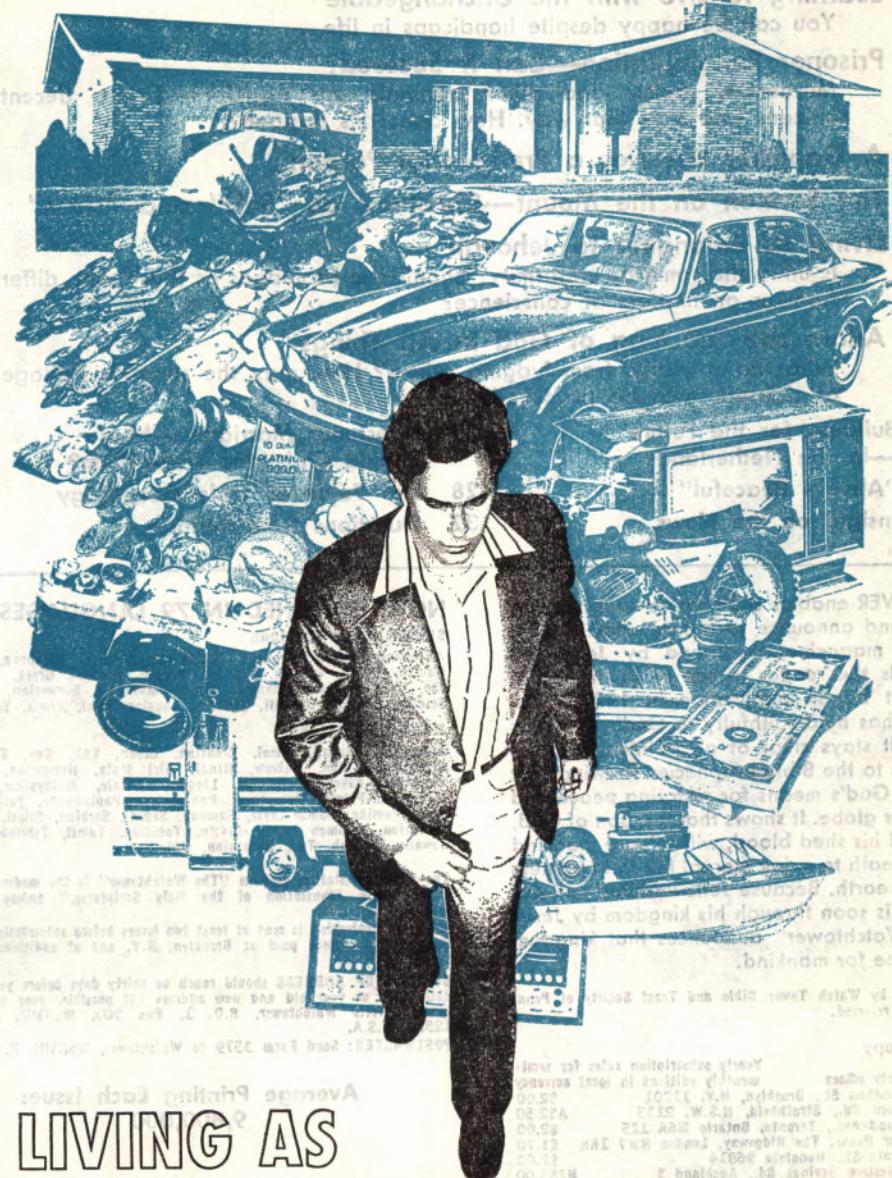


MARCH 15, 1978

# THE WATCHTOWER

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom



## LIVING AS BELONGING TO JEHOVAH

March 15, 1978  
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## IN THIS ISSUE

- 3 Learning to Live with the Unchangeable**  
You can be happy despite handicaps in life
- 5 Prisoner Rehabilitation—Can It Succeed?**  
Murderers, rapists and other criminals are transformed into decent citizens and stay that way. How does this happen?
- 8 A Gangster Receives a Presidential Pardon**
- 10 The Sermon on the Mount—Christians as "Salt" and "Light"**
- 12 Living as Belonging to Jehovah**  
Is unity the same as uniformity? Should we be judges of those who differ from us on matters of conscience?
- 17 Adorn the Teaching of God in All Things**  
What harm results from judging others? How may the superior fruitage of righteousness be produced?
- 21 Building for the Future**  
—In the Netherlands
- 23 "Always Peaceful"**
- 24 Insight on the News**
- 25 Incestuous Marriages—How Should Christians View Them?**
- 28 The Value of Bible Genealogy**
- 32 Questions from Readers**

A WATCHTOWER enables a person to look far into the distance and announce to others what is seen. Likewise, this magazine, published by Jehovah's Witnesses, aids the reader to see what the future holds. Since it began publication in 1879, "The Watchtower" has held faithfully to God's Word as its authority. It stays clear of all political involvement. It points to the Bible prophecies showing that Jesus Christ is God's means for restoring peace and harmony to this globe. It shows that this Son of God, on the basis of his shed blood, will release mankind from sin and death to enjoy eternal life in happiness on a paradise earth. Because Jehovah God will accomplish all this soon through his kingdom by Jesus Christ, "The Watchtower" announces that kingdom as the real hope for mankind.

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# Learning to Live with the Unchangeable

THERE was an ancient Greek philosopher who is reputed to have counseled: 'Young man, get married, get married. If you get a good wife, you will be happy and that is a good thing. And if you do not get a good wife, you will become a philosopher and that also is a good thing.' The idea of the latter part of the saying is that it is good to adjust to that which cannot be changed, taking a philosophical view of life, as it were.

This matter of learning to live with the unchangeable applies to ever so many facets of life. The very matter of one's height might cause one grief. A girl more than six feet tall may fret because she is so tall. Then, again, a man less than five feet may chafe because he is so short. But as Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is reported as saying: "Is there a man of you who by anxious thought can add a foot to his height?" (Matt. 6:27, *The New English Bible*) Furthermore, a person may have been born hunchbacked, with a speech impediment, with poor eyesight, or may have become a cripple due to polio.

What can any of these persons do? "What can't be cured must be endured," is the way one physician put it. One who learned to live with his extreme shortness



is Carlos Romulo, a Philippine statesman. He says that he did not let his being so short abash him and, in time, found that it really was an asset, as people often have an inclination to favor the person who is very small.

One thing that all such disadvantaged persons can do is to learn to appreciate the blessings that they do have. Is it not true that life and even a measure of health are great blessings? There are the beauties of creation or "nature," the pleasure of listening to beautiful music, the love of family and friends and the satisfaction that comes from being useful both to oneself and to others.

The same applies to one's attitude toward world conditions, which are unchangeable as to getting any better. Should we be disturbed because of the increasing corruption in high places and the worsening violence and crime on city streets? The Bible gives good advice: "Do not show yourself heated up because of the evildoers." Why not? Because in God's due time they will be no more. (Ps. 37:1-13) Until then a person can learn to live with such conditions by being extremely cautious, not venturing out into the streets alone late at night, valuing his life more

than the money he may have on his person, and so forth.

Yes, it will help us to learn to live with the unchangeable if we try to be philosophical about our particular situation and make the best of it. Accept the fact that all happiness is relative and that under present imperfect and sinful conditions there will always be some bitter with the sweet. So, in whatever state or condition you might find yourself, look for its compensations or mercies. The very unconsciousness of sleep is a blessing, concerning which a poet once wrote: "There's mercy in every place, And mercy, encouraging thought, Gives even affliction a grace, And reconciles man to his lot."

The same applies to our relations with others. Many married couples upon finding that they are not very compatible separate or divorce, but the better way would be to learn to adjust to each other. Thus there was the romantic Italian, fond of athletics, who married a rather conservative British girl. For years they had difficulty in living together, but for the sake of the children they did not break up. However, in time they learned to adjust, bringing more contentment and happiness into their marriage.

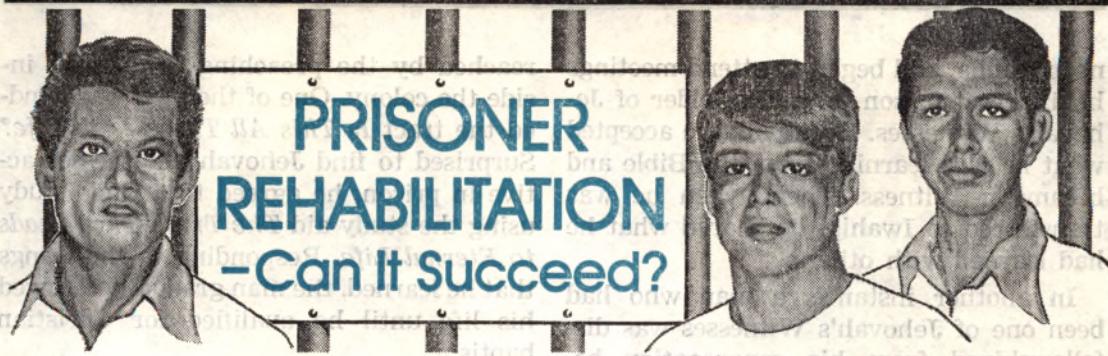
To take another true life story of the present time, there was the charming young woman who married a man who had everything in the way of personality and possessions for which she could have wished. But her desire for children was not fulfilled. Has she learned to live with the unchangeable? Yes, for now she can even joke about her frustration. Moreover, she fills her days with the full-time activity of sharing the "good news" with others—even as he does—and enjoys many blessings and satisfactions in teaching whole families, and especially mothers and their young children about Jehovah God and the blessings of his kingdom—rearing

spiritual children, as it were, by making these Christian disciples.

Going to the Bible we find many other examples of those who learned to live with the unchangeable. Among those that might be noted here is the prophet Moses. How mightily God used him to bring his people out of Egypt, and yet they kept trying his patience year in and year out during that 40-year trek in the wilderness! (Deut. 8:2-5) How frustrating he must have found their lack of appreciation, their lack of faith, their complaining, their rebelliousness and their greedy selfishness! The love that he pours out to them as expressed in the book of Deuteronomy is proof of how well he learned to live with the unchanging weaknesses and failings of his people—unchanging as far as his being able to do anything about it.—Acts 7:30-39.

Modern servants of Jehovah God likewise often find conditions very trying. As they preach the good news of God's kingdom, they have to put up with indifference and apathy, blind prejudice and bitter opposition. Do they give up because of these seemingly unchangeable conditions? Not at all. Rather, they work at becoming more resourceful; they work at strengthening their own faith; and they keep reminding themselves of the reasons why they are serving Jehovah God in this time of the end.

Truly, many are the situations under which various ones have had to endure, because of being unable to change them, or to get out from under them honorably. But whatever the situations may be, the wise course is to learn to live with them, by learning to adjust. Helping one to do so is the precious privilege of prayer, as well as the hope that God's Word holds out of a "new heavens and a new earth" in which there will be no evil, no frustrations. Instead there will be everlasting life in happiness.—Phil. 4:6, 7; 2 Pet. 3:13; Rev. 21:4.



## PRISONER REHABILITATION —Can It Succeed?

"I CONSIDER myself completely free! I am free of the darkness that formerly held me."

"Every day of my life is happy!"

These are expressions of two inmates of the Iwahig Penal Colony in the Philippines. Both were convicted of murder, and have spent long years in prison. But they have found something that has brought them more joy than anything that they possessed during their previous years of freedom.

### THE IWAHIG PRISON

The Iwahig Prison and Penal Colony—to give it its full title—is different from many other prisons. It is situated on the island of Palawan, the long island in the Philippine chain that stretches southwest into the China Sea. The prison includes 95,410 acres (38,612 hectares), and provides accommodations for about 5,000 inmates. However, these are called *colonos* (those who inhabit a colony) rather than prisoners.

Throughout most of the prison area there are no high walls or bars. There are no armed guards, and many inmates move about quite freely. Some do not wear uniforms. Most live in dormitories and work at producing the principal crops of the colony: rice, corn, copra, lumber, rattan and a small variety of bamboo.

The *colonos* receive a small cash gratuity each month, which they can augment in such ways as by making and selling handicrafts. A few, who have shown themselves trustworthy and can support their families, are allowed to bring them into the colony to live. These families live in duplex apartments; they are given necessary provisions free, and may grow crops or raise livestock to help to defray expenses.

Discipline is maintained, but the *colonos* are given greater freedom as they prove themselves trustworthy. Some even help in running the colony. Additionally, training in different skills is supplied, and illiterates are taught basic reading, writing and arithmetic. Leisure activities are allowed, including swimming, various competitive sports, music programs and picnics, while some religious meetings are permitted on Sundays.

Over the years Iwahig has been a fertile ground for the disciple-making work of Jehovah's Witnesses. But how did this activity of Jehovah's Witnesses get started?

**PREACHING WORK INSIDE IWAHIG**  
Many persons have been involved in this activity over the years, and Domingo Obispo was one of the first.\* He was serving a long sentence in Muntinlupa prison

\* You can read the first-person experience of Domingo Obispo beginning on page 8 of this magazine.

near Manila, and began to attend meetings held in that prison by a local elder of Jehovah's Witnesses. Eventually he accepted what he was learning from the Bible and became a Witness. Then, when he was transferred to Iwahig, he shared what he had learned with others.

In another instance, a man who had been one of Jehovah's Witnesses was disfellowshiped from his congregation because of bad conduct. He committed a very serious crime and was imprisoned. In prison he started to repent, just like King Manasseh of old. (2 Chron. 33:10-13) Finally, when this man was transferred to Iwahig, he contacted the elders in the nearby Puerto Princesa Congregation, and they could see that his repentance was genuine. Therefore he was accepted back as one of Jehovah's Witnesses, and he began preaching in the colony.

Then there was the man who escaped from Iwahig. He went to a town in Palawan and started living as a private citizen. One of Jehovah's Witnesses preached to him, and the escaped convict believed what he heard. Then his conscience began to bother him, so he consulted an elder in the congregation. What should he do?

The Christian elder gave him advice based on the apostle Paul's words at Romans chapter 13, verse one. He was shown that it was the responsibility of a true Christian to pay back Caesar's things to Caesar. Hence, accompanied by some Christian friends, he went back to the colony and surrendered himself. Now he is a trustworthy prisoner and has been assigned as a teacher of other inmates. He is using this assignment as an opportunity to spread the message of true Christianity.

Most of those who are now becoming Jehovah's Witnesses in Iwahig have been

reached by the preaching done right inside the colony. One of the men was handed the tract *Is This All There Is to Life?* Surprised to find Jehovah's Witnesses active in prison, he agreed to a Bible study using the study aid *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life*. Responding to the things that he learned, the man gradually changed his life until he qualified for Christian baptism.

Actual house-to-house (or dormitory-to-dormitory) preaching is forbidden in the colony. However, twice a week a "head count" is held, and on these occasions all are gathered together to check that no one is missing. This is the time used by the Witnesses to preach to their fellow inmates. Bible studies are conducted with them under the trees or in the grandstand of the plaza.

Also, on Sundays Christian elders from the Puerto Princesa Congregation are allowed to conduct a Bible study inside the prison, using the *Watchtower* magazine as a study aid. Interested persons are invited to attend. Previously these meetings were held in the prison library, but the administration, appreciative of the work being done by Jehovah's Witnesses, has now arranged to have a large Kingdom Hall built, at the colony's expense.

Recently the authorities have allowed certain *colonos* to attend the circuit assemblies of Jehovah's Witnesses held outside the prison. The elders from the nearby congregation accept responsibility for these persons, and the inmates are accompanied by only one unarmed guard. They wear civilian clothes and are not manacled. At each of the last three circuit assemblies, some of these men were baptized. In May 1977, two of the 12 who attended were immersed. The other Witnesses at the assemblies are always delighted to asso-

ciate with their Christian brothers from Iwahig.

#### SUCCESSFUL REHABILITATION

The result of the activity of Jehovah's Witnesses has been a complete reformation of certain hardened criminals. Although it is often true that men return to their lives of crime after leaving prison, many of these have completely changed. In the words of the apostle Paul, they have been "washed clean."—1 Cor. 6:11.

The permanence of the reformation is seen in the experience of one man who, after serving a 15-year sentence for murder, was released and became a pioneer, as Jehovah's Witnesses call full-time preachers. Others who have been released have progressed to become respected elders in the Christian congregation with which they associate.

The objective of the Iwahig Penal Colony is particularly "reformation," rather than "punishment." Hence, the members of the administration are delighted at the changes that they see in those inmates who have become Jehovah's Witnesses. One penal supervisor exclaimed: "I wish all the inmates here were Jehovah's Witnesses!"

The Acting Security Officer of the colony said: "I want this religion to have many converts here, because I have observed that the moment they become Jehovah's Witnesses I see many good things in their habits and traits.

"That member of yours, Sanchez, he was the number one troublemaker here—a drunkard, heavy smoker and full of vices. He was a pain in my neck. How he had the courage to change is something I do not know. All I know is that he became one of Jehovah's Witnesses and that was it!"

#### WHY THE CHANGE?

What is it that turns murderers, rapists, arsonists and assassins into good-living Christians? According to the men themselves, it is the reforming power of God's Word and the good association with godly people. One commented that he was attracted by the Bible's promise of everlasting life, and that God would wipe out every tear from the eyes of suffering mankind, as well as remove sickness and death. (John 5:24; Rev. 21:4) Since he had seen the bad side of life, these promises appealed to his heart.

Another commented that a true Christian brotherly love exists among the inmates who have become Jehovah's Witnesses, and this is what attracted him. Now he says that he wants to strive to be "a good servant of Jehovah God."

Others said that when they associated with Jehovah's Witnesses, it was the first time in their whole lives that they had been treated like decent people. The reality of this love is seen in the case of one inmate at the time that he was to be released. He said that "his eyes filled with tears" because he had to part from his beloved Christian brothers.

So, even in prison, the power of the Bible to heal hearts and change people is being dramatically demonstrated. As they come into the light of God's Word, these men, who have been incarcerated for previous wrongdoing, experience the real freedom that Jesus promised when he said: "You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (John 8:32) They are grateful for the loving-kindness of their God, Jehovah, who has permitted them to find true liberty and lasting rehabilitation even while they are in prison. You will enjoy reading the following first-person experience of one of these men.

# A Gangster Receives A Presidential Pardon

**B**ACK in 1945, I was viewed as a devout Catholic. Once, I remember, to fulfill a vow, I walked on my knees all the way from the church door to the altar. At the same time, I was a heavy drinker and a member of a gang. I made friends easily because I was liberal with money. My means of living was buying and selling stolen goods. In one week, I could get as much as 10,000 pesos in this way. No wonder I was generous! I was looked up to in Balibalic, Manila, where I lived.

I was admired as a "tough guy!" But close by there was another "tough guy" who looked on me as his rival. One day our gangs had an encounter. I shot my rival dead; his friends fled, and I was supreme. That was in 1947.

Now, however, I had to hide from the law, so I fled south of Manila into Cavite. A reward of 1,000 pesos was put on my head, and that was enough to encourage a close friend to betray me. In May 1949 I was caught and, on May 1, 1951, I was sentenced to life imprisonment.

## LIFE IN MUNTINLUPA

The following day I was taken in handcuffs to the National Penitentiary at Muntinlupa, Rizal. On arrival, my own clothes were taken, and I was given prison clothes. My number was 11481-P. Once inside the prison, I felt unnatural. I knew I was alive, but I seemed to be in a pit. The other prisoners were like animals. I particularly hated the way that they forced newcomers who were young to submit to homosexual acts. In my heart I felt pity for their victims, and I promised myself that I would never again take advantage of or oppress my fellowman. So I took courage and prayed to God that I

might be able to withstand the terrible situation in which I now found myself.

The prison director at Muntinlupa allowed freedom of worship, and there were many different groups that held services. I believed that all religions were from God, so I drifted for about six months from one meeting to another. But, after observing their conduct and habits, I came to the conclusion that there was no truth in them. One thing to which I objected was the way some of these groups would bring pretty girls to their meetings to attract attendance. This would incite the prisoners to do unclean things afterward.

Finally, I attended the meetings held by Jehovah's Witnesses. I was impressed by their method of teaching. It was right from the Bible and very informative. I was especially interested in the name of God. Eventually, I dedicated myself to Jehovah and was baptized in 1953. I began preaching to other inmates and employees at Muntinlupa. Some listened, and in time there were a number who became Witnesses in that prison.

We had some problems regarding flag salute because of our conscientious objection to saluting. Once we had to suffer solitary confinement. One morning, however, the prisoners, numbering many thousands, were convened in the prison plaza. The flag was raised and all saluted except the Witnesses, who numbered about 20 at the time.

At that moment there was a heavy downpour of rain, and the prisoners scampered for shelter. Only we Witnesses remained standing in the rain, since we had not been dismissed. Later, the director called us and asked why we did not run like the others, but stood and got wet. We explained that



## Christian

our stand regarding the flag did not mean that we disrespected it. It was just that we view the act of saluting as a religious ceremony. From then on, our position in this matter was much better understood.

In 1957 the Muntinlupa penitentiary was rocked almost daily by riots between rival gangs that carried names like "OXO" and "Sigue-sigue." To help to maintain peace and order, the prison authorities handpicked those whose record of conduct was exemplary and gave them appointments. I was assigned to be a *bastonero*, which is a prisoner who is entrusted to oversee other prisoners. As a reward for conscientious discharge of my responsibilities, I was chosen to be transferred to the Iwahig Penal Colony in Palawan.

### LIFE IN IWAHIG

In Iwahig I was given another responsible job—I was made food administrator for some 800 inmates. I received the food supply and oversaw the cooking, as well as the feeding of the men. The authorities felt that my conduct was good, because the prisoners were content with my management, whereas some who had previously held my job had been murdered.

One day, the superintendent of Iwahig asked why the prisoners seemed satisfied with me. I told him that I was one of Jehovah's Witnesses and applied Bible principles in my work. From then on he relied on me more, and I had more freedom to preach among the inmates. As a result, I conducted a group study with some 13 persons. Soon, I contacted the Witnesses in the local Puerto Princesa Congregation, and one of Jehovah's Witnesses helped us to have regular meetings inside Iwahig.

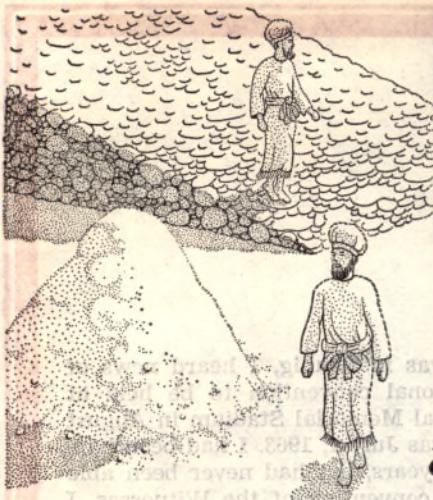
While I was in Iwahig, I heard news of an international convention to be held at Manila's Rizal Memorial Stadium in August of 1963. It was July 1, 1963. I had been baptized for 10 years, but had never been able to attend a convention of the Witnesses. I felt very sad and restless. That night I could not sleep because of thinking about the convention, so I started praying, asking to be shown a way whereby I could attend.

### RELEASE

One evening I wrote to the then president of the Philippines, Diosdado Macapagal. I appealed to him for a presidential pardon so that I could attend. On July 30 his reply came with the wonderful words: "I am granting your request." I wept for joy. On August 10 I was released. August 15 I was with my family. August 17 we all joined with thousands of our Christian brothers at the international convention. Words are inadequate to describe my joy at that time. God had been very kind to me.

After the assembly I was able to pursue my service to Jehovah God as a free man. In spite of my prison record, I was able to get employment so that I could care for my family as a Christian man should. My present employers know that I have been in prison, but they also know that now I am a Christian; so they trust me in my work.

In the congregation, I have been able to progress to the point of being an elder. My goal in life is to keep on serving Jehovah with all my heart, together with my wife and children. And it is our hope to become acceptable to Him, and to receive his blessing of life in the now so near earthly paradise.—Contributed.



## THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

### Christians as "Salt" and "Light"



**F**Ollowing the nine 'happinesses' of his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus commented as to how his followers would affect mankind. He said: "*You are the salt of the earth.*"—Matt. 5:13; compare Mark 9:50; Luke 14:34, 35.

Salt was well known to Jesus' listeners. It served both to enhance the taste of food and to preserve it from corruption. Evidently, because salt represented freedom from corruption or decay, God commanded that it accompany "every offering" on his altar. (Lev. 2:13) During Jesus' day priests officiating at Jehovah's temple in Jerusalem salted the animal, grain and frankincense offerings that were presented on the altar of burnt offering. Jewish history says that for this purpose a huge heap of salt lay near the ramp leading up to that altar. In the temple area there was a large storeroom, known as "the salt chamber," to assure an ample supply.

Jesus' disciples were to be "the salt of the earth." This would prove to be true both in their activities of witnessing to others about God's kingdom and in their personal conduct. Christian witnessing has resulted in many accepting Jesus as the

promised Messiah and exercising faith in his sin-atoning sacrifice. This has opened up opportunities for such believers to have their lives preserved for eternity. (John 6:47; Rom. 10:13-15) Furthermore, by influencing people to live according to Bible principles, followers of Jesus retard the increase of moral and spiritual decay in human society.

However, Jesus added a note of warning, saying: "*But if the salt loses its strength, how will its saltiness be restored? It is no longer usable for anything but to be thrown outside to be trampled on by men.*" Bible commentator Albert Barnes notes that, different from common table salt (sodium chloride), the salt with which Jesus and his contemporaries were acquainted "was impure, mingled with vegetable and earthy substances; so that it might lose the whole of its saltiness, and a considerable quantity of earthy matter remain. This was good for nothing except that it was used, as it is said, to place in paths, or walks, as we use gravel."

Christians must beware of discontinuing their efforts to share the "good news" of God's kingdom with their neighbors.

(Mark 13:10) Also, they must be on guard against falling into patterns of conduct that do not harmonize with Scriptural guidelines. Otherwise, they will deteriorate spiritually and become like spoiled salt—insipid, flat, tasteless—that is no longer good for anything.—Compare Hebrews 6:4-8; 10:26-29.

#### LIGHT THAT SHINES TO GOD'S GLORY

Further showing the beneficial effect that his followers would have on mankind, Jesus said: “*You are the light of the world.*”—Matt. 5:14.

From the inspired Word of God, especially the teachings and example of Jesus Christ, comes spiritual light that aids persons to see things as God sees them. (Prov. 6:23; Isa. 51:4; Matt. 4:16; Luke 1:79; 2:32; John 1:4-9; 3:19-21; 8:12; 9:5) By their public witnessing activities, disciples of Jesus enlighten people concerning the sinful condition of mankind, God’s purpose to remove sin through Jesus Christ, and his Kingdom arrangement to bless with eternal life all who exercise faith in Jesus.—John 3:16, 36; Rom. 3:23, 24.

But being “the light of the world” involves more. The apostle Paul writes: “Go on walking as children of light, for the fruitage of the light consists of every sort of goodness and righteousness and truth.” (Eph. 5:3-9) Christians must be shining examples of conduct that accords with Bible principles.

With regard to his disciples as light bearers, Jesus further declared: “*A city cannot be hid when situated upon a mountain. People light a lamp and set it, not under the measuring basket, but upon the lampstand, and it shines upon all those in the house.*”—Matt. 5:14, 15.

A ‘city situated upon a mountain’ would be seen easily, even from a considerable distance. Similarly, persons who imitate Jesus Christ are noticed readily as being a people “zealous for fine works.” (Titus

2:14) Their efforts to manifest godly qualities such as moderation, chasteness, diligence at work, wholesome speech and family togetherness favorably impress others. (Titus 2:1-12) They are also determined to be “no part of the world,” not taking part in its politics, warfare and immoral way of life. (John 15:19; 17:14-16) Sometimes this leads to ridicule and persecution of conscientious Christians.—Matt. 24:9; 1 Pet. 4:4.

With good reason, therefore, Jesus adds that people set a lamp, “not under the measuring basket [Greek, *modios*, with a capacity of two gallons],” but “upon the lampstand,” where it can illuminate an entire room. Followers of Jesus must not allow opposition from the world to cause them to hide or keep to themselves the truths that they have come to know about God. Nor can they take up the practice of conduct that does not accord with Bible principles, for, even if such persons continued zealously proclaiming Bible truth, their actions would becloud its value.—2 Pet. 2:2.

With reference to a lamp shining on a lampstand, Jesus next declared: “*Likewise let your light shine before men, that they may see your fine works and give glory to your Father who is in the heavens.*” (Matt. 5:16) What a powerful reason to continue “shining as illuminators in the world”! (Phil. 2:15) By observing a Christian’s “fine works,” individuals can perceive the excellence of their God. Frequently such observers are motivated to “give glory” to God by also becoming his worshipers. Hence, the apostle Peter admonished: “Maintain your conduct fine among the nations, that, in the thing in which they are speaking against you as evildoers, they may as a result of your fine works of which they are eyewitnesses glorify God in the day for his inspection.”—1 Pet. 2:12.



## LIVING AS BELONGING TO JEHOVAH

TRUE Christians are interested in living at peace with others. (Rom. 12:18) Members of the Christian congregation do this by giving attention to the more important things and minimizing the things that are not essential for promoting faith. (1 Tim. 1:4) Among the important things, they seek to have unity of faith and action. As an illustration of this unity, the apostle Paul points to the human body. Just as the members of a healthy body operate in a unified way in the interests of the whole body, which enables it to get a worthwhile work done, so it is in the Christian congregation. There should be no division in this "body," but "its members should have the same care for one another."—1 Cor. 12:25.

1. On what matters should the Christian congregation be at unity?

<sup>2</sup> However, this unity is not uniformity. The fact that Christians all believe in the one Almighty God and in his Son Jesus Christ, who is Head over the congregation, does not make them like "peas in a pod," nor does it cause them to speak mechanically, as would robots. No, each has his unique personality, his own viewpoint on matters not essential to salvation. Each differs from the others, more or less, in his way of arranging affairs and of doing things, even in daily routines of work, in relaxation and amusement. This is to a large extent because circumstances and backgrounds of individuals vary greatly.

<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, whatever Christians do, they are to do wholeheartedly as to Jehovah God. One Christian may not fully understand why another one sees or does things in a certain way. But he realizes that God is the Judge of his servants. And, just as the Christian tries to do all things to the best of his understanding and ability in order to please Jehovah, so he attributes the same conscientious motives to his brothers. The apostle says on this:

"None of us, in fact, lives with regard to himself only, and no one dies with regard to himself only; for both if we live, we live to Jehovah, and if we die, we die to Jehovah. Therefore both if we live and if we die, we belong to Jehovah."—Rom. 14:7, 8.

<sup>4</sup> Even the most sincere, conscientious Christian has imperfections and faults and therefore does not always stay free from

2. While there is unity, why do Christians not see and do all things alike?  
3, 4. How does the true Christian "live to Jehovah"?

selfish acts. But it is *not his great object in life* to become rich or to indulge in a life of pleasure and ease. He is not living with regard to himself or for himself only. His main pursuit in life is to please God by doing His will. He is willing to die at any time if his death can serve God's purpose. And just as he lived his life as belonging to God, so in death Jehovah counts him as His. In fact, in facing death he is sure of a resurrection, because Jehovah views as living, not as dead, those who make him their God.—Matt. 22:31, 32; Rom. 4:17.

#### **ALLOW EACH ONE TO GOVERN HIS PERSONAL AFFAIRS**

<sup>5</sup> The most important work a person can do is to help others to gain and maintain a good standing with God and Christ. But other things also need to be done. A man who devotes time in proclaiming the "good news" may decide to build a new home, or enlarge his home, for his family. Because he spends time and money on this, other Christians should not conclude that necessarily he is materialistic. They are judging him if they say, 'He is "cooling off" in love for the truth.' The man may do this because he feels that it is a Christian's duty to have a presentable, respectable home in the eyes of the community. Perhaps he will use that home as a meeting place for a congregation group.

<sup>6</sup> Another conscientious Christian may choose a form of relaxation that is not wrong in itself. He keeps it secondary to *his serving Kingdom interests*. Others likely would not select that particular way as refreshing for them, but would consider it a waste of time. But they would be judging the Christian if they say that he is living for himself and not with regard

5. (a) What is the most important work? (b) How should a Christian view the way another person spends his time and energies?

6. How might a person find himself wrongly acting as judge of his brother with regard to forms of relaxation?

to Jehovah, or that he is divided between 'serving God and mammon.'—Luke 16:13, *Authorized Version*.

<sup>7</sup> Every one of us has his own view as to what material things he needs or can have, while continuing to put Kingdom interests first, sharing zealously in the urgent work of proclaiming the "good news" to others. (Matt. 6:33; Mark 13:10) A man may possess a fair amount of worldly goods and still retain command over them, using them to Jehovah's praise. Another may be of a nature that he cannot control riches and is tempted to let them take him away from spiritual things. He needs to 'pummel his body' and learn to exercise self-control, having in mind his foremost obligation to proclaim "the good news." (1 Cor. 9:16, 27) But another Christian should not presume to judge or act as a "conscience" for this person, though he may offer kindly help and counsel to one who is succumbing to a love of money.—1 Tim. 6:17.

#### **VIEW NO MAN "ACCORDING TO THE FLESH"**

<sup>8</sup> Jesus' half brother James says, in this regard: "Let the lowly brother exult over his exaltation, and the rich one over his humiliation, because like a flower of the vegetation he will pass away." (Jas. 1:9, 10) The lowly one, not having possessions or prominence in this system of things, can exult because in the world he was disregarded, but now he is considered as being on the same level as the rich one in the judgment of God and of his fellow Christians. He is a 'fellow citizen of the holy ones and a member of the household of God.' (Eph. 2:19) He has the surpassing riches of serving God, and ahead of him lies the reward of life. The rich man can exult over the fact that he has been brought to see that it is useless

7. Why cannot the Christian prescribe what is best for another with respect to material possessions?

8. How can both the poor man and the rich man exult as to their respective positions in the truth?

to spend his energies in the amassing of wealth. From his new Christlike, humble position he can appreciate the "deceptive power of riches" and the folly of trusting in them. (Mark 4:19) He knows that "the things seen are temporary, but the things unseen are everlasting." He now looks to the same reward as does the lowly one.—2 Cor. 4:18.

<sup>9</sup> Based on these truths, the fine rule for all Christians is set forth by the apostle: "[Christ] died for all that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died for them and was raised up. Consequently from now on we know no man according to the flesh." (2 Cor. 5:15, 16) What a man is spiritually, not what he appears to be from a fleshly, material standpoint, is what counts with God. We should hold to this evaluation of matters.

<sup>10</sup> That the true Christian cannot rightly regard matters in any other way is shown also by the apostle's words. After saying, "We belong to Jehovah," he continues: "For to this end Christ died and came to life again, that he might be Lord over both the dead and the living." (Rom. 14:9) Now as Lord he is able to help Christians to live their lives successfully for the things of God. As he has "conquered the world," so they also can conquer. (John 16:33; Heb. 7:25) As Lord over the dead, Christ has the authority and the power to bring them back to life. Comfortingly, throughout a life of serving God, and even in death, they are never abandoned.—Rom. 8:31-34, 38, 39.

<sup>11</sup> Paul is saying these things not merely to repeat the hope that the Christian should already possess. He is using this argument as proof that there is no place for the Christian to judge his brother, be-

cause that brother belongs totally to God. He makes the point of his argument in the next few verses, saying:

"But why do you judge your brother? Or why do you also look down on your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God; for it is written: 'As I live,' says Jehovah, 'to me every knee will bend down, and every tongue will make open acknowledgment to God.' So, then, each one of us will render an account for himself to God. Therefore let us not be judging one another any longer."—Rom. 14:10-13.

#### PRIMARILY, AVOID STUMBLING OTHERS

<sup>12</sup> In the congregation at Rome some had been judging the actions and motives of others who had different opinions and different conscientious scruples. This was wrong and dangerous to all involved. It was displeasing to the great Judge, before whom none had a preferred standing. Paul shows a far better way. To those who were prone to judge, he now says: "Rather make this your decision [or, "judge"], not to put before a brother a stumbling block or a cause for tripping."—Rom. 14:13. (See *The Kingdom Interlinear Translation*.)

<sup>13</sup> They could turn their propensity for judging others to a good advantage by judging themselves instead and by determining to supervise their own conduct more closely. Jesus had warned: "Stop judging that you may not be judged; for with what judgment you are judging, you will be judged. . . . How can you say to your brother, 'Allow me to extract the straw from your eye'; when, look! a rafter is in your own eye? Hypocrite! First extract the rafter from your own eye, and then you will see clearly how to extract the straw from your brother's eye."—Matt. 7:1-5; compare 1 Corinthians 11:31; 2 Corinthians 13:5.

9. Why should we "know no man according to the flesh"?

10. Why should we keep in mind that Christ is Lord over the dead and the living?

11. Why is it completely out of place for Christians to be judging their brothers?

12, 13. How do both the apostle Paul and Jesus Christ point out the thing each needs to do, rather than to be a judge?

<sup>14</sup> To cause another to stumble would be to incite him to sin, for sin is represented in the Bible as a *fall*. (1 Cor. 10:12; 1 Tim. 6:9; compare Matthew 5:27-30.) A Christian could make a brother stumble in this way: He might do something that he has the Christian freedom to do, without first ascertaining whether this might hurt the conscience of the brother. For example, this brother may have qualms of conscience with regard to alcoholic beverages. Yet the Christian may drink before the brother, or offer him a drink. The brother may think, 'Well, he is a mature Christian, so maybe I can follow his pattern.' So he is emboldened, and goes ahead. But at the same time his conscience is telling him that it is not right. It is condemning him. He is not acting out of faith, or as unto God. Therefore, he has been made to stumble. His conscience is wounded and he is dejected because he feels that he has sinned. It may be hard for him to recover.—1 Cor. 8:12, 13; Rom. 14:23.

<sup>15</sup> Or, the action of the Christian in insisting on his "freedom" to do something that under normal circumstances he has the right to do could cause the one with a weak conscience to become a judge of him. His unwisely exercising such "freedom" could cause the weaker one to start entertaining false suspicions and jealousies. This could endanger the peace and unity of the congregation.

<sup>16</sup> Paul gives the reason why one Christian may decide not to do something, the doing of which is perfectly all right for the other one: "I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is defiled in

itself; only where a man considers something to be defiled, to him it is defiled." —Rom. 14:14.

<sup>17</sup> The apostle shows the broad freedom that Christians actually have by speaking of food, which, he says, "God created to be partaken of with thanksgiving by those who have faith and accurately know the truth." "The reason for this," he continues, "is that every creation of God is fine, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, for it is sanctified through God's word [which approves it] and prayer over it."—1 Tim. 4:3-5.

<sup>18</sup> What God created and designated for a certain purpose, such as food, is fine, and the Christian may eat any of it without sinning—it is clean. But some, especially among the Jewish members of the early Christian congregation, had consciences weak on the point of foods that had been prohibited under the Mosaic law. (Acts 10:14, 15) Even though other Christians explained the matter, long usage and custom made it hard for their consciences to consider such food clean. Of course, they did not *have* to eat it. But someone else might realize that God had declared the Law to be abolished on the basis of Christ's sacrifice, and that therefore all foods were "legal" and clean. He could therefore eat wholeheartedly, thanking God for his provisions.

<sup>19</sup> However, should the Christian having this knowledge eat in the presence of the Jewish Christian? Paul answers: "If because of food your brother is being grieved, you are no longer walking in accord with love. Do not by your food ruin that one for whom Christ died."—Rom. 14:15.

14. What does it mean to cause a brother to 'stumble'? Give an example.

15. A Christian's insisting on doing a certain thing because he has a "right" to do it, could cause what sin on his part of a fellow believer?

16. Why does one Christian refrain from doing some things that another one considers perfectly all right?

17, 18. (a) What broad freedom does the Christian have, as illustrated by the apostle Paul? (b) Why were some early Christians unable to exercise this freedom fully?

19, 20. (a) Describe the difference between things that must be done and things that are optional to the Christian. (b) How can a Christian who is determined to exercise his Christian freedom be "no longer walking in accord with love"?

<sup>20</sup> While the example used here is food, the principle covers anything that we might have a right to do, and yet is an optional matter. However, there are things that God commands must be done, involving integrity, righteousness and obedience. They are the "important things." (Phil. 1:10) No Christian may properly compromise or fail on these points. But to go ahead stubbornly on matters of personal preference or opinion, not caring for the feelings of other Christians, is not acting

in accord with love. That which is not done out of love is of no value to the doer.  
—1 Cor. 13:1-3.

<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, headstrong action would be very unwise. It could pain another brother, even though that brother's opinion that the action is wrong might not be well founded. He could become downhearted, angry, even disgusted. The injury could go so far as to bring his faith to ruin. Christ, who gave his life for humankind,

is his Owner. (Jude 4) He counts this brother, bought by his blood, as precious to him, and he certainly will not be pleased with the one who, because of insisting on his own opinion, either judges his brother or gives cause for tripping.—Compare Matthew 18:6, 14.

<sup>22</sup> By living to Jehovah, then, we know that "all things [that God has provided for us to use or do] are lawful; but not all things are advantageous [they depend on time, circumstances, and what is for the welfare of others]. All things are lawful; but not all things build up. Let each one keep seeking, not his own advantage, but that of the other person."

—1 Cor. 10:23, 24.



**A Christian should not stumble another by offering him drink or food that his conscience rejects**

21. What effect could uncaring action have on another?

22. What, then, should we make it our determination to do?

**"The kingdom of God does not mean eating and drinking, but means righteousness and peace and joy with holy spirit." —Rom. 14:17.**



## ADORN THE TEACHING OF GOD IN ALL THINGS

**D**IFFERENCES of opinion, taste and inward feelings exist among any group of people. This is also true among sincere Christians. These variations can upset the peace and unity of the congregation if its members view their own opinion as superior or as being the one to which all should conform.

<sup>2</sup> In the 14th chapter of Romans, the apostle Paul deals with differences of opinion in the Christian congregation at Rome. These had to do with things affecting the conscience—differences that some felt had to be settled definitely, one way or another, in order to carry on the true worship of God. The foundation teachings of the Bible were not involved. The matters under dispute concerned interpretations

of conscience on the less important everyday activities of life. The apostle pointed out that mature Christians have a wide latitude of freedom in these things. But he also cautioned against the unbridled exercise of this liberty or a Christian's attempting to restrict another's freedom.

<sup>3</sup> One Christian might feel conscientiously free to exercise a certain right. However, Paul encouraged such a one to temper his actions if he knew that they offended the conscience of a brother. Conversely, the one having a conscience overly tender in some respects was counseled not to condemn his brother for doing what the Scriptures allow, even though he himself could not conscientiously do it.

### WE MAY WORK AGAINST OUR OWN INTERESTS

<sup>4</sup> The apostle then says: "Do not, there-

1. What factors that could be a source of trouble exist in every Christian congregation?  
2, 3. (a) What kind of differences existed in the congregation at Rome? (b) What was the gist of the counsel given by Paul to those in the congregation who differed in certain opinions?  
4. What good does the Christian try to do?

fore, let the good you people do be spoken of with injury to you." (Rom. 14:16) A Christian works hard to do good, to "adorn the teaching of our Savior, God, in all things" before the eyes of everyone, so that all will look on Christian teaching with the highest respect. (Titus 2:10) He wants his life to be a living testimony to what he and the congregation teach, as the apostle Peter counsels: "Hold a good conscience, so that in the particular in which you are spoken against they may get ashamed who are speaking slightlying of your good conduct in connection with Christ."—1 Pet. 3:16.

<sup>5</sup> Now, having been so careful in all these matters related to Christian living, what a shame it would be to destroy this good influence for true worship by insisting on doing something that is in itself entirely all right—"good"—but which looks wrong in the eyes of an overly sensitive Christian brother. The brother might tend to speak disparagingly about this to others. Or, some act that the Christian might do could be misinterpreted by the whole community. This act would not be one that is wrong in itself. But, because others condemn it, they could bring injury to the Christian's good reputation. It could reflect reproachfully on the message of the "good news" that the congregation works so hard to proclaim and teach. For this reason, it would be better that the Christian restrain himself from indulging in the enjoyment or practice of certain freedoms, even right ones, on which point the conscience of another Christian may be weak.

<sup>6</sup> On the other hand, it is also essential that a Christian with an overscrupulous conscience refrain from criticizing another, who is making use of his freedom, and actually doing no wrong. He is judging his brother. *He should get his view adjusted.*

5. How might something "good" that the Christian does be spoken of to his injury?

6. What advice is given the Christian with an overly scrupulous conscience?

(Compare 2 Corinthians 13:11.) For otherwise he will continue to disturb the peace of the congregation. Because of his judging his brother, he must share a very large part of the blame for the trouble his critical attitude causes. Rather, he should strive to become fully mature and firmly established, making his faith on all points strong, so that he will not be prone to stumble or to condemn others. If he does not progress in this way, he can be a constant source of trouble and can bring reproach on the "good news."—Heb. 5:12-14; Ps. 119:165.

#### KINGDOM OF GOD CONSISTS OF MORE IMPORTANT THINGS

<sup>7</sup> The apostle comes to the focal point of the matter when he says: "For the kingdom of God does not mean eating and drinking, but means righteousness and peace and joy with holy spirit." (Rom. 14:17) True worship and that which pertains to the kingdom of God and his congregation are not centered on these physical matters. As Jesus said: "There is nothing from outside a man that passes into him that can defile him; but the things that issue forth out of a man are the things that defile a man."—Mark 7:15.

<sup>8</sup> This can be said of many other things of life. Dress and grooming, entertainment, employment and other personal affairs are not the essentials "for the advancement of the good news." (Phil. 1:12) If there is no actual violation of the Scriptures and if moderation is shown by shunning extremes or involvements with worldly wrongdoing, then these matters of daily living do not come within the area where we should be judged by our brothers.—Compare Proverbs 11:2.

<sup>9</sup> It is the teaching about the kingdom

7, 8. What is meant by the apostle Paul's statement, "The kingdom of God does not mean eating and drinking"?

9. How is the kingdom of God "righteousness and peace and joy with holy spirit"?

of God that will produce the far superior fruitage of righteousness in its proclaimers and in those who hear the message. (Titus 2:12; 1 Pet. 2:11) Everyone should be ready to yield his own will and desires and his private indulgences for the sake of peace in the congregation. If a Christian really allows the holy spirit to work in him and direct him, he will have joy because of his confidence that he is pleasing God. The design of the kingdom of God is to promote *these vital things of the spirit*.—Rom. 8:6, 13.

<sup>10</sup> In view of his having these majestic goals, a mature Christian focuses his attention on the matters that really have to do with the characteristics and principles of the kingdom of God. “For he who in this regard slaves for Christ is acceptable to God and has approval with men.” (Rom. 14:18) If he slaves for Christ in promoting these important things, he will certainly have God’s approval, and other Christians will love him for his reasonableness and good sense. His life course will commend him to people on the outside. Even though some may not want to take up Christianity, his conduct will recommend itself to their consciences.—2 Cor. 4:2.

#### SEEK THE CONGREGATION’S PEACE

<sup>11</sup> “So, then,” says the apostle, “let us pursue the things making for peace and the things that are upbuilding to one another.” (Rom. 14:19) He thus advises the congregation to set aside all causes of contention and to live in harmony with one another. His appeal is for them to do the things that build up one another spiritually, instead of finding fault or, on the other hand, stubbornly insisting on a personal right—the things that tear down others.

10. In view of what the kingdom of God means, in what way is the Christian who slaves for Christ in this regard acceptable to God and approved by men?

11. Instead of finding fault with one another, to what should the members of the congregation lend all their energy?

Paul recommends that they work so that all can “attain to the oneness in the faith and in the accurate knowledge of the Son of God, to a full-grown man, to the measure of stature that belongs to the fullness of the Christ,” and “by love grow up in all things into him who is the head, Christ.” Then they can join together unitedly and, with real force and effectiveness, bring the message of salvation to mankind.—Eph. 4:13, 15.

<sup>12</sup> Those who have come to a knowledge of the truth are the work of God. Much time and effort has also been spent by God’s servants in teaching and assisting these, with great care and tenderness. They are “God’s field under cultivation, God’s building.” (1 Cor. 3:9) Could any Christian be so disrespectful and destructive as to tear this work down? The apostle admonishes: “Stop tearing down the work of God just for the sake of food. True, all things are clean [because the Mosaic law regarding clean and unclean things was abolished through Christ], but it is injurious to the man who with an occasion for stumbling eats. It is well not to eat flesh or to drink wine or do anything over which your brother stumbles.” (Rom. 14:20, 21) In leading another, by our example, to take a course contrary to his conscience, or by trying to force our preferred way on another, we may tear down all the good work that God’s spirit has accomplished with that person, even though we ourselves do not realize the damage that we are doing.—Compare 1 Corinthians 3:17.

#### SEEK GOD’S GLORY, NOT PLEASING OF SELF

<sup>13</sup> The conclusion to draw, then, is this: “The faith that you have, have it in accord with yourself in the sight of God.” (Rom. 14:22) The faith here mentioned has reference to the subject under discuss-

12. How can a Christian avoid “tearing down the work of God”?

13. How should one have his faith ‘in accord with himself in the sight of God’?

that we know what is right. It is common for us  
to feel that our way is right, and it may be so. It  
is good to be sure about what is right, but it is  
also important to be considerate of others.  
It is good to have a strong personal con-  
science, but it is also good to be considerate  
of others' decisions.



sion. Obviously, it does not mean faith in the kingdom of God and the important things in connection with it, for this faith is to be proclaimed openly to all. (Matt. 28:19, 20) Paul refers to the faith that a Christian has that Christ's sacrifice has freed us from former restrictions, such as eating certain foods and observing certain days—things that are not the real elements of the kingdom of God, but are now simply matters of personal preference or opinion. (Gal. 4:8-11) So the counsel is, 'Do not force your opinion on others.' If you know that there is a question in the minds of some as to the rightness of a certain thing that you know is not wrong, you should not seek to overpower them, or make a display of your own "freedom." God would then respect your considerate attitude. He would understand why you held back from exercising what really is a Christian right. But if you knew that your doing this certain thing would not

Rather than persuade another to go contrary to his conscience, we should let holy spirit lead him as he studies God's Word

cause qualms of conscience in others, you could go ahead. God would appreciate that you have a well-trained conscience and exhibit good judgment. Either way, God would see the sincerity of your faith. His judgment is what counts. He sees that you act both conscientiously and with love in the exercise of your faith.

<sup>14</sup> Now, to the other one who is conscientiously hesitant about taking a certain step, the apostle goes on to say: "Happy is the man that does not put himself on judgment by what he approves." (Rom. 14:22) By never going contrary to his conscience, the Christian will have peace of mind. But if he has doubts about a certain course, then without hesitation he should reject or abandon it. Whatever a person approves, it should not violate his conscience, however appealing it may be, or whatever argument someone else might make. On the other hand, if he finds that argument to be based on the Scriptures

14. Why is the man happy who "does not put himself on judgment by what he approves"?

and becomes thoroughly convinced of its correctness, then he may adjust his conscientious view accordingly.—Rom. 14:5.

<sup>15</sup> “But if he has doubts, he is already condemned if he eats, because he does not eat out of faith. Indeed, everything that is not out of faith is sin.” (Rom. 14:23) The apostle directs this remark to those professing to be Christians, not to unbelievers. What a person does should be something that in no way makes his conscience uncomfortable. If his conscience is bothered, he is self-condemned. And he should constantly strive for a clear picture of the Christian faith, so as to achieve a more balanced conscience. While not all things that a Christian does have a direct

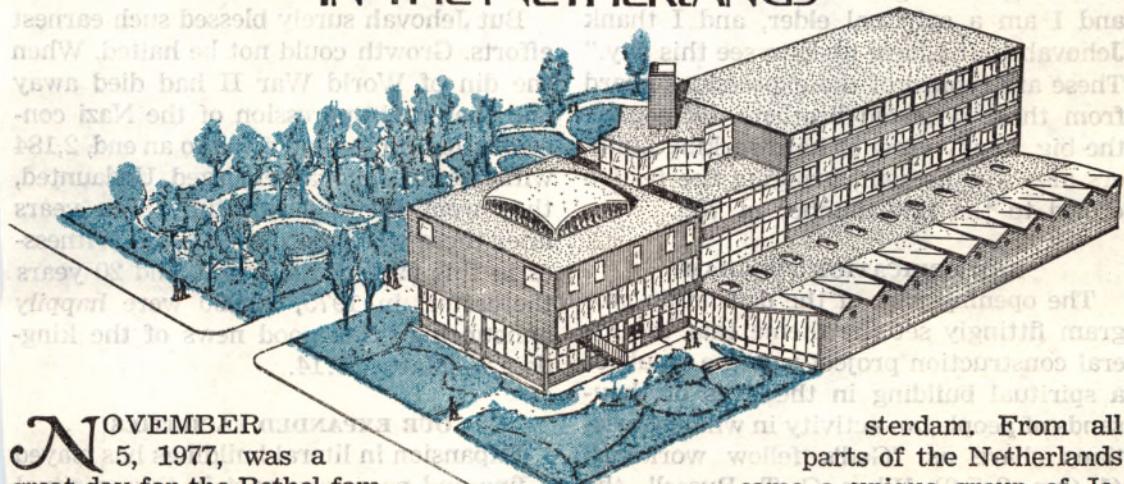
connection with the proclamation of the “good news,” what he does, even in recreation and relaxation, he does with the view of upbuilding himself and others.

<sup>16</sup> In summary, the wise counsel of the apostle is: “Do all things for God’s glory.” (1 Cor. 10:31) Before taking any step, ask, ‘Will this work for the peace of the congregation, so that God’s spirit will operate freely among all?’ ‘Will my action be such as to bring no reproach on the name of God and Christ?’ ‘Will it build up and not tear down the work of God in the congregation?’ Happy indeed is the Christian who can keep his life in full harmony with a right, balanced, clean conscience before God. Such a Christian is a blessing to the congregation of God.

15. (a) How is a man condemned if he goes ahead and does a thing when he has doubts as to its rightness? (b) How can he improve the quality of his conscience? (Eph. 3:14-19; 1 Thess. 5:11)

16. In order to “do all things for God’s glory,” what should a Christian do before taking any step?

# BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE —IN THE NETHERLANDS



NOVEMBER 5, 1977, was a great day for the Bethel family at the headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses in Am-

sterdam. From all parts of the Netherlands came a unique group of Jehovah's Witnesses. What a sight it was to see hundreds

of gray-headed brothers and sisters gathering in the Kingdom Hall and the shipping space connected with the Amsterdam Bethel home! Why had they come?

The occasion was the dedication of the new annex of the Bethel home. All those baptized before 1941 had been invited because these older ones had been the nucleus of the Christian organization in the Netherlands and had borne the brunt of the Kingdom proclamation work in the early days. How good it was to look around and see the beaming faces of all these aged brothers and sisters! Some were crippled, a few were in wheelchairs, others were bent with age, and many walked with canes—but here they were.

Listen to their remarks. "Brothers, this is a great day for me. Do you know that in 1940 I was a member of the family in one of the first pioneer homes in Leersum [Netherlands] and that we sometimes had no money for food until we placed some literature?" "I was an elder under the old arrangement [when congregational elders were chosen by voting]. Then when all those 'elective elders' went, I went with them. I became a company servant [presiding overseer]. I am old now, and I am a spiritual elder, and I thank Jehovah that I have lived to see this day." These are typical of the expressions heard from these dear old brothers. Of course, the big, happy crew of hardworking builders also was present, bringing the festive crowd to the fine number of 789.

#### THE DEDICATION PROGRAM

The opening part of the dedication program fittingly set the theme that the literal construction project was the result of a spiritual building in the lives of thousands of people, an activity in which Christians share as "God's fellow workers."

(*1 Cor. 3:5-9*) When C. T. Russell, the first president of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, visited the Netherlands

in 1891, the prospects for a spiritual building work here were not very bright. He remarked that the Dutch seemed more interested in material pursuits than in spiritual things. But what happened? Sprouting of the seed sown by a few scattered individuals could not be prevented by the strong religious elements active in those days. The work of declaring the "good news" began to grow.

In 1924 only 50 persons were present at a national assembly of Jehovah's servants in the Netherlands. During 1927 two brothers from France took up disciple-making activity in the southern part of the country. But in 1932 our work gathered momentum because some German pioneers, or full-time Kingdom proclaimers, crossed the border to the Netherlands and began to sow seed in abundance. They were supplemented by the first Dutch pioneers and other early workers. Of course, the economic crisis of the 1930's made life very hard. Cheerfully relating their experiences as part of the dedication program, some smiling pioneers said that in those days of privation they sometimes ate sandwiches composed only of 'dry bread on top and dry bread underneath.'

But Jehovah surely blessed such earnest efforts. Growth could not be halted. When the din of World War II had died away and the cruel oppression of the Nazi concentration camps had come to an end, 2,184 witnesses of Jehovah emerged. Undaunted, they went forward faithfully. Ten years later there were more than 9,000 Witnesses in this part of the world, and 20 years thereafter, in 1975, 29,000 were happily announcing "this good news of the kingdom."—Matt. 24:14.

#### OUR EXPANDED FACILITIES

Expansion in literal buildings has played a fine and necessary part in this spiritual building work. The dedication speaker, Lloyd Barry, a member of the Governing

Body of Jehovah's Witnesses, pointed out that this building was standing because Jehovah had blessed the work of the builders and those who had laid the spiritual groundwork in the Netherlands. He referred to the faithful ones who had eaten "sandwiches" of dry bread and pointed out that this same self-sacrificing spirit among Jehovah's Witnesses world wide had resulted in fine increase. Not all the builders had been professionals, but they had willing hearts.—Ps. 110:3.

If we could take you on a tour of our facilities here in Amsterdam, we might start with the new factory. Two job presses and a small Linotype machine can be seen in the large new extension. How happy we were to learn of plans to install a rotary press for magazine printing in this new factory!

Our tour next takes us to a large basement for the storage of literature and other items. The new annex is anchored to 190 pylons sunk deep into the subsoil. The basement floor actually lies some me-

ters under the groundwater level, and has just the right weight to "float" at a constant height. Obviously, such construction called for skilled craftsmanship. In the smaller basement section of the original home, a walk-in cool cellar and a modern meat-processing room have been installed. A little higher up in the building, new bedrooms have been added on every floor, so that there are now 37 bedrooms, a sufficient number to house the present Bethel family and extra members. Wall-to-wall carpets in the new rooms, the offices and the hallways add to the delightful surroundings. How pleasant to live in such a home! We heartily invite you to come to see it for yourself.

With great appreciation for the new facilities, and the expectation of more work to come, the Amsterdam Bethel family agrees with the dedication speaker, who said: "This building and its new annex are tokens of Jehovah's blessing and an indication that more work must yet be done to the glory of Jehovah's name."

## "Always Peaceful"

- Christians are Scripturally urged to "pursue peace" and "maintain fine conduct." (Heb. 12:14; 1 Pet. 2:12) Many benefits result from heeding this counsel. This was illustrated recently in South Africa.

● Due to unrest throughout the country, authorities at the African township of Soweto, outside Johannesburg, were doubtful about permitting Jehovah's Witnesses to use the Amphitheater there for an assembly. But the caretaker, who knew of their conduct at previous assemblies, commented: "These are the last people to be refused the use of the theater. Their assemblies are always peaceful." Permission to use the facilities was granted.

● Despite the unrest in the country, a fine, peaceful Christian assembly was held. It was attended by 4,620 persons, including 50 who were baptized in symbol of their dedication to Jehovah God. When the gathering was over, the caretaker remarked that the Witnesses had left the Amphitheater "clean as never before."

# INSIGHT ON THE NEWS

- Do the traditional roles of men and women result merely from differences in the way they are brought up? Most in

## Woman's Role

### —Equal or Complement?

think so. But Dr. Judith Bardwick, a psychologist and dean at the University of Michigan, admits that she has been forced to rethink some of her long-held feminist views because of recent biological findings. She also observes that "there is no society where males are not dominant. When something is so universal, the probability is—as reluctant as I am to say it—that there is some quality of the organism that leads to this condition."

Clearly, this "quality of the organism," noted by Dr. Bardwick, was put in the genetic makeup of women when God created Eve to be "a helper for [the man], as a complement of him." (Gen. 2:18) For this complementary role, God gave the first woman certain feminine qualities that serve to round out and make for a balanced relationship.

Because of such qualities, Sociologist Alice Rossi, a founder of the National Organization for Women (NOW), has come to believe that women may 'always predominate in the caring tasks like teaching and social work and in the life sciences, while men will prevail in those requiring more aggression . . . and in the "dead" sciences like physics.' Professor Rossi declares: "I don't think parity [equality] necessarily means identicity."—New York "Times," November 30, 1977, p. A1.

- An article titled "Hell: Still a Burning Issue?" in "U.S. Catholic" magazine observes that in the "Old Testament"

### Is Hell Hot?

hell was called "Sheol" and whether you were good or bad didn't make any difference. Everyone ended up in the same place." "Sheol" is the Hebrew word for "the grave," though often rendered "hell" in popular Catholic and Protestant Bible translations. The Catholic "Jerusalem Bible," however, leaves it untranslated, as does the "New World Translation."

"U.S. Catholic" goes on to note that later on, "evil ones" were believed to be "sent to Gehenna—the burning dump" outside Jeru-

salem. "I've seen it," says [clergyman] Martin Marty. 'The fires we now associate with hell are symbols of Gehenna' where fires burned constantly to keep the pile of rubbish manageable. . . . It was the name Jesus used when he spoke several times in the Gospels about hell."—November 1977, pp. 6-10.

Hence, even Catholic authorities are admitting publicly that the word "hell" as found in many translations has origins and meanings different from what many have been led to believe. In fact, the Catholic "Jerusalem Bible's" note on the "burning lake" of Revelation (Apocalypse) 21:8, which apparently corresponds with "gehenna," states that it represents "eternal death. The fire, like the water of v. 6, is symbolic."—See also Revelation 20:14, 15 and note, "Jerusalem Bible."

- A postcard recently mailed to all subscribers for "The Jewish Observer," an Orthodox publication, stated: "While we invariably avoid printing G-d's [God's] Name [Jehovah or Yahweh] in full

### Ancient Superstition Continues

—both in editorial texts and in advertisements—through a deeply regrettable printing error, the Name of G-d is spelled out in Hebrew [יהוה] in the ad for the Art Scroll Tehillim on the back cover of the Sept. J.O. [Jewish Observer]."

The card also advised readers to "handle this page with appropriate reverence." The New York "Times" article notes that this means "the offending page should eventually be buried."

Thus the superstitious custom of avoiding the use of God's name continues as it did centuries ago when Jewish Bible copyists substituted the Hebrew words for "Lord" or "God" for יהוה (Jehovah) thousands of times.

By contrast, the Bible itself urges believers to make use of God's name: "Fill their faces with shame; that they may seek Thy name, O LORD [Hebrew: יְהוָה]. . . . That they may know that it is Thou alone whose name is the LORD [Hebrew: יְהוָה], the Most High over all the earth."—Ps. 83:17, 19, Jewish Publication Society translation (83:16, 18 most others).

# INCESTUOUS MARRIAGES— How Should Christians View Them?

A FEW years ago a court in a Scandinavian country decided that no action should be taken against a man who was living with his sister in marital relationship. A member of the country's parliament said that he would advocate a change in the country's incest laws so that such relationship would not be illegal. Similar cases could be cited in many lands.

What constitutes an incestuous marriage? What information does the Bible supply that can aid Christians in determining the view that they should take regarding these?

"Incest" refers to sexual connections between close relatives. The English word is drawn from the Latin term *incestus*. In Latin, however, *incestus* means simply "unchastity." So it is a much broader term than the English word derived from it. All incest is, of course, unchastity, but not all unchastity is incest. The specialized meaning given to the English word is due to the appearance of *incestus* in the Latin *Vulgata*'s rendering of Leviticus 18:17, where sexual connections within certain family relationships are described.\* Catholic translations in English used the word in Anglicized form and, in time, it came to have its limited sense of sexual relations or marriage between close relatives.

The important point for those who respect God's Word, however, is not the

Latin or English term used, but what the Scriptures say about the relationship itself. For one thing, the Law covenant given to the nation of Israel did prohibit certain marital relationships between relatives. (Lev. 18:7-18; 20:14, 19-21; Deut. 27:23) For Christians, a vital factor is the desire to maintain marriage in honor and to avoid bringing it into disrepute, taking into consideration the conscience of others, both inside and outside the Christian congregation.—Heb. 13:4; 1 Cor. 10:32, 33; 2 Cor. 4:2.

The Law covenant's prohibition of certain marital relationships among close relatives certainly provides a guiding principle. But the fact remains that Christians are not under that Law given to fleshly Israel. Hence, the Christian congregation is not authorized to try to enforce that Law by insisting on adherence to its code through the avoidance of each and every prohibited marital relationship it lists.—Acts 15:10, 11; Rom. 6:14; Gal. 2:21.

It may be noted that certain features of the prohibitions seem designed to conserve the order of inheritance rights among the Israelites. Actual proximity of blood relationships or of family closeness due to marriage does not alone seem to have determined the morality or immorality of the relationship. Thus, a nephew could not marry his aunt but there was no prohibition against an uncle marrying his niece. (Lev. 18:12-14) Obviously, the proximity of blood relationship (or, if aunts and uncles through marriage are involved, the proximity of family relationship) was

\* The Hebrew word so translated is the word *zimmah*. Strong defines it as meaning "a plan, espec. a bad one." Kell-Delitzsch says: "lit. invention, design." The *Sep-tuagint* used the Greek *asebyma* for it and Liddell-Scott says this word means "impious or profane act, sacrilege." In the *New World Translation* it is rendered "loose conduct."

no greater or less in either case. Yet one was allowable and the other was not.

A man could not marry his brother's widow, something that today, in many lands, would not be viewed as incestuous. And yet, it may be noted that, under the Law covenant, where a man died without having fathered an heir, his brother was called upon by the Law to take the widow as his wife so as to produce an heir in his brother's name. This shows that such relationship was not deemed *intrinsically* or *inherently* bad or immoral.—Lev. 18:16; Deut. 25:5, 6.

Marriage by first cousins, where blood ties are quite close, was not prohibited. Marriage to a half sister was prohibited, but no prohibition is stated against a son marrying a stepdaughter of his father, that is, an adoptive daughter, not the offspring of the son's parents.—Lev. 18:11.\*

#### **IMPORTANT FACTORS FOR CHRISTIANS**

The fact that Christians are not under the Law covenant certainly does not mean that any marriage between fleshly relatives, no matter how close, is acceptable to Christians. It is noteworthy that, in discussing incest, the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (Micropædia, Vol. V, p. 323) refers to marriage between parents and children and between brothers and sisters and states that "incest is universally condemned and usually greeted with horror." In another article (Macropædia, Vol. 10, p. 479) it says: "The nearest approach to a universal rule found in all known human cultures is the incest taboo—the prohibition of sexual intercourse between a man and his mother, sister, daughter, or other specified kin." It speaks (p. 480) of the

\* Note that the listing in the book *Aid to Bible Understanding*, page 1041, erroneously lists such marriage as prohibited. The text (Leviticus 18:11) actually specifies that the daughter is the "offspring of your father," hence not adoptive. The chart in the February 1, 1975, *Watchtower*, page 73, correctly omits any prohibition of marriage with one's stepsister.

"basic triad" of mother, sister, daughter found in such incest prohibitions.

Turning to the inspired Christian Greek Scriptures, it seems obvious that when the apostle Paul wrote to Timothy that he should deal with "older women as mothers, younger women as sisters with all chasteness," his injunction drew its force from the fact that sexual relations with one's mother or fleshly sister were viewed as totally unacceptable, fundamentally immoral. (1 Tim. 5:2) And, since such sexual connections, as we have seen, are viewed with disgust in almost all areas, it is obvious that such a relationship could not fulfill the Bible's injunction, "let marriage be honorable among all."—Heb. 13:4.

While the likelihood of its happening is doubtless very remote, there can be no question that anyone entering into a parent-child or a brother-sister union would be viewed as definitely unacceptable in the Christian congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses and, hence, unacceptable for baptism unless the union would first be dissolved. Anyone who was a baptized member of the congregation and who entered into such union would rightly be disfellowshiped from the congregation and reinstatement therein could come only by a dissolution of the union.

#### **RELATIONSHIPS OUTSIDE THE IMMEDIATE FAMILY**

What of cases outside the immediate family? In view of the Law covenant not being in force toward Christians, there does not seem to be sufficient Scriptural basis for taking a rigid position here, although the closer to such intimate blood relationship the marriage comes the more the congregation should make clear its viewing the union as undesirable. Here the Scriptural principle of love enters strongly, since it is known that the closer the blood relationship the greater the likelihood of

genetic defects in any offspring resulting. (Rom. 13:8-10) It is a fact, too, that in a community generally "the horror at incest declines with the distance of the blood relative." (*Encyclopædia Britannica*, Micropædia, Vol. V, p. 323) So, even though some union between relatives outside the immediate family might not call for expulsion, the congregational elders could certainly take into account the degree of proximity in the relationship of those in such union, as also what effect this has on the congregation and the community, and then let this guide them as to using such ones in any exemplary way in the congregation.

Kinship may not be through blood relationship but through marriage (affinity). A Christian properly seeks to avoid that which would stir up public prejudice due to a violation of strongly held standards in this aspect of the matter. So, whereas, when relatives not related by blood marry, the danger of genetic hazards does not come into the picture, the closeness of their kinship can still affect the honorableness of their marriage in the eyes of the community. As has been shown, this should be of serious concern to the Christian. (Heb. 13:4) Like the apostle, we should want to "keep from becoming causes for stumbling" to those around us.—1 Cor. 10:32, 33.

In this connection, what of the case described at 1 Corinthians 5:1? Here the apostle describes an immoral relationship between a man and his father's wife, evidently the man's stepmother. The account does not say that any marriage was involved and, in fact, the apostle calls it "fornication" (*porneia*). The account does not say that the man's father was still alive, although the words at 2 Corinthians 7:12, if applying to this same case, would indicate that he was. It therefore seems that it was not a case of marriage but of

the man's living immorally with his stepmother. But, even though the question of marriage may not be involved, Paul's reference to this as a case of fornication such as "is not even among the nations" clearly shows that the family relationship existing made the fornication especially scandalous.—1 Cor. 5:1.

#### MAINTAINING DUE BALANCE IN OUR VIEWPOINT

It is not, of course, the duty of the Christian congregation to insist on total conformity to all the differing worldly standards regarding incest, nor to act as enforcers of Caesar's laws prohibiting certain marriages (some of which laws go beyond even what the Law covenant prohibited). Human laws and their definitions of "incest" are not consistent but show wide variations. In some societies, a man who marries within his clan or village or, in some cases, even within his tribe may be viewed as incestuous. In other societies, nearly the reverse is true and a person is condemned if he does not marry within his tribe or clan. (*Hastings' Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, Vol. IV, p. 253) In some Oriental societies, it is viewed as improper for persons having the same family name to marry, no matter how distant their kinship may be. (*Encyclopædia Britannica*, Macropædia, Vol. 5, p. 32) In some countries or states, marriage of first cousins can gain legal recognition, in others it cannot.

Though not providing the standard for morality such as governs one's acceptance into the Christian congregation or expulsion therefrom, these factors could affect one's being used in an exemplary way in the congregation. Much would depend on the gravity with which the surrounding community would view a union of certain relatives, whether it is a cause of great

scandal or is simply a matter of some occasional or scattered unfavorable comment.—1 Tim. 3:7, 10.

Where persons have entered such a union previous to baptism, and the union does not involve immediate family relationship and perhaps already has resulted in offspring, then it would seem that the principle stated at 1 Corinthians 7:24 might be extended to such situations. In some cases the union may not be such as is accorded legal recognition in the area. If the parties involved can go to some place where such is obtainable, this would be beneficial in that it may contribute a degree of honorableness to the union in the eyes of others. If not, and the parties desire to be baptized and otherwise qualify,

**So all Is'ra-el were reckoned by genealogies; were written in kings of Is'ra-el were carried away for their**

**2 Now dwelt in cities were, the Is'ra-el-ites, the priests, Lé'yites, and the Néth-i-nims.<sup>3</sup>**

**3 And in Je-ru'sa-lém<sup>4</sup> dwelt of the children of Jú'dah, and of the children of Bén'ja-min, and of the children of É'phra-im, and Mánas'seh;**

**4 U'tha-I the son of Am-mí'hud, the son of Óm'ri, the son of Ím'ri, the son of Ba'ni, of the children of Phá'rez the son of Jú'dah.**

**5 And of the Shí'lō-nites; Ás-a-i'ah the firstborn, and his sons.**

**6 And of the sons of Zé'rah; Jé'u-él, and their brethren, six hundred and ninety.**

**7 And of the sons of Bén'ja-min, Sál'lu the son of Me-shú'l'am, the son of Hód-a-wí'ch, the son of**

the opportunity could be extended to them to sign a declaration pledging faithfulness to their existing union. This would be viewed as an expression of their own acceptance of their union as binding rather than implying that the congregation favors the union.

Surely those who are deeply concerned with having and retaining God's favor and blessing will guard against doing anything that would reflect unfavorably on his Name and Word. Though freed from subjection to the Law covenant given to the Israelites, as true Christians they will give earnest heed to the inspired words of the apostle: "Do not use this freedom as an inducement for the flesh, but through love slave for one another."—Gal. 5:13.

## THE VALUE OF BIBLE GENEALOGY

**P**ERHAPS you have begun to read the Bible through from Genesis to Revelation (Apocalypse) and found the reading to be very absorbing. But when you came to the books of Chronicles and saw verse after verse and chapter after chapter giving a genealogical list of names that you could not pronounce and that were without meaning to you, you may have said, 'Why is this here? Why such boresome details?'

It is true that, for mere reading, such a list is monotonous. Nevertheless, these genealogical lists are very valuable. Why?

For one thing, they support the authenticity of the Bible. They constitute proof that God wants those who worship him to worship with spirit and TRUTH, not as a fictitious or imaginary god. (John 4:23, 24) Is it not true that when you hear or read an account of some event, you want *names* and *places*? You immediately ask, Who? Where? When you know these details, there is a ring of truth to what is said or written, and much more reality. Also, with this information at hand you can check for more details to verify what was said, referring to other parts of the Bible or secular historical works. If the Bible were fiction or written by impostors it would certainly avoid such details. But these details in the Bible harmonize with other accounts and help to make the Bible one united whole. It is an honest presentation of actual historical facts.

Furthermore, we must keep in mind that the Hebrew Scriptures were the *constitution*, the *law* and the *record book* of the Hebrew people. They formed the chief archive of the nation. Many of the genealogical lists were compiled from other written legal records, since the cities kept a register of those born in the locality. They are a part of *real history*.—Luke 2:1-5.

#### **HELPS TO IDENTIFY THE MESSIAH**

The genealogies are valuable in another very important way. That is, they help us to identify the Messiah. When Jesus Christ appeared, he did not announce 'I am the Messiah (or, Christ).' (John 5:31-37) Many other persons have done this through the ages, but they had no credentials. One's mere claim is not sufficient to justify others' faith in him. Among many proofs of Jesus' Messiahship, the genealogical records of the Jews, kept in their own city registers, testified that he was of the right line of descent—from King David of the tribe of Judah. (Luke 2:1-6)

Jesus said that he was the TRUTH, fulfilling all things the Hebrew Scriptures said of him, including his genealogy.—John 14:6.

The need for keeping a record of lineage was seen in the first prophecy, where God foretold a "seed," or offspring, that would deliver mankind. (Gen. 3:15) About 2,000 years later, because of Abraham's great faith, God favored him with the promise that the seed would come in his line of descent. (Gen. 22:17, 18) In time, the line of the promise was narrowed down to Judah, one of the 12 sons of Jacob and the great-grandson of Abraham, then, further, to King David's line. (Gen. 49:10; 2 Sam. 7:8, 12-16) Jesus' human birth met all these qualifications, for he was acknowledged as being of the tribe of Judah and the son of David.—Matt. 9:27; 2 Tim. 2:8; Heb. 7:14.

#### **RECORD OF PRIESTLY LINE IMPORTANT**

Besides keeping a record of the kingly line through David, the Jews had to keep records of the descendants of Aaron, of the tribe of Levi. This was because their priesthood all had to be of that tribe. (Ex. 28:1-3; Num. 3:5-10) A large portion of the genealogical record in Chronicles serves this purpose. Before David died, he made arrangements for the temple service, assigning the Levites to specific services. (1 Chron. chaps. 24-27) After the return of Israel from exile in Babylon these records were vital because the priesthood and temple services had to be restored. The books of Chronicles outline these arrangements made by David and, along with the books of Ezra and Nehemiah, show how worship was again established in the same pattern after the restoration. The lines of descent were strictly adhered to. This is illustrated by the fact that some men thinking that they were of the priestly family but unable to establish their genealogy were excluded

## In Coming Issues

- Who Cares About Religion Anymore?
- Peace and Security —When?
- Recognize Christ's Vital Place

from serving until they could prove their lineage.—Neh. 7:64, 65.

So the truthfulness of the Bible is upheld by these genealogies. Ezra, the writer of Chronicles, lists about 20 official sources that he used in compiling his work. These were public records, and not merely the fanciful works of writers who had nationalistic or selfish motives. But how can these genealogies benefit us today?

### SHOWS HOW ALL NATIONS CAME FROM ONE MAN

Bible genealogy helps us in other ways. It supports the apostle Paul's statement that "[God] made out of one man every nation of men, to dwell upon the entire surface of the earth." (Acts 17:26) The account is very clear that Adam and Eve were the parents of the entire human race. (Gen. 1:28; 3:20) Their descendants through their son Seth are listed down to the Flood. (Gen. chaps. 5, 7) Then Noah's family (eight persons in all) survived, to grow to 70 families, from whom the entire earth has been populated.—Gen. chap. 10.

### RANSOM BY ONE MAN

This information, in turn, reveals how it is possible that, since one man fathered the human race, one man could give his

life as a ransom price for the salvation of mankind. (Matt. 20:28; John 11:49-52) For, as the "last Adam," Jesus can purchase the human race, to administer the merit of his sacrifice, thereby becoming the "Eternal Father" to as many as take hold of the ransom. Had there been many original fathers of the human race one man could not have served as a ransom price.—1 Cor. 15:45; Isa. 9:6; 53:10.

### CHRONOLOGICAL PERIODS

Other benefits of the Bible's genealogical record are probably of less importance, but nonetheless valuable. In some parts of the Bible, they are essential for establishing the length of chronological periods. For example, in Genesis chapters 5 and 7:6, 11, the time from Adam's creation to the Flood is shown to be 1,656 years. Then, in chapter 11 the 427-year time period from the Flood to the Abrahamic covenant is accounted for.—Gen. 12:4.

Without these records it would be impossible to calculate how long humankind has been on the earth. The length of the time period is not revealed in the case of the animal creation, or in the preceding creative epochs. Although Bible scholars cannot be definite about the time that elapsed before man appeared on the scene, they can determine very accurately that the period of God's dealings with mankind to date is about 6,000 years.\*

### SEEMING DISCREPANCIES

Additionally, genealogical lists help us to understand matters otherwise obscure. For instance, Samuel appears to be an Ephraimite at 1 Samuel 1:1, where Samuel's father Elkanah is called an Ephraimite. If so, there appears to be something

\* From the time of the Abrahamic covenant (about 2,083 years from Adam's creation), the statements at Exodus 12:40, 41; 1 Kings 6:1, the record of the kings of Judah and Israel and the exile in Babylon, we are brought into the time of reliable secular chronology.

amiss, for Samuel served in the tabernacle, assisting Eli the high priest, also wearing an ephod, a garment signifying his work as one ministering there.—1 Sam. 2:11, 18.

On this problem the genealogical list of 1 Chronicles 6:19-28 helps us out. Here the descendants of Levi are listed, as shown by verse 19. In verses 27 and 28, Elkanah and Samuel are listed. So Samuel was actually a Levite, qualified for tabernacle service. His father was called an Ephraimite because he lived in Ramathaim-zophim, or Ramah, in the territory of the tribe of Ephraim. This is similar to our custom today of calling a person a Londoner because he has resided there for some time, whereas he may have been born in another locality.

#### PROPHETIC FULFILLMENT

As to showing the fulfillment of prophecy, an instance is found with regard to Jehovah's prophetic covenant with Phinehas, son of Eleazar the High Priest, of "a priesthood to time indefinite for him and his offspring after him." (Num. 25:13) How was this promise fulfilled?

The high priesthood apparently continued in Phinehas' line until the time of High Priest Eli, descendant of Phinehas' uncle Ithamar. This change was probably due to some temporary disqualification in Phinehas' line. But King Solomon removed Abiathar, the descendant of Ithamar, because he had joined King David's son Adonijah in an attempt to seize the throne of Judah while King David was sick. (1 Ki. 1:1-14; 2:26, 27) He made Zadok, Phinehas' descendant, high priest in his place. (1 Ki. 2:35) As far as the historical rec-

ord shows, this line apparently continued in the high priesthood for many years afterward.

#### IDENTIFICATION OF INDIVIDUALS

The genealogical record often helps us in establishing the relationship between certain persons mentioned. (Gen. 35:21-26) We are also happy, when confused as to the identity of someone we are reading about, to find that we are able to distinguish between persons of the same name because Bible genealogy often names a father, mother, brother, or son, or designates the city or locality from which an individual came.—Luke 6:14; Acts 12:12; Matt. 10:2-4; Mark 15:43; Acts 5:37; 1 Sam. 17:4, 58; Gen. 11:29; 28:9.

#### NEEDED BY JEWS FOR LEGAL MATTERS

Other points of value in the genealogical lists are: The Jews needed these for establishing tribal relationships for the division of the Promised Land and for determining family relationships for individual land inheritances. The genealogies identify the nearest of kin as the one on whom the legal responsibility devolved to perform brother-in-law marriage with his brother's widow in order to carry on his brother's name. This nearest relative also was the one to act in repurchasing his relative out of slavery, and to be avenger of blood upon a manslayer.—Deut. 25:5, 6; Lev. 25:47-49; Num. 35:19.

So, while the genealogical lists may seem complicated, we can be thankful that they were preserved for a purpose, both for those living in ancient times and for those who want to get an understanding of God's Word today.



# QUESTIONS from READERS

● Is it wrong for a Christian to use a pain-killer, since Jesus at his impalement refused wine mixed with a painkiller?

—Not necessarily; Jesus evidently did so for a special reason.

Just before being nailed to the stake Jesus refused what Matthew calls "wine mixed with gall" and Mark describes as "wine drugged with myrrh." (Matt. 27:34; Mark 15:23) One commentator observes: "The myrrh gave the sour wine a better flavour and like the bitter gall had a narcotic and stupefying effect. Both elements may have been in the drink which Jesus tasted and refused."

Jesus was then reaching the climax of his course of integrity. (Rom. 5:18, 19) Understandably, he would not want to be stupefied thereby the Godly consecration devotional with his precious blood upon a murderer.—Matt. 26:5, 6;

Mark 15:22; Matt. 27:48; Matt. 27:50.

Those living in present times say for those who went to get an injection of God's Word today

or drugged. He had prayed to his Father that he was willing to accept what was ahead. So Jesus needed to have and ought to have his full senses at that point. (Matt. 26:39; John 10:17, 18) Christ Jesus was to be fully aware of what he was doing in order to keep his integrity and to remain faithful to the end.

But what of a Christian's accepting a pain-killer when suffering pain or undergoing an operation? The Bible speaks of the appropriateness of giving intoxicating liquor to a person about to die, to aid him to forget his sorrow, or perhaps his pain. (Prov. 31:6) So, while the Scriptures rightly condemn getting drunk with alcohol (a drug), that does not rule out accepting a drug to deaden pain. When such is medically administered, it might serve a good purpose. However, the person involved should consider the possibility of becoming addicted to the painkiller.

## "WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

April 30: Living as Belonging to Jehovah.

Page 12. Songs to Be Used: 55, 56.

May 7: Adorn the Teaching of God in All Things. Page 17. Songs to Be Used: 65, 67.

May 14: Let Your Light Shine. Page 18. Songs to Be Used: 68, 69.

May 21: How Was This Possible? Page 19. Songs to Be Used: 70, 71.

May 28: The Righteousness of Jehovah. Page 20. Songs to Be Used: 72, 73.

June 4: The Righteousness of Jehovah. Page 21. Songs to Be Used: 74, 75.

June 11: The Righteousness of Jehovah. Page 22. Songs to Be Used: 76, 77.

June 18: The Righteousness of Jehovah. Page 23. Songs to Be Used: 78, 79.

June 25: The Righteousness of Jehovah. Page 24. Songs to Be Used: 80, 81.

July 2: The Righteousness of Jehovah. Page 25. Songs to Be Used: 82, 83.

July 9: The Righteousness of Jehovah. Page 26. Songs to Be Used: 84, 85.

July 16: The Righteousness of Jehovah. Page 27. Songs to Be Used: 86, 87.

July 23: The Righteousness of Jehovah. Page 28. Songs to Be Used: 88, 89.

July 30: The Righteousness of Jehovah. Page 29. Songs to Be Used: 90, 91.

