer have to struggle with weaknesses and sinful tendencies, making perfect obedience to God both possible and delightful, as it was in the case of the perfect man Jesus. (Isaiah 11:3) In fact, Jesus remained loyal to God even in the face of great temptation and torture—things that will



be utterly foreign to life in Paradise.—Hebrews 7:26.

### Why Some Do Go to Heaven

Many readers of the Bible, however, are aware of Jesus' words: "In the house of my Father there are many abodes. . . . I am going my way to prepare a place for you." (John 14:2, 3) Does this not contradict the idea of life everlasting on a paradise earth?

These teachings are not contradictory. In fact, one supports the other. To begin with, the Bible states that only a limited number of faithful Christians—namely, 144,000 of them—are raised as spirit creatures to live in heaven. Why are they given this wonderful reward? Because they make up the group that John saw in a vision who "came to life and ruled as kings with the Christ for a thousand years." (Revelation 14:1, 3; 20:4-6) Compared with the billions on earth, the 144,000 truly are a "little flock." (Luke 12:32) Moreover, having experienced the problems common to humankind, like Jesus they will be able to "sympathize with our weaknesses" as they supervise the rehabilitation of mankind and of the earth.—Hebrews 4:15.

### Earth—Mankind's Eternal Home

By providing the ransom sacrifice of Jesus Christ, God began gathering the 144,000 almost 2,000 years ago, and indications are that this group is now complete. (Acts 2:1-4; Galatians 4:4-7) However, Jesus' sacrifice was not for the sins of the 144,000 only, "but also for the whole world's." (1 John 2:2) Hence, all who exercise faith in Jesus have the prospect of eternal life. (John 3:16) Those asleep in the grave but who are in God's memory will be resurrected, not to heaven, but to life on a cleansed earth. (Ecclesiastes 9:5; John 11:11-13, 25; Acts 24:15) What will await them there?

Revelation 21:1-4 answers, saying: "Look! The tent of God is with *mankind* . . . And he will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former

things have passed away." Imagine—humans being released from death, and the pain and outcry it causes gone forever! At last, Jehovah's original purpose for the earth and humankind will reach its glorious fulfillment.—Genesis 1:27, 28.

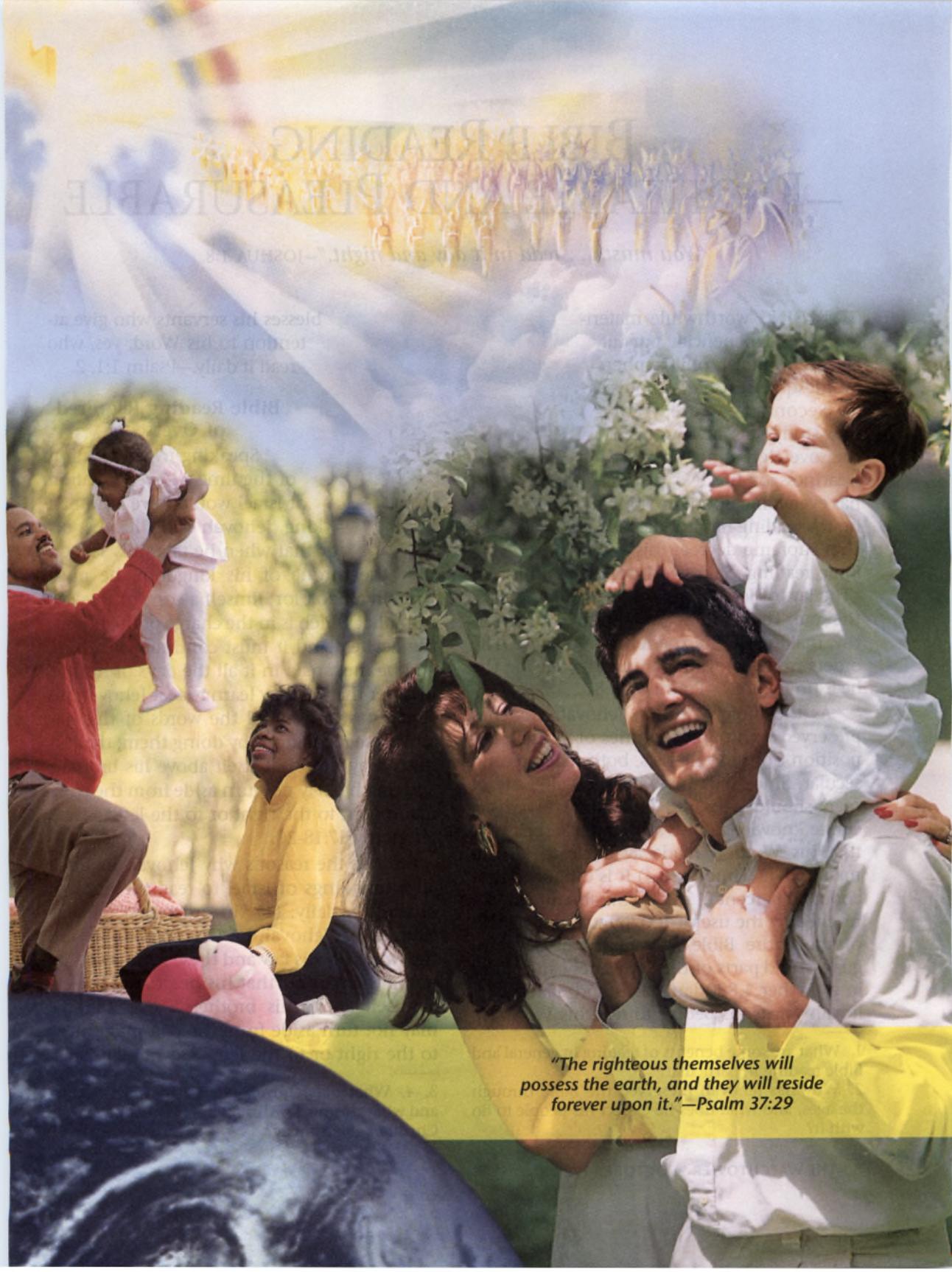
### Our Choice—Life or Death

Adam and Eve were never given the option of going to heaven. Their choice was either to obey God and live eternally on a paradise earth or to disobey him and die. Sadly, they chose disobedience and therefore returned to the "dust" of the ground. (Genesis 2:16, 17; 3:2-5, 19) It was never God's purpose for the human family in general to die and to populate heaven via the grave. God created myriads of angels to live in heaven; these spirit creatures are not humans who are deceased and who have been resurrected to life in heaven.—Psalm 104:1, 4; Daniel 7:10.

What must we do to receive the blessing of living forever in Paradise on earth? A first step is to study God's Word, the Holy Bible. "This means everlasting life," Jesus said in prayer, "their taking in knowledge of you, the only true God, and of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ."—John 17:3.

Putting that knowledge into practice is another step to everlasting happiness in Paradise. (James 1:22-24) Those who live by God's Word have the prospect of seeing with their own eyes the fulfillment of such thrilling prophecies as the one recorded at Isaiah 11:9, which says: "They [humankind] will not do any harm or cause any ruin in all my holy mountain; because the *earth* will certainly be filled with the knowledge of Jehovah as the waters are covering the very sea."





*"The righteous themselves will possess the earth, and they will reside forever upon it."—Psalm 37:29*

# BIBLE READING —PROFITABLE AND PLEASURABLE

*"You must . . . read in it day and night."*—JOSHUA 1:8.

**R**EADING worthwhile material is a beneficial pursuit. French political philosopher Montesquieu (Charles-Louis de Secondat) wrote: "For me, study has always been the sovereign remedy for the weariness of life. No distress has ever come upon me that an hour's reading has not dispelled." To a supreme degree, this is true of Bible reading. Said the inspired psalmist: "The law of Jehovah is perfect, bringing back the soul. The reminder of Jehovah is trustworthy, making the inexperienced one wise. The orders from Jehovah are upright, causing the heart to rejoice."—Psalm 19:7, 8.

<sup>2</sup> As the Bible's Author, Jehovah God has preserved it through centuries of virulent opposition from its enemies, both religious and secular. Since it is his will that "all sorts of men should be saved and come to an accurate knowledge of truth," he has seen to it that his Word is made available to all humankind. (1 Timothy 2:4) It is estimated that about 80 percent of earth's inhabitants can be reached by the use of 100 languages. The text of the entire Bible is available in 370 languages, and parts of the Scriptures can be read in a further 1,860 languages and dialects. Jehovah wants his people to read his Word. He



blesses his servants who give attention to his Word, yes, who read it daily.—Psalm 1:1, 2.

## Bible Reading Required of Overseers

<sup>3</sup> Speaking in anticipation of the time when the nation of Israel would have a human king, Jehovah said: "It must occur that when he takes his seat on the throne of his kingdom, he must write in a book for himself a copy of this law from that which is in the charge of the priests, the Levites. And it must continue with him, and he must read in it all the days of his life, in order that he may learn to fear Jehovah his God so as to keep all the words of this law and these regulations by doing them; that his heart may not exalt itself above his brothers and that he may not turn aside from the commandment to the right or to the left."—Deuteronomy 17:18-20.

<sup>4</sup> Notice the reasons why Jehovah required all future kings of Israel to read the book of divine law daily: (1) "in order that he may learn to fear Jehovah his God so as to keep all the words of this law and these regulations by doing them"; (2) "that his heart may not exalt itself above his brothers"; (3) "that he may not turn aside from the commandment to the right or to the left." Do not Christian

1. What are some benefits of reading in general and Bible reading in particular?

2. Why has Jehovah preserved the Bible through the ages, and what does he expect his people to do with it?

3, 4. What did Jehovah require of Israel's kings, and what reasons for this requirement apply also to Christian elders today?

overseers today need to fear Jehovah, obey his laws, refrain from exalting themselves above their brothers, and avoid deviating from Jehovah's commandments? Daily Bible reading is surely no less important for them than it was for the kings of Israel.

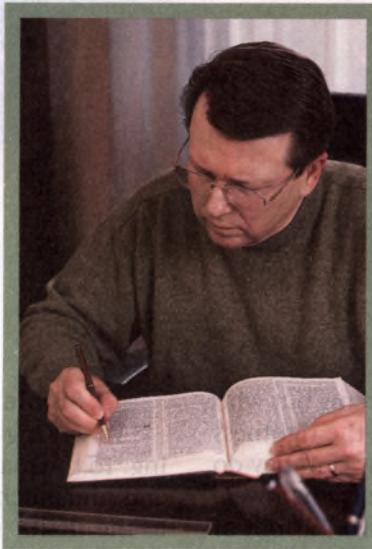
<sup>5</sup> Christian elders today have a very busy schedule, making daily Bible reading a challenge. For example, members of the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses and members of Branch Committees worldwide are all very busy men. Yet, a recent letter from the Governing Body to all Branch Committees emphasized the need for daily Bible reading and good study habits. This, the letter pointed out, will increase our love for Jehovah and for the truth, and it "will help us to maintain our faith, joy, and perseverance down to the glorious end." All elders in congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses feel the same need. Daily reading of the Scriptures will help them to "act wisely." (Joshua 1:7, 8) For them, in particular, Bible reading is "profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness." —2 Timothy 3:16, Revised Standard Version.

### A Necessity for Young and Old

<sup>6</sup> In ancient times, individual copies of the Scriptures were not available for personal use,

5. What did the Governing Body recently write to Branch Committee members regarding Bible reading, and why would all Christian elders do well to follow such counsel?

6. Why did Joshua read aloud all the words of Jehovah's law before the assembled tribes of Israel and the alien residents?



*Elders, in particular, need to read the Bible daily*

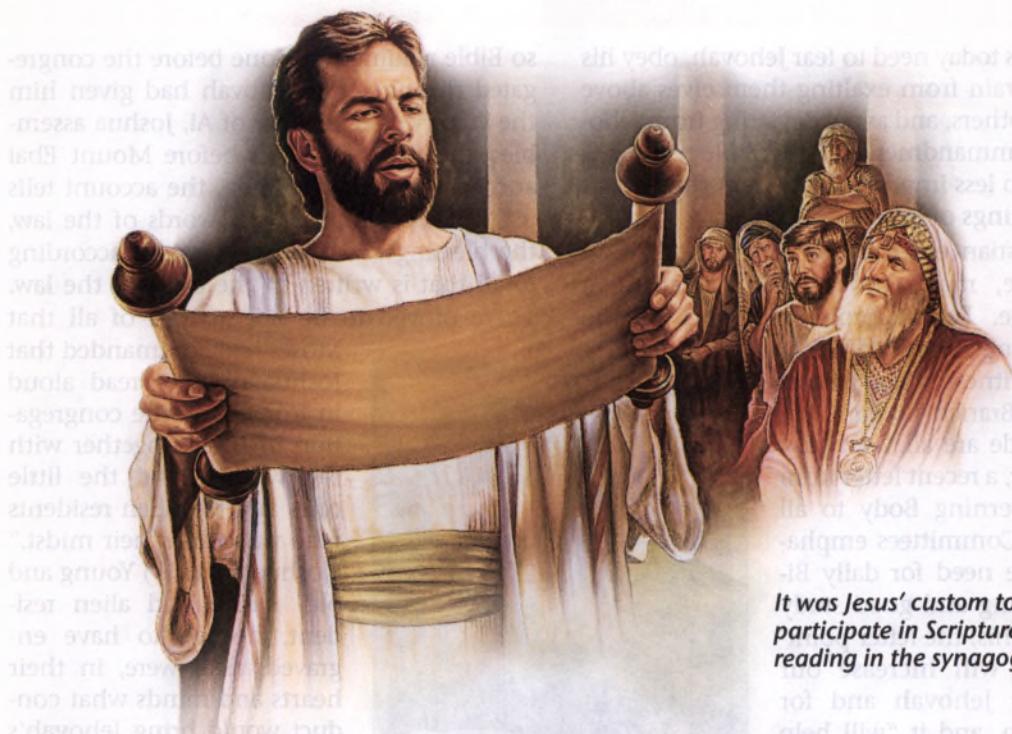
so Bible reading was done before the congregated throng. After Jehovah had given him the victory over the city of Ai, Joshua assembled the tribes of Israel before Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim. Then, the account tells us: "He read aloud all the words of the law, the blessing and the malediction, according to all that is written in the book of the law. There proved to be not a word of all that

Moses had commanded that Joshua did not read aloud in front of all the congregation of Israel, together with the women and the little ones and the alien residents who walked in their midst." (Joshua 8:34, 35) Young and old, native and alien resident, needed to have engraved, as it were, in their hearts and minds what conduct would bring Jehovah's blessing and what would bring his disapproval. Bible reading done on a regular basis will surely help us in this regard.

<sup>7</sup> Today, millions of Jehovah's servants are like those "alien residents" in a spiritual sense. At one time, they were living according to the world's standards, but they have transformed their lives. (Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3:7, 8) They constantly need to remind themselves of Jehovah's standards of good and bad. (Amos 5:14, 15) Daily reading of God's Word helps them to do this.—Hebrews 4:12; James 1:25.

<sup>8</sup> There are also many "little ones" among Jehovah's people who have been taught

<sup>7, 8. (a)</sup> Who today are like "the alien residents," and why do they need to read the Bible daily? (b) In what ways can "little ones" among Jehovah's people follow Jesus' example?



*It was Jesus' custom to participate in Scripture reading in the synagogue*

Jehovah's standards by their parents but who need to convince themselves of the rightness of his will. (Romans 12:1, 2) How can they do so? In Israel, the priests and older men were instructed: "You will read this law in front of all Israel in their hearing. Congregate the people, the men and the women and the little ones and your alien resident who is within your gates, in order that they may listen and in order that they may learn, as they must fear Jehovah your God and take care to carry out all the words of this law. And their sons who have not known should listen, and they must learn to fear Jehovah your God." (Deuteronomy 31: 11-13) Living under the Law, Jesus at the early age of 12 showed a keen interest in understanding his Father's laws. (Luke 2:41-49) Later, it was his custom to listen to and participate in Scripture reading in the synagogue. (Luke 4:16; Acts 15:21) Young ones today would do well to follow Jesus' example by reading God's Word daily and by regularly attending meetings where the Bible is read and studied.

### Bible Reading—A Priority

<sup>9</sup> Wise King Solomon wrote: "Take a warning: To the making of many books there is no end, and much devotion to them is wearisome to the flesh." (Ecclesiastes 12:12) One might add that the reading of many books published today is not only wearisome to the flesh but, frankly, dangerous to the mind. So it is important to be selective. In addition to reading our Bible study publications, we need to read the Bible itself. The founding editor of this magazine wrote to its readers: "Never forget that the Bible is our Standard and that however God-given our helps may be they are 'helps' and not substitutes for the Bible."<sup>\*</sup> Hence, while not neglecting Bible-based publications, we need to read the Bible itself.

\* See *Jehovah's Witnesses—Proclaimers of God's Kingdom*, published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc., page 241.

9. (a) Why do we need to be selective in what we read? (b) What did the founding editor of this magazine state with regard to Bible study aids?

<sup>10</sup> Conscious of this need, for years now “the faithful and discreet slave” has scheduled Bible reading as a part of the Theocratic Ministry School program in each congregation. (Matthew 24:45) The present Bible-reading program covers the entire Bible in a period of about seven years. This schedule is beneficial for all but particularly so for new ones who have never read the Bible in its entirety. Those who attend the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead for missionaries and the Ministerial Training School as well as new members of the Bethel family are required to read the whole Bible in one year. Whatever schedule you follow, as an individual or as a family, meeting it requires giving priority to Bible reading.

### What Do Your Reading Habits Reveal?

<sup>11</sup> If you have trouble keeping to your Bible-reading schedule, it might be appropriate to ask yourself: ‘What impact might my reading or TV-viewing habits have on my ability to read Jehovah’s Word?’ Remember what Moses wrote—and Jesus repeated—that “man must live, not on bread alone, but on every utterance coming forth through Jehovah’s mouth.” (Matthew 4:4; Deuteronomy 8:3) Just as we need to eat bread or its equivalent every day of our lives in order to sustain our physical body, we likewise need to absorb Jehovah’s thoughts daily to maintain our spirituality. We can have access to God’s thoughts each day by reading the Scriptures.

<sup>12</sup> If we appreciate the Bible, “not as the word of men, but, just as it truthfully is, as the word of God,” we will be drawn to it just as a baby craves its mother’s milk. (1 Thessalo-

10. How has “the faithful and discreet slave” emphasized the importance of Bible reading?

11. How and why should we feed on Jehovah’s utterances every day?

12, 13. (a) How does the apostle Peter illustrate the longing we should have for God’s Word? (b) How does Paul use the illustration of milk differently from Peter?

nians 2:13) The apostle Peter made that comparison, writing: “As newborn infants, form a longing for the unadulterated milk belonging to the word, that through it you may grow to salvation, provided you have tasted that the Lord is kind.” (1 Peter 2:2, 3) If we have truly tasted, by personal experience, that “the Lord is kind,” we will develop a craving for Bible reading.

<sup>13</sup> It should be noted that Peter in this passage used the analogy with milk differently from the apostle Paul. For a newborn baby, milk meets its full nutritional needs. Peter’s illustration shows that God’s Word contains all we need to “grow to salvation.” Paul, on the other hand, uses the need for milk to illustrate the poor feeding habits on the part of some who claim to be spiritual adults. In his letter to Hebrew Christians, Paul wrote: “Although you ought to be teachers in view of the time, you again need someone to teach you from the beginning the elementary things of the sacred pronouncements of God; and you have become such as need milk, not solid food. For everyone that partakes of milk is unacquainted with the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to mature people, to those who through use have their perceptive powers trained to distinguish both right and wrong.” (Hebrews 5:12-14) Attentive Bible reading can do much to develop our perceptive powers and to stimulate our appetite for spiritual things.

### How to Read the Bible

<sup>14</sup> The most profitable Bible reading starts, not by reading, but by praying. Prayer is a remarkable privilege. It is as if you began perusing a book on some deep subject by calling on the author for his help in understanding what you were about to read. What a tremendous advantage that can be! The Bible’s Author,

14, 15. (a) What privilege does the Bible’s Author offer us? (b) How can we benefit from divine wisdom? (Give examples.)

Jehovah, offers you that privilege. A member of the first-century governing body wrote to his brothers: "If any one of you is lacking in wisdom, let him keep on asking God, for he gives generously to all and without reproaching; and it will be given him. But let him keep on asking in faith, not doubting at all." (James 1:5, 6) The modern-day Governing Body constantly exhorts us to engage in prayerful Bible reading.

<sup>15</sup> Wisdom is the practical application of knowledge. So before opening your Bible, ask Jehovah to help you recognize points in your reading that need to be applied in your personal life. Associate new things learned with previous knowledge. Fit them into "the pattern of healthful words" you have come to recognize. (2 Timothy 1:13) Ponder episodes in the lives of Jehovah's servants of the past, and ask yourself how you would have acted under similar circumstances.—Genesis 39:7-9; Daniel 3:3-6, 16-18; Acts 4:18-20.

<sup>16</sup> Do not read just to cover pages. Take your time. Dwell on what you are reading. When intrigued by a certain point, look up the cross references if your Bible contains such. If the point is still not clear, make a note to do further research later. As you read, mark the texts you especially want to remember or copy them. You may also add personal notes and cross references to the margin. For texts you feel you may someday need in your preaching and teaching work, note the key word and check in the index of Bible words at the back of your Bible.\*

### Make Bible Reading a Delight

<sup>17</sup> The psalmist spoke of the happy man whose "delight is in the law of Jehovah, and

\* See *The Watchtower* of May 1, 1995, pages 16-17, "Suggestions to Enhance Your Bible Reading."

16. What practical suggestions are given to enable us to make our Bible reading more beneficial and useful?

17. Why should we delight in reading the Bible?

in his law he reads in an undertone day and night." (Psalm 1:2) Our daily Bible reading should not be a chore but a real delight. One way to make it a pleasure is to be ever conscious of the value of the things learned. Wise King Solomon wrote: "Happy is the man that has found wisdom . . . Its ways are ways of pleasantness, and all its roadways are peace. It is a tree of life to those taking hold of it, and those keeping fast hold of it are to be called happy." (Proverbs 3:13, 17, 18) The effort needed to acquire wisdom is truly worthwhile, for its ways are ways of pleasantness, peace, happiness, and finally, life.

<sup>18</sup> Yes, Bible reading is both profitable and pleasurable. But is it enough? Christendom's church members have been reading the Bible for centuries, "always learning and yet never able to come to an accurate knowledge of truth." (2 Timothy 3:7) For Bible reading to be fruitful, we must do it with a view to applying the knowledge thus acquired in our personal lives and using it in our work of preaching and teaching. (Matthew 24:14; 28:19, 20) This requires effort and good methods of study, which can also be enjoyable and rewarding, as we shall see in the following article.

18. What is necessary in addition to Bible reading, and what will we consider in the following article?

### Review Questions

- What counsel given to Israel's kings applies today to overseers, and why?
- Who today are like "the alien residents" and "the little ones," and why do they need to read the Bible daily?
- In what practical ways has "the faithful and discreet slave" helped us to read the Bible regularly?
- How can we derive real benefit and pleasure from our Bible reading?

# STUDY —REWARDING AND ENJOYABLE

*"If you keep seeking for it . . . , you will find the very knowledge of God."*—PROVERBS 2:4, 5.

MANY people read simply for pleasure. If the material is wholesome, reading can be a source of healthy relaxation. Apart from their regular Bible-reading program, some Christians derive real enjoyment from reading randomly in the Psalms, Proverbs, the Gospel accounts, or other parts of the Bible. The sheer beauty of language and thought brings them deep pleasure. Others choose for their leisure reading the *Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses*, the *Awake!* magazine, biographical accounts published in this journal, or printed matter on history, geography, and nature studies.

<sup>2</sup> Whereas casual reading can be a form of relaxation, study requires mental effort. English philosopher Francis Bacon wrote: "Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested." The Bible falls eminently in the last category. The apostle Paul wrote: "Concerning him [Christ, as prefigured by King-Priest Melchizedek] we have much to say and hard



to be explained, since you have become dull in your hearing. . . . Solid food belongs to mature people, to those who through use have their perceptive powers trained to distinguish both right and wrong." (Hebrews 5:11, 14) Solid food must be masticated before being swallowed and digested. Deep spiritual information requires reflection before being absorbed and retained.

<sup>3</sup> A dictionary defines "study" as "the act or process of applying the mind so

as to acquire knowledge or understanding, as by reading, investigating, etc." It follows that more is involved than merely doing cursory reading, perhaps underlining words as we go along. Study means work, mental effort, and the use of perceptive powers. While study requires effort, however, this does not mean that it cannot be enjoyable.

## Making Study a Pleasure

<sup>4</sup> Reading and studying God's Word can be refreshing and invigorating. The psalmist declared: "The law of Jehovah is perfect, bringing back the soul. The reminder of Jehovah is trustworthy, making the

1. How can leisure reading bring us much pleasure?
- 2, 3. (a) In what way can deep spiritual information be compared to solid food? (b) What does study involve?

4. According to the psalmist, how can the study of God's Word be refreshing and rewarding?

inexperienced one wise. The orders from Jehovah are upright, causing the heart to rejoice; the commandment of Jehovah is clean, making the eyes shine." (Psalm 19:7, 8) Jehovah's laws and reminders revive our soul, enhance our spiritual well-being, bring us inward joy, and make our eyes shine with a clear vision of Jehovah's wonderful purposes. How delightful!

<sup>5</sup> When we are able to see good results from our work, we tend to enjoy doing it. Thus, to make study pleasurable, we should be quick to use the newly acquired knowledge. James wrote: "He who peers into the perfect law that belongs to freedom and who persists in it, this man, because he has become, not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, will be happy in his doing it." (James 1:25) Immediate personal application of points learned brings great satisfaction. Doing research with the specific purpose of answering a question put to us during our preaching or teaching work will also bring us great happiness.

### Developing a Fondness for God's Word

<sup>6</sup> The composer of Psalm 119, perhaps Hezekiah while yet a young prince, expressed his fondness for Jehovah's word. In poetic language, he said: "For your statutes I shall show a fondness. I shall not forget your word. Also, your reminders are what I am fond of . . . I shall show a fondness for your command-

5. In what ways can study bring us great pleasure?  
6. How did the writer of Psalm 119 express his fondness for Jehovah's word?

ments that I have loved. Let your mercies come to me, that I may keep living; for your law is what I am fond of. I have longed for your salvation, O Jehovah, and your law I am fond of."—Psalm 119:16, 24, 47, 77, 174.

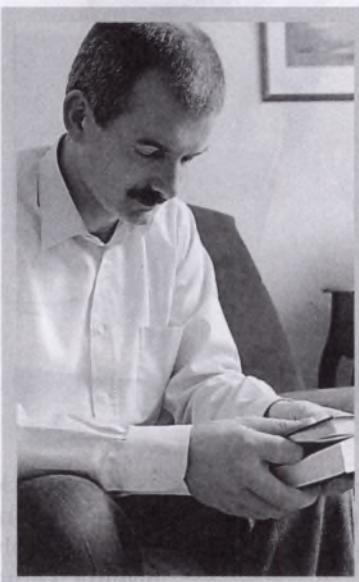
<sup>7</sup> Explaining the word translated "show a fondness" in Psalm 119, one dictionary on the Hebrew Scriptures states: "The usage in v. 16 parallels the [verbs] for rejoicing . . . and for meditation . . . The progression is: rejoice, meditate, delight in . . . This combination may suggest that purposeful reflection is the means by which one comes to take delight in the word of Yahweh. . . . The meaning includes an emotive element."<sup>\*</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Yes, our love for Jehovah's Word should come from our heart, the seat of emotion. We should take pleasure in lingering over certain passages that we have just read. We should muse over deep spiritual thoughts, become absorbed in them, and meditate on them. This requires quiet reflection and prayer. Like Ezra, we need to prepare our hearts for the reading and study of God's Word. Of him it is written: "Ezra himself had prepared his heart to consult the law of Jehovah and to do it and to teach in Israel regulation and justice." (Ezra 7:10) Note the triple purpose of Ezra's preparing his heart: to

\* *New International Dictionary of Old Testament Theology & Exegesis*, Volume 4, pages 205-7.

7, 8. (a) According to one reference work, what does it mean to "show a fondness" for God's Word? (b) How can we show our love for Jehovah's Word? (c) How did Ezra prepare himself before reading Jehovah's Law?

*Quiet reflection and prayer help us develop love for God's Word*



study, to make personal application, and to teach. We should follow his example.

### Study as an Act of Worship

<sup>9</sup> The psalmist states that he showed concern for Jehovah's laws, commandments, and reminders. He sings: "With your orders I will concern myself, and I will look to your paths. . . . I shall raise my palms to your commandments that I have loved, and I will concern myself with your regulations. How I do love your law! All day long it is my concern. More insight than all my teachers I have come to have, because your reminders are a concern to me." (Psalm 119:15, 48, 97, 99) What is implied by 'concerning oneself' with Jehovah's Word?

<sup>10</sup> The Hebrew verb translated "concern [oneself]" also means "meditate, muse," "go over a matter in one's mind." "It is used of silent reflection on God's works . . . and God's word." (*Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*) The noun form "concern" refers to "the psalmist's meditation," "his loving study" of God's law, as "an act of worship." Considering the study of God's Word as a part of our worship adds seriousness to it. It should therefore be done conscientiously and with the benefit of prayer. Study is a part of our worship and is done to improve our worship.

### Digging Deeper Into God's Word

<sup>11</sup> In reverential admiration, the psalmist exclaimed: "How great your works are, O Jehovah! Very deep your thoughts are." (Psalm 92:5) And the apostle Paul spoke of "the deep

9, 10. (a) In what ways did the psalmist show concern for Jehovah's Word? (b) What does the Hebrew verb translated "concern [oneself]" mean? (c) Why is it important for us to consider the study of the Bible as "an act of worship"?

11. How does Jehovah reveal deep spiritual thoughts to his people?

things of God," profound thoughts that Jehovah reveals to his people "through his spirit" operating on the faithful and discreet slave class. (1 Corinthians 2:10; Matthew 24:45) The slave class diligently provides spiritual nourishment for all—"milk" for new ones but "solid food" for "mature people."—Hebrews 5:11-14.

<sup>12</sup> To comprehend such "deep things of God," it is necessary to study prayerfully and reflect on his Word. For example, fine material has been published that shows how Jehovah can at once be just and merciful. His exercising of mercy is not a watering down of his justice; rather, divine mercy is an expression of God's justice as well as his love. When judging a sinner, Jehovah first determines whether it is possible to show mercy on the basis of his Son's ransom sacrifice. If the sinner is unrepentant or rebellious, God allows justice to take its course without unwarranted mercy. Either way, he is faithful to his elevated principles.\* (Romans 3:21-26) 'O the depth of God's wisdom!'—Romans 11:33.

<sup>13</sup> Like the psalmist, we thrill at the fact that Jehovah shares many of his thoughts with us. David wrote: "To me how precious your thoughts are! O God, how much does the grand sum of them amount to! Were I to try to count them, they are more than even the grains of sand." (Psalm 139:17, 18) Although our knowledge today represents only a fraction of the innumerable thoughts Jehovah will reveal throughout eternity, we deeply

\* See *The Watchtower*, August 1, 1998, page 13, paragraph 7. As a project of Bible study, you might review both study articles in that issue as well as the articles "Justice," "Mercy," and "Righteousness" in the Bible encyclopedia *Insight on the Scriptures*, published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.

12. Give an example of "deep things of God" that have been explained by the slave class.

13. How should we show appreciation for "the grand sum" of spiritual truths revealed thus far?

appreciate "the grand sum" of precious spiritual truths revealed thus far and dig ever deeper into the sum, or substance, of God's Word.—Psalm 119:160, footnote.

### Effort and Effective Tools Needed

<sup>14</sup> Deep Bible study requires effort. This fact emerges very clearly from a careful reading of Proverbs 2:1-6. Notice the active verbs that wise King Solomon used to underscore the effort needed to acquire divine knowledge, wisdom, and discernment. He wrote: "My son, if you will *receive* my sayings and *treasure up* my own commandments with yourself, so as to *pay attention* to wisdom with your ear, that you may *incline your heart* to discernment; if, moreover, you *call out* for understanding itself and you *give forth your voice* for discernment itself, if you *keep seeking* for it as for silver, and as for hid treasures you *keep searching* for it, in that case you will understand the fear of Jehovah, and you will find the very knowledge of God. For Jehovah himself gives wisdom; out of his mouth there are knowledge and discernment." Yes, rewarding study requires research, digging, as if searching for a hidden treasure.

<sup>15</sup> Spiritually enriching study also requires good study methods. Solomon wrote: "If an iron tool has become blunt and someone has not whetted its edge, then he will exert his own vital energies." (Ecclesiastes 10:10) If a workman uses a cutting tool that is not sharp or if he does not use it skillfully, he will waste his energy and his work will be shoddy. Likewise, the benefits from time spent studying may vary greatly, depending on our study methods. Excellent practical suggestions for improving the way we study can be found

14. How does Proverbs 2:1-6 underscore the need for effort in studying God's Word?
15. What Biblical illustration highlights the need for good study methods?

in Study 7 of the *Theocratic Ministry School Guidebook*.\*

<sup>16</sup> When a craftsman sets about his work, he lays out the tools he will need. Similarly, when we begin a study period, we should select in our personal library the study tools we will need. Remembering that study is work and requires mental effort, it is also good to adopt an appropriate posture. If we wish to stay mentally alert, sitting on a chair at a table or a desk may prove to be more effective than lying in bed or sitting in a cozy armchair. After concentrating for a while, you might find it beneficial to do some stretching or go outside for some fresh air.

<sup>17</sup> Many incomparable study tools are also available to us. Foremost among these is the *New World Translation* of the Bible, now available in whole or in part in 37 languages. The standard edition of the *New World Translation* is equipped with cross-references and a "Table of the Books of the Bible" that provides the name of the writer, the place written, and the time period covered. It also has an index of Bible words, an appendix, and maps. In some languages, this Bible is printed in a larger edition, known as the *Reference Bible*. It contains all the above features and many more, including extensive footnotes, which are also indexed. Do you take full advantage of what is available in your language in order to help you dig deeper into God's Word?

<sup>18</sup> Another priceless study tool is the two-volume Bible encyclopedia *Insight on the Scriptures*. If you possess this work in a language you can understand, it should be your

\* Published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc. If this manual is not available in your language, fine counsel on study methods can be found in the following issues of *The Watchtower*: August 15, 1993, pages 13-17; May 15, 1986, pages 19-20.

16. What practical suggestions are given to help us engage in deep study?
- 17, 18. Give examples of how to use the fine study tools available to you.



*Do you make full use of the available study tools to dig deeper into God's Word?*

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constant companion when you study. It will supply you with background information on most Bible topics. A similarly helpful tool is the book "*All Scripture Is Inspired of God and Beneficial.*" When beginning to read a new book of the Bible, it is good to examine the corresponding study in the "*All Scripture*" book to get the geographical and historical setting, plus a summary of the Bible book's contents and their value to us. A recent addition to the many study tools in printed form is the computerized *Watchtower Library*, now available in nine languages.

<sup>19</sup> Jehovah has provided all these tools by means of "the faithful and discreet slave" to enable his servants on earth to 'seek and find the very knowledge of God.' (Proverbs 2:4, 5) Good study habits enable us to come to a better knowledge of Jehovah and to enjoy a closer

relationship with him. (Psalm 63:1-8) Yes, study means work, but it is work that is enjoyable and rewarding. It does take time, however, and you are probably thinking, 'Where can I find the time to do justice to my Bible reading and personal study?' This aspect will be considered in the closing article of this series.

### Review Questions

- How can we make our personal study refreshing and rewarding?
- Like the psalmist, how can we show "fondness" and "concern" for Jehovah's Word?
- How does Proverbs 2:1-6 show the need for effort in studying God's Word?
- What fine study tools has Jehovah provided?

19. (a) Why has Jehovah provided us with fine tools for Bible study? (b) What is needed for proper Bible reading and study?

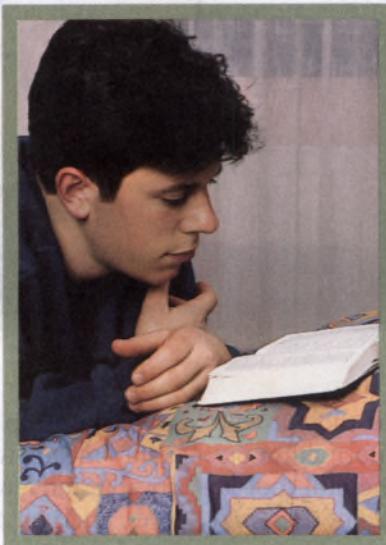
# BUYING OUT TIME FOR READING AND STUDY

*"[Buy] out the opportune time for yourselves, because the days are wicked."—EPHESIANS 5:16.*

IT HAS been said that "to choose time is to save time." A person who allots a specific amount of time to things that need to be done will often get more out of his time. Wise King Solomon wrote: "Everything has its appointed hour, there is a time for all things under heaven." (Ecclesiastes 3:1, Moffatt) We all have the same amount of time at our disposal; it is up to us as to how we use it. The way we fix our priorities and apportion our time reveals to a large degree what is dearest to our heart.  
—Matthew 6:21.

<sup>2</sup> We are obliged to spend time eating and sleeping because these are physical needs. But what of our spiritual needs? We know that they must be satisfied as well. In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus declared: "Happy are those conscious of their spiritual need." (Matthew 5:3) That is why "the faithful and discreet slave" regularly reminds us of the importance of devoting time to Bible reading and study. (Matthew 24:45) You may realize

1. Why is it wise for us to budget our time, and what can the way we use our time reveal about us?
2. (a) In his Sermon on the Mount, what did Jesus say about our spiritual need? (b) What self-examination would be in order?



how important this is, but you may feel that you just do not have time to study or to read the Bible. If so, let us examine ways and means of making more room in our life for reading God's Word, for personal study, and for meditation.

## Finding Time for Bible Reading and Study

<sup>3</sup> In view of the times we live in, all of us need to take heed of the apostle Paul's words: "Keep strict watch that how you walk is not as unwise but as wise persons, buying out the opportune time for yourselves, because the days are wicked. On this account cease becoming unreasonable, but go on perceiving what the will of Jehovah is." (Ephesians 5:15-17) Of course, this counsel covers all features of our lives as dedicated Christians, including finding time for prayer, study, meetings, and sharing as fully as possible in preaching the "good news of the kingdom."—Matthew 24:14; 28:19, 20.

<sup>4</sup> Many of Jehovah's servants today seem to

- 3, 4. (a) What counsel did the apostle Paul give concerning the use of our time, and what does this include? (b) What did Paul mean when he counseled us to 'buy out the opportune time for ourselves'?

have difficulty fitting Bible reading and deep study into their lives. Obviously, we cannot add an extra hour to our day, so Paul's counsel must mean something different. In Greek, the phrase "buying out the opportune time" implies buying at the expense of something else. In his *Expository Dictionary*, W. E. Vine gives it the meaning of "making the most of every opportunity, turning each to the best advantage since none can be recalled if missed." From what or where can we buy out the opportune time for reading and studying the Bible?

### We Must Set Priorities

<sup>5</sup> In addition to our secular obligations, we have many things of a spiritual nature to attend to. As Jehovah's dedicated servants, we have "plenty to do in the work of the Lord." (1 Corinthians 15:58) For this reason, Paul instructed Christians in Philippi to "make sure of the more important things." (Philippians 1:10) This means that priorities have to be set. Spiritual things should always take precedence over material considerations. (Matthew 6:31-33) Yet, balance is also needed in meeting our spiritual obligations. How are we apportioning our time between the various aspects of our Christian life? Traveling overseers report that among "the more important things" that a Christian should take care of, personal study and Bible reading tend to be neglected.

<sup>6</sup> As we have seen, buying out the opportune time involves "making the most of every opportunity" and "turning each to the best advantage." So if our Bible reading and study habits leave much to be desired, it would be good to make a personal analysis to see how our time is spent. If our secular work is

overly demanding, consuming too much of our time and energy, we should make it a matter of prayer to Jehovah. (Psalm 55:22) We may be able to make adjustments that would leave us more time for the important things having to do with Jehovah's worship, including study and Bible reading. It has rightly been said that a woman's work is never done. So Christian sisters must also set their priorities and reserve definite periods for Bible reading and serious study.

<sup>7</sup> By and large, most of us can buy out time for study at the expense of nonessential activities. We might ask ourselves, 'How much time do I spend reading secular magazines or newspapers, watching television programs, listening to music, or playing video games? Do I spend more time in front of the computer than I do reading the Bible?' Paul says: "Cease becoming unreasonable, but go on perceiving what the will of Jehovah is." (Ephesians 5:17) Unreasonable use of television appears to be a major reason why many Witnesses do not devote sufficient time to personal study and Bible reading.—Psalm 101:3; 119:37, 47, 48.

<sup>8</sup> Some may say that they cannot study all the time, that they

7, 8. (a) From what activities can time often be bought out for reading and study? (b) What is the purpose of recreation, and how can remembering this help us set our priorities?

5. Why and how should we "make sure of the more important things"?

6. What can buying out the opportune time involve when it comes to secular work or housework?



need some recreation. While this is true, it might be good to consider the amount of time we spend relaxing and compare it with the time spent actually studying or reading the Bible. The result might be surprising. Recreation and relaxation, while necessary, must be kept in their proper place. Their purpose is to refresh us for renewed spiritual activities. Many television programs and video games leave a person exhausted, whereas reading and studying God's Word is refreshing and invigorating.—Psalm 19:7, 8.

### How Some Make Room for Studying

<sup>9</sup> The foreword to the 1999 edition of the booklet *Examining the Scriptures Daily* states: "It would be most advantageous to consider the daily text and comments from this booklet in the morning. You will feel as though Jehovah, the Grand Instructor, were waking you up with his instructions. Jesus Christ is prophetically spoken of as benefiting from Jehovah's instructions each morning: 'He [Jehovah] awakens morning by morning; he awakens my ear to hear like the taught ones.' Such instructions gave Jesus 'the tongue of the taught ones' so that he would 'know how to answer the tired one with a word.' (Isa. 30:20; 50:4; Matt. 11:28-30) Being awakened to timely counsel from the Word of God each morning will not only help you to cope with your own problems but

9. What are the advantages of following the advice given in the booklet *Examining the Scriptures Daily*—1999?



also equip you with 'the tongue of the taught ones' to help others."<sup>\*</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Many Christians follow this advice by reading the daily text and comments and by reading the Bible or studying early in the morning. In France a faithful pioneer gets up early every morning and devotes 30 minutes

\* Published by the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.

10. How do some make room for Bible reading and study, and with what benefits?



***Regularly reading and studying  
the Bible will enable us to 'handle  
the word of the truth aright'***

to reading the Bible. What has enabled her to do this over the years? She says: "I am deeply motivated, and I stick to my reading schedule come what may!" Whatever time of the day we choose, the important thing is that we stick to our schedule. René Mica, who has been in the pioneer service for over 40 years in Europe and in North Africa, states: "Since 1950 it has been my goal to read the Bible in its entirety every year, something that I have now done 49 times. I feel that this is vital for my maintaining a close relationship with my Creator. Meditating on God's Word helps me to understand Jehovah's justice and his other qualities better and has been a source of incredible strength."\*

\* See the article "When They Read It and How They Benefit," published in the May 1, 1995, issue of *The Watchtower*, pages 20-1.

## **"Food Supplies at the Proper Time"**

<sup>11</sup> Even as regular eating habits contribute to good physical health, a regular schedule for study and Bible reading is conducive to good spiritual health. In Luke's Gospel, we read Jesus' words: "Who really is the faithful steward, the discreet one, whom his master will appoint over his body of attendants to keep giving them their measure of food supplies at the proper time?" (Luke 12:42) For over 120 years now, spiritual "food supplies at the proper time" have been provided in *The Watchtower*, as well as in other Bible-based books and publications.

<sup>12</sup> Note the expression "at the proper time." At the right moment, our "Grand Instructor," Jehovah, by means of his Son and the slave class, has guided his people in matters of doctrine and conduct. It has been as if we collectively have heard a voice saying to us: "This is the way. Walk in it, you people," in case you people should go to the right or in case you should go to the left." (Isaiah 30:20, 21) Moreover, when individuals attentively read the Bible and all the Bible publications, they frequently have the feeling that thoughts expressed therein are directed specially to them. Yes, godly counsel and direction will come at the proper time for us, enabling us to resist temptation or make a wise decision.

### **Develop Good Feeding Habits**

<sup>13</sup> To benefit fully from such "food supplies" provided at the proper time, we need to have good feeding habits. It is essential to have a regular schedule for Bible reading

11, 12. (a) What spiritual "food supplies" have been provided by "the faithful steward"? (b) How have the "food supplies" been provided at the proper time?

13. What are some poor spiritual feeding habits?

and personal study and to stick to it. Do you have good spiritual feeding habits and regular periods of deep personal study? Or do you just skim the surface of the material that has been carefully prepared for us, eating on the run, so to speak, or even skipping some meals altogether? Poor spiritual feeding habits have caused some to become weak in the faith—even to fall away.—1 Timothy 1:19; 4:15, 16.

<sup>14</sup> Some may feel that they already know the basic doctrines and that not every article presents something completely new. Therefore, systematic study and meeting attendance are unnecessary. However, the Bible shows that we need to be reminded of things already learned. (Psalm 119:95, 99; 2 Peter 3:1; Jude 5) Just as a good cook prepares the same basic ingredients in many tasty ways, the slave class provides nourishing spiritual food in a wide variety of ways. Even in articles that cover subjects that have frequently been commented on before, there are finer points that we would not want to miss. The fact is that what we get out of our reading material depends to a large degree on how much time and effort we put into studying it.

14. Why is it beneficial carefully to go over material that may appear familiar?

### Review Questions

- What is revealed by the way we use our time?
- From what activities can time be bought out for reading and studying the Bible?
- Why should we watch our spiritual feeding habits?
- What benefits come from reading and studying the Scriptures?

### Spiritual Benefits From Reading and Studying

<sup>15</sup> The benefits we get from reading and studying the Bible are numerous. We are helped to measure up to one of our basic Christian responsibilities, namely, that we may individually become “a workman with nothing to be ashamed of, handling the word of the truth aright.” (2 Timothy 2:15) The more we read and study the Bible, the more our minds will be filled with God’s thoughts. Then, like Paul, we will be able to ‘reason with people from the Scriptures, explaining and proving by references’ the wonderful truth of Jehovah’s purposes. (Acts 17:2, 3) Our skill in teaching will be enhanced, and our conversations, talks, and counsel will be more upbuilding spiritually.—Proverbs 1:5.

<sup>16</sup> In addition, time devoted to examining God’s Word will enable us to conform our life more fully to Jehovah’s ways. (Psalm 25:4; 119:9, 10; Proverbs 6:20-23) It will strengthen our spiritual qualities, such as humility, loyalty, and happiness. (Deuteronomy 17:19, 20; Revelation 1:3) When we apply the knowledge we gain from reading and studying the Bible, we enjoy a free flow of God’s spirit in our life, resulting in a greater abundance of the fruitage of the spirit in all that we do.—Galatians 5:22, 23.

<sup>17</sup> Most important, the time bought out from other activities to read and study God’s Word will bring rich dividends with regard to our relationship with God. Paul prayed that his fellow Christians might “be filled with the accurate knowledge of [God’s] will in all wisdom and spiritual comprehension, in or-

15. How do reading and studying the Bible help us to be better ministers of God’s Word?
16. In what personal ways do we benefit from reading and studying God’s Word?
17. How do the quantity and quality of our personal Bible reading and study affect our relationship with Jehovah?



**Balancing other activities  
in our busy life with  
spiritual pursuits brings  
rich dividends**

but it is indeed—necessarily! “filled before me with wisdom so that I may know how to answer those who ask me concerning the hope that is in me.” “Therefore let us also walk worthily of the calling to which we have been called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with patience, forbearing one another in love, being careful to walk worthily of Jehovah to the end of fully pleasing him.” (Colossians 1:9, 10) Likewise, for us “to walk worthily of Jehovah,” we must be “filled with the accurate knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual comprehension.” Clearly, our gaining Jehovah’s blessing and approval depends to a large extent on the quantity and quality of our personal reading and study of the Bible.

<sup>18</sup> “This means everlasting life, their taking in knowledge of you, the only true God,

18. What blessings can be ours if we follow Jesus’ words recorded at John 17:3?

and of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ.” (John 17:3) That is one of the scriptures most widely used by Jehovah’s Witnesses to help others appreciate the importance of studying God’s Word. It is certainly no less important for each one of us to do so personally. Our very hope of living forever is contingent on our growing in knowledge of Jehovah and his Son, Jesus Christ. And just think what that means. There will never be an end to our learning more about Jehovah—and there will be an eternity in which to learn about him! —Ecclesiastes 3:11; Romans 11:33.



## BLESSED WITH A SPECIAL HERITAGE

AS TOLD BY  
**CAROL ALLEN**

I was alone, clutching my pretty new book. Fear gripped me, and tears rolled down my face. After all, I was just a little seven-year-old girl lost in a strange city, surrounded by tens of thousands of people!

RECENTLY, nearly 60 years later, vivid memories of that childhood experience came flooding back, triggered by a visit with my husband, Paul, to the beautiful Watchtower Educational Center at Patterson, New York. He had been invited there to attend the second class of a school for traveling overseers of Jehovah's Witnesses.

As we looked around the sunlit lobby, I noticed a large display captioned "CONVENTIONS." Toward the center was an old black-and-white photograph of children excitedly waving their copies of my childhood book! I quickly read the caption with the picture: "1941—In St. Louis, Missouri, when the morning ses-

sion opened, 15,000 children—between 5 and 18 years of age—were assembled in the main arena directly in front of the platform. . . . Brother Rutherford announced the release of the new book *Children*."

Each child was given a personal copy. The children then returned to where their parents were seated—all except me. I was lost! A friendly usher picked me up and stood me on a tall contribution box and told me to look for someone I knew. Anxiously I scanned the crowd pouring down the wide stairway. All of a sudden, there was a face from home! "Uncle Bob! Uncle Bob!" I was found! Bob Rainer carried me up to where my anxious parents were waiting.

## Early Events That Shaped My Life

Looking at that display prompted a flood of memories—events that shaped my life and led to our being at the lovely Patterson facility. My thoughts turned to events of more than a hundred years ago, things I had heard about especially from my grandparents and my parents.

In December 1894 a full-time minister of the Bible Students, as Jehovah's Witnesses were then known, called on my paternal grandfather, Clayton J. Woodworth, at his home in Scranton, Pennsylvania, U.S.A. Clayton was newly married. He wrote a letter to the president of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, Charles Taze Russell, and it was published in the June 15, 1895, *Watchtower*. He explained:

"We are a young husband and wife who have been members of the nominal church for about ten years; but are now, we trust, stepping from its darkness into the light of the new day now dawning for the consecrated children of the Most High. . . . Long before we ever met each other it was our earnest wish that we might serve the Lord, if it chanced to be his will, as missionaries in the foreign field."

Later, in 1903, Sebastian and Catherine Kresge, my maternal great-grandparents, happily listened to the Bible message brought by two Watch Tower representatives to the large farm on which they lived, in the beautiful Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania. Their daughters, Cora and Mary, also lived there with their husbands, Washington and Ed-



*With Ed Hooper shortly before the 1941 St. Louis convention, where I received my personal copy of the "Children" book*

mund Howell. The Watch Tower representatives, Carl Hammerle and Ray Ratcliffe, stayed with them a whole week, teaching them many things. All six of these family members listened, studied, and soon became zealous Bible Students.

In that very year, 1903, Cora and Washington Howell had a daughter named Catherine. How she eventually married my father, Clayton J. Woodworth, Jr., is an interesting and, I believe, meaningful story. It reveals the loving insight and parental concern of my grandfather Clayton J. Woodworth, Sr.

## My Father Receives Loving Help

My father, Clayton junior, was born in Scranton in 1906, within 50 miles or so of the Howell farm. In those early years, Grandpa Woodworth became well acquainted with the large Howell family, often enjoying their legendary hospitality. He was a great help to the congregation of Bible Students in that area. In time, Grandpa was called on to perform the marriages of the three Howell sons, and with his own son's welfare in mind, he made a point of taking him along for each of these weddings.

Dad was not then actively engaged in the ministry of the Bible Students. True, he drove Grandpa to make his ministerial calls, but despite Grandpa's encouragement, Dad did not take an active part himself. At that time, my father's musical interests superseded all others, and he was moving toward a professional career.

**Grandpa in 1948**



**At the Howell farm when my parents (in circle) were married**

Catherine, the daughter of Cora and Washington Howell, had also become an accomplished musician, playing and teaching the piano. But just as a professional career was opening before her, she put that pursuit aside and began sharing in the full-time ministry. Grandpa could not have had in mind a better companion for his son—at least from my point of view! Dad was baptized, and he married Mom six months later, in June 1931.

Grandpa was always proud of his son's musical ability. He was so happy when Dad was asked to train the nucleus of the big convention orchestra for the 1946 international convention in Cleveland, Ohio. In the following years, Dad conducted the orchestra at a number of other conventions of Jehovah's Witnesses.

#### **Grandpa's Trial and Prison Life**

In the Patterson lobby, Paul and I also came across the exhibit with the picture seen on the next page. I immediately recognized the picture, since Grandpa sent me a copy of it well over 50 years ago. He is the one standing on the far right.

During the patriotic hysteria surrounding World War I, these eight Bible Students—including Joseph F. Rutherford (seated in center), president of the Watch Tower Society—were wrongfully imprisoned and held without bail. The charges against them centered on statements in the seventh volume of *Studies in the Scriptures*, entitled *The Finished Mystery*. The statements were incorrectly perceived as discouraging the participation of the United States in World War I.

Over a period of many years, Charles Taze Russell had written the first six volumes of *Studies in the Scriptures*, but he died before he could write the seventh. So his notes were given to Grandpa and another Bible Student, and they wrote the seventh volume. This was released in 1917, before the end of the war. At the trial, Grandpa and most of the others were sentenced to four concurrent terms of 20 years each.

The caption to the picture in the Patterson lobby explains: "Nine months after Rutherford and his associates were sentenced—and with the war past—on March 21, 1919, the appeals court ordered bail for all eight defendants, and

on March 26, they were released in Brooklyn on bail of \$10,000 each. On May 5, 1920, J. F. Rutherford and the others were exonerated."

After being sentenced, but before being sent to the federal penitentiary in Atlanta, Georgia, the eight spent their first few days of incarceration in the Raymond Street jail in Brooklyn, New York. From there Grandpa wrote a description of being placed in a six-by-eight-foot cell "in the midst of unspeakable filth and disorder." He observed: "You have a pile of newspapers, and if inclined to think lightly of them at first, you soon come to realize that in these papers and in soap and a wash-rag, lies your one chance of cleanliness and self-respect."

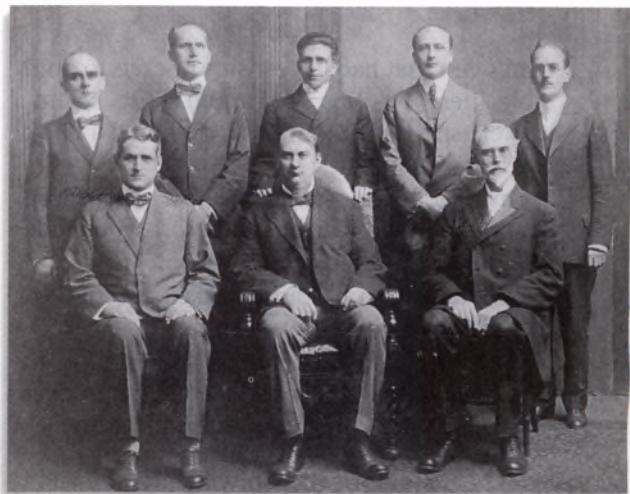
Yet, Grandpa kept his sense of humor, referring to the jail as "Hôtel de Raymondie," noting, "I shall leave here the moment my board is up." He also described his courtyard walks. Once when he stopped for a moment to have his hair combed, a pickpocket snatched his pocket watch, but as he wrote, "The chain broke and I saved it." When I was visiting Brooklyn Bethel in 1958, Grant Suiter, then secretary-treasurer of the Watch Tower Society, called me into his office and gave me that watch. I still treasure it.

### Effect Upon Father

When Grandpa was unjustly imprisoned in 1918, my father was only 12. Grandma closed their home and took him with her to live with her mother and her three sisters. Grandma's maiden name was Arthur, and the family proudly claimed that one of their relatives, Chester Alan Arthur, was the 21st president of the United States.

After Grandpa Woodworth was given a long sentence for alleged crimes against the United States, the Arthurs clearly felt that he had disgraced their family name. It was an emotionally painful time for my father. Perhaps such treatment was a factor in his initial hesitancy toward sharing in the public ministry.

When Grandpa was released from prison, he moved his family into a big stucco house on



*The eight Bible students  
who were wrongly imprisoned in 1918  
(Grandpa standing at far right)*

Quincy Street in Scranton. As a child, I knew it—and Grandma's pretty china—well. We called them her holy dishes because no one but Grandma was allowed to wash them. After Grandma died in 1943, Mom often entertained and used those beautiful dishes.

### Busy in Kingdom Service

On another day at the Patterson campus, I came across a picture of Brother Rutherford speaking at the 1919 Cedar Point, Ohio, convention. There he urged all to share zealously in announcing God's Kingdom and to use the new magazine released at that convention, *The Golden Age*. Grandpa was appointed its editor, and he contributed articles for it right up through the 1940's, shortly before his death. In 1937 the magazine's name was changed to *Consolation* and in 1946 to *Awake!*

Grandpa did his writing both at home in Scranton and at the Watch Tower headquarters about 150 miles away in Brooklyn, spending two weeks at a time in each place. Dad says that he remembers Grandpa's typewriter going at five o'clock many mornings. Yet, Grandpa also took seriously the responsibility to share in the public preaching activity. In fact, he designed a

man's vest that had large inside pockets to hold Bible literature. My 94-year-old aunt, Naomi Howell, still has one. He also designed a book bag for women.

Once, following a lively Bible discussion, Grandpa's service partner said: "C. J., you made one mistake."

"What mistake?" Grandpa asked. He checked his vest. Both pockets were empty.

"You forgot to offer him a subscription to *The Golden Age*." They had a good laugh over the editor's forgetting to offer his magazine.

### Memories of Growing Up

I remember sitting on Grandpa's lap as a child, my small hand in his as he told me the "Finger Story." Starting with "Tommy Thumb" and moving on to "Peter Pointer," he told something special about each finger. Then he carefully wrapped all the fingers together as he gave the moral: "Together work they best, each one helping all the rest."

After they were married, my parents moved to Cleveland, Ohio, and became close friends with Ed and Mary Hooper. Their families had been Bible Students since the turn of the century. My parents and Uncle Ed and Aunt Mary, as I called them, were inseparable. The Hoopers had lost their only child, a baby girl, so when I came along in 1934, I became their special "daughter." Reared in such a spiritually rich environment, I made my dedication to God and was baptized before my eighth birthday.

Bible reading was part of my early years. The description of life in God's new world at Isaiah 11:6-9 was one of my favorite scripture passages. My first effort to read the Bible through was in 1944, after receiving my personal copy of the *American Standard Version*, released in a special edition at the Buffalo, New York, convention. How thrilled I was to read this translation in which God's name, Jehovah, had been restored to its proper place nearly 7,000 times in the "Old Testament"!

Weekends were happy times. My parents and the Hoopers took me along to witness in the rurals. We packed a lunch and picnicked by a stream. Then we went to someone's farm for an outdoor Bible talk to which we had invited all the neighbors. Life was simple. We found our joy as families. A number of these early family friends later became traveling overseers, including Ed Hooper, Bob Rainer, and his two sons. Richard Rainer still does this work, accompanied by his wife, Linda.

Summers were especially happy times. I stayed at the Howell farm with my cousins. In 1949 my cousin Grace married Malcolm Allen. Little did I realize that years later I would marry his brother. My younger cousin Marion was a missionary in Uruguay. She married Howard Hilborn in 1966. Both of these cousins served with their husbands at Brooklyn headquarters for a number of years.

### Grandpa and My Graduation

During my high school years, Grandpa was a ready correspondent. His letters included many old family photographs with detailed notes typed on the back, sharing family history. That is how I received my copy of the photograph of him and the others who were unjustly sent to prison.

By late 1951, Grandpa had lost his voice box to cancer. His quick wit was still intact, but his words had to be written on a little notepad he carried with him. My high-school class was to graduate midterm, in January 1952. Early in December, I mailed Grandpa a draft of my commencement speech. He made some editorial marks and then on the last page wrote two words that went straight to my heart: "Grandpa delighted." He finished his earthly course at age 81, on December 18, 1951.\* I still treasure that faded draft of my commencement speech with those two words on the final page.

Right after my graduation, I entered the pio-

\* See *The Watchtower*, February 15, 1952, page 128.



*All of our worldly goods  
fitted into our Volkswagen*

neer service, as Jehovah's Witnesses call the full-time preaching work. In 1958, I attended the mammoth convention in New York City, where a peak of 253,922 persons from 123 countries filled Yankee Stadium and the Polo Grounds. There one day I met a delegate from Africa who wore an identification badge that read "Woodworth Mills." Some 30 years earlier, he had been named after Grandpa!

#### **Happy for My Heritage**

When I was 14, my mother began to pioneer again. She died 40 years later, in 1988, still a pioneer! Dad shared in the pioneer work when he could. He passed away nine months before Mom. Those whom we studied with became dear friends for life. Some of their sons went to serve at headquarters in Brooklyn, and others entered the pioneer work.

To me 1959 was a very special year. That was when I was introduced to Paul Allen. He



*With my  
husband, Paul*

had been appointed a traveling overseer in 1946 when he graduated from the seventh class of Gilead, a school for training

missionaries of Jehovah's Witnesses. At the time of our meeting, neither of us knew that Paul's next assignment would be Cleveland, Ohio, where I was pioneering. Dad loved him, and so did Mom. We were married in July 1963 on the Howell farm, surrounded by our families and with Ed Hooper presiding. It was a dream come true.

Paul had never owned a car. When we left Cleveland for his next assignment, all of our belongings fitted into my 1961 Volkswagen Bug. Often the friends dropped by on Mondays, the day we moved on to another congregation, to watch us load. It was like a circus performance to see the suitcases, briefcases, file box, typewriter, and so forth, disappear into that little car.

Together Paul and I have traveled countless miles, enjoying the ups and enduring the downs of present life—everything done in the strength that only Jehovah can supply. The years have been happy ones, filled with love for Jehovah, for each other, and for friends old and new. The two months we spent in Patterson as Paul received training was the highlight of our life so far. Observing Jehovah's earthly organization up close reaffirmed a conviction passed on to me as part of my precious spiritual heritage: *This is indeed God's organization.* What a joy to be even a small part of it!

# "A Charming Mountain Goat"

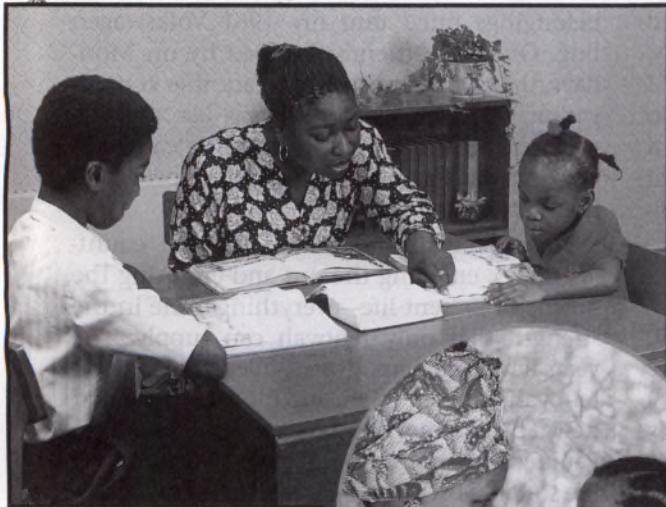


**C**HARMING is not an adjective most of us would use to describe a goat. We may think of goats as useful animals that will eat practically anything and that provide us with tasty meat and nutritious milk—but we would hardly call them charming.

Nevertheless, the Bible describes a wife as "a lovable hind and a charming mountain goat." (Proverbs 5:18, 19) Solomon, a writer of the book of Proverbs, was a keen observer of Israel's wildlife, so undoubtedly he had good reason for using this metaphor. (1 Kings 4:30-33) Perhaps, like his father David, he had observed the mountain goats that frequent the area

around En-gedi, near the shores of the Dead Sea.

Small flocks of mountain goats that live in the nearby Judean Desert regularly visit the spring of En-gedi. Since it is the only reliable water source in this barren area, En-gedi has been a favorite watering place for mountain goats for centuries. In fact the name En-gedi probably means "fountain of the kid," a testimony to the regular presence of young goats in this area. King David found refuge here from the persecution of King Saul, although he had to dwell like a fugitive "upon the bare rocks of the mountain goats."—1 Samuel 24:1, 2.



**A Christian wife and mother displays beautiful spiritual qualities when fulfilling her God-given responsibilities**



At En-gedi you can still watch a female ibex, or mountain goat, gracefully pick her way down a rocky ravine as she follows a male goat toward the water. Then you may begin to comprehend the comparison of the female ibex with a loyal wife. Her placid nature and elegant form also bespeak feminine virtues. The word "charming" apparently alludes to the grace and elegant appearance of the mountain goat.\*

The female ibex has to be tough as well as graceful. As Jehovah pointed out to Job, the mountain goat gives birth in the crags, in rocky, inaccessible places where food may be scarce and temperatures are extreme. (Job 39:1) Despite these difficulties, she cares for her offspring and teaches them to climb and leap among the rocks as nimbly as she does. The ibex also valiantly protects her young from predators. One observer saw a mountain goat fighting off an eagle for half an hour, while the young kid crouched beneath her for protection.

Christian wives and mothers often have to rear their children under adverse circumstances. Like the mountain goat, they show dedica-

tion and unselfishness in caring for this God-given responsibility. And they bravely strive to protect their children from spiritual dangers. So, far from belittling women with this metaphor, Solomon was actually drawing attention to a woman's grace and beauty—spiritual qualities that shine through even in the most difficult environment.

## IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

How You Can Draw Close to God

What God's Kingdom Will Do

Have I Made the Holy Spirit  
My Personal Helper?

\* According to *The New Brown-Driver-Briggs-Gesenius Hebrew and English Lexicon*, in this context the Hebrew word *chen*, translated "charming," means 'grace or elegance of form and appearance.'

# Are You DISCREET?

**I**N APPOINTING judges over Israel, Moses strove to find "wise and discreet and experienced men." (Deuteronomy 1:13) Experience, which came with age, was not the sole criterion. Wisdom and discretion were also important.

A person who is discreet shows good judgment in speech and in conduct. According to *Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*, the discreet person is also "capable of preserving prudent silence." Yes, there is "a time to speak," and there is "a time to keep quiet," and the discreet person appreciates the difference. (Ecclesiastes 3:7) Often, there is good reason to keep silent, for the Bible states: "In the abundance of words there does not fail to be transgression, but the one keeping his lips in check is acting discreetly."—Proverbs 10:19.

Christians are careful to be dis-

creet in their dealings with one another. The one who speaks most frequently or most forcefully is not always the one most important or most indispensable. Remember, Moses was "powerful in his words," but he could not effectively lead the nation of Israel until he cultivated patience, meekness, and self-control. (Acts 7:22) Therefore, those who are entrusted with authority over others must especially strive to be modest and to show a yielding spirit.—Proverbs 11:2.

Those to whom Jesus Christ has entrusted "all his belongings" are described in God's Word as "faithful and *discreet*." (Matthew 24:45-47) They do not immodestly run ahead of Jehovah on an impulsive whim; nor do they lag behind when God's direction in a matter is clear. They know when it is time to speak and when it is time to wait silently for further clarification. All Christians do well not only to imitate their

faith but also to prove themselves discreet, as the slave class does.—Hebrews 13:7.

