

OCTOBER 1, 2001

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

**YOU
CAN HAVE**

**True
Faith**

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

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TRUE FAITH

Is It Still Possible?

"Faith is a living, daring confidence in God's grace, so sure and certain that the believer would stake his life on it a thousand times."

—MARTIN LUTHER, 1522.

"To all intents and purposes we already are a secular society in which Christian faith and practices have become largely moribund."

—LUDOVIC KENNEDY, 1999.

VIEWS on faith differ dramatically. In the past, faith in God was the norm. Nowadays, in a world of skepticism and suffering, true faith in God and in the Bible is disappearing rapidly.

True Faith

To many, "faith" simply means having a religious belief or following a form of worship. As used in the Bible, however, "faith" basically means total trust—complete, unshakable confidence in God and his promises. It is a quality that marks a disciple of Jesus Christ.

On one occasion, Jesus Christ spoke about the need to pray and "not to give up." In so doing, he

raised a question about whether true faith would exist at all in our day. He asked: "When the Son of man arrives, will he really find this faith on the earth?" Why did he raise such a question?—Luke 18:1, 8, footnote.

Lost Faith

Many things can cause people to lose what faith they may have. Among them are the traumas and trials of everyday life. Professor Michael Goulder, for example, was a parish priest in Manchester, England, at the time of the 1958 Munich air disaster in which many of the Manchester United football team were killed. In a BBC television program, announcer Joan Bakewell explained that Goulder "felt helpless before the scale of people's grief." One result was that he "lost his faith in a God who intervenes in human destiny." Goulder stated his belief that "the

Bible isn't . . . the inerrant word of God" but, rather, "the errant word of man, perhaps with some divine inspiration here and there."

Sometimes faith just withers away. That was what happened in the case of writer and broadcaster Ludovic Kennedy. He says that from childhood his "doubts and uncertainties [about God] went to and fro and [his] disbeliefs grew." No one, it seems, could give him reasonable answers to his questions. His father's death at sea was a serious blow to what was already a very weak faith. Prayers to God to "preserve us from the dangers of

the sea and from the violence of the enemy" went unanswered as the converted passenger liner his father was on was attacked and destroyed by German battleships during World War II.—*All in the Mind—A Farewell to God.*

Such experiences are not unusual. "Faith," says the apostle Paul, "is not a possession of all people." (2 Thessalonians 3:2) What do you think? Is true faith in God and in his Word still possible in an increasingly skeptical world? Examine what the following article has to say on this subject.

You Can Have TRUE FAITH



When Sarah Jayne was 19, she learned that she had ovarian cancer. Following surgery, she felt good and was optimistic about the future. So optimistic, in fact, that when she was 20, she got engaged and began to make plans for her wedding. That same year the cancer returned, and she learned that she had only weeks to live. Sarah Jayne died in June 2000, just before she turned 21.

WHAT impressed visitors to Sarah Jayne's bedside in the hospital was her calm confidence about the future, along with her deep faith in God and his Word, the Bible. Despite the terrible tragedy she was facing, she was sure of the resurrection hope—that she would see all her friends again. (John 5:28, 29) "I will see all of you in God's new world," she said.

Some dismiss that kind of faith as delusional. "What else

is the afterlife but a belief among the insecure," asks Ludovic Kennedy, "that at the last trump there will be cakes and ale, even caviar and trumpets for them too, that in some leafy Eden they will share happy hours with those who have gone before and others who may well come after?" To that, we must raise a counter question. Which is more reasonable—to believe that "this life is all we have, so we had better make the most of it," as Kennedy suggests, or to believe in God and his promise of a resurrection? Sarah Jayne chose the latter. How did she develop such faith?

"Seek God . . . and Really Find Him"

To develop faith and trust in someone, you need to know him and to learn how he thinks and acts. This process involves the heart as well as the mind. It is really the same when it comes to developing true faith in God. You need to get to know him, to learn about his qualities and his personality, to find out how trustworthy and dependable he has proved to be in all that he has said and done.—Psalm 9:10; 145:1-21.

Some feel that this is impossible. God, they say, is too distant, too mysterious—if he exists at all. “If God is as real as he seems to be to Christians like Sarah Jayne,” asks the skeptic, “why doesn’t he make himself known to the rest of us?” But is God really too distant and unsearchable? In a speech to the philosophers and intellectuals in Athens, the apostle Paul said that “the God that made the world and all the things in it” has also provided all that is needed to “seek [him] . . . and really find him.” In fact, Paul said: “He is not far off from each one of us.”—Acts 17:24-27.

How, then, can you “seek God . . . and really find him”? Some have done this simply by observing the universe around them. For many, that in itself gives enough evidence to convince them that there must be a Creator.* (Psalm 19:1; Isaiah 40:26; Acts 14:16, 17) They feel, as the apostle Paul did, that “[God’s] invisible qualities are clearly seen from the world’s creation onward, because they are perceived by the things made, even his eternal power and Godship.”—Romans 1:20; Psalm 104:24.

You Need the Bible

To build real faith in the Creator, however, you need something else that he has provided. What is that? The Bible—God’s inspired Word, in which he reveals his will and pur-

* See the book *Is There a Creator Who Cares About You?*, published by Jehovah’s Witnesses.

pose. (2 Timothy 3:16, 17) “But wait,” some will say, “how can you possibly believe anything the Bible says when you see the terrible things done by people who claim to follow the Bible?” Granted, Christendom has a shocking record of hypocrisy, brutality, and immorality. But any reasonable person can see that Christendom only pretends to follow Bible principles.—Matthew 15:8.

The Bible itself warned that many people would profess to worship God yet would, in fact, “disown even the owner that bought them.” “On account of these,” said the apostle Peter, “the way of the truth will be spoken of abusively.” (2 Peter 2:1, 2) Jesus Christ said that these ones were “workers of lawlessness” who would be clearly identified by their evil actions. (Matthew 7:15-23) To reject God’s Word on the basis of Christendom’s record is like throwing away a letter from a trusted friend simply because the person who happens to deliver it is disreputable.

Without God’s Word it is impossible to build real faith. It is only through the pages of the Bible that Jehovah presents his side of things, so to speak. He sheds light on such perennial questions as why he has permitted suffering and pain and what he will do about the situation. (Psalm 119:105; Romans 15:4) Sarah Jayne came to believe that the Bible is the inspired Word of God. (1 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Peter 1:19-21) How? Not simply because her parents told her so, but because she took the time to evaluate honestly all the evidence that shows the Bible to be a unique revelation from God. (Romans 12:2) She observed, for example, the Bible’s powerful influence in the lives of those who adhere to its principles. With the help of such publications as *The Bible—God’s Word or Man’s?*,* she also carefully examined the mountain of internal evidence that proves divine inspiration.

* Published by Jehovah’s Witnesses.

"Faith Follows the Thing Heard"

It is not enough, however, simply to have a Bible or even to believe that it is inspired. "Faith," writes the apostle Paul, "follows the thing heard." (Romans 10:17) Hearing the Bible, not just *having* a Bible, is what builds faith. You "hear" what God has to say by reading and studying his Word. Even young ones can do this. Paul says that "from infancy" Timothy was taught "the holy writings" by his mother and grandmother. Does this suggest that some kind of brainwashing was involved? No! Timothy was not manipulated or deceived in any way. He was "persuaded to believe" what he heard and read.—2 Timothy 1:5; 3:14, 15.

Sarah Jayne became persuaded in the same way. Like the first-century Beroeans, she "received the word [from her parents and other teachers] with the greatest eagerness of mind." As a little child, she no doubt put instinctive trust in what her parents told her. Later, as she grew up, she did not just blindly or passively accept everything she was

"From infancy" Timothy was taught "the holy writings" by his mother and grandmother



From "Photo-Drama of Creation," 1914

The Beroeans were commended for examining the Scriptures daily

taught. She 'carefully examined the Scriptures daily as to whether these things were so.'—Acts 17:11.

You Can Build True Faith

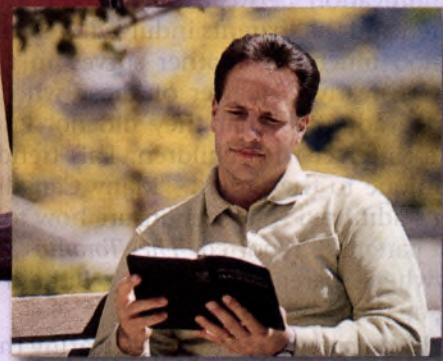
You too can build true faith—the kind of faith described by the apostle Paul in his letter to the Hebrew Christians. Such faith, he said, is "the assured expectation of things hoped for, the evident demonstration of realities though not beheld." (Hebrews 11:1) Having such faith, you will be absolutely sure that all your hopes and expectations, including God's promise of a resurrection, will be realized. You will be convinced that such hopes are based on sure guarantees, not on wishful thinking. You will know that Jehovah has never failed to keep his promises. (Joshua 21:45; 23:14; Isaiah 55:10, 11; Hebrews 6:18) God's promised new world will be as real to you as if it were already here. (2 Peter 3:13) And you will see clearly with eyes of faith that Jehovah God, Jesus Christ, and God's Kingdom are all realities, not delusions.

You are not left on your own to build true faith. Besides making his Word freely available, Jehovah has also provided a world-





*It is hearing
and heeding
the Bible, not
just having
one, that
builds faith*



wide Christian congregation that is devoted to helping righthearted people build faith in God. (John 17:20; Romans 10:14, 15) Accept all the help that Jehovah provides through that organization. (Acts 8:30, 31) And since faith is a fruit of God's holy spirit, pray constantly for that spirit to help you to develop true faith.—Galatians 5:22.

Do not be put off by skeptics who scoff at anyone who professes faith in God and his Word. (1 Corinthians 1:18-21; 2 Peter 3:3, 4) In fact, true faith is of immense value in strengthening your stand against such attacks. (Ephesians 6:16) Sarah Jayne

*"I will see all of you in
God's new world"*

found that to be true, and she always encouraged those who visited her in the hospital to build up their own faith. "Make the truth your own," she would say. "Study God's Word. Stay close to God's organization. Pray constantly. Stay active in Jehovah's service."—James 2:17, 26.

Seeing her faith in God and in the resurrection, one of her nurses said: "You really do believe this, don't you?" When asked what gave her such an optimistic outlook despite her trials, she replied: "It is having faith in Jehovah. He is a real friend to me, and I dearly love him."



IMITATE JEHOVAH WHEN TRAINING YOUR CHILDREN

"Don't all parents correct their children?"—HEBREWS 12:7,

Contemporary English Version.

A SURVEY that was taken in Japan a few years ago revealed that about half of the adults interviewed felt that there was too little communication between parents and their children and that parents indulged their children too much. In another survey in that country, nearly a quarter of those who responded admitted that they did not know how to interact with children. This trend is not unique to the Orient. "Many Canadian parents admitted they feel unsure how to be good parents," reported *The Toronto Star*. Everywhere, parents are finding it hard to bring up their children.

² Why do parents have trouble rearing their children? A major reason is that we are living in "the last days," and "critical times hard to deal with" are here. (2 Timothy 3:1) In addition, "the inclination of the heart of man is bad from his youth up," states the Bible. (Genesis 8:21) And youths are especially vulnerable to the attacks of Satan, who like "a roaring lion" preys on the inexperienced. (1 Peter 5:8) Obstacles certainly abound for Christian parents, who set out to bring up their children "in the discipline and mental-regulating of Jehovah." (Ephesians 6:4) How can parents help their children to grow up to be mature worshipers of Jehovah, able to distinguish "both right and wrong"?—Hebrews 5:14.

³ "Foolishness is tied up with the heart of a

boy," observed wise King Solomon. (Proverbs 13:1; 22:15) To rid their hearts of such foolishness, young ones require loving correction from their parents. Youths, though, do not always welcome such correction. In fact, they often resent counsel regardless of who gives it. Parents, therefore, must learn to "train up a boy according to the way for him." (Proverbs 22:6) When children take hold on such discipline, it can mean life to them. (Proverbs 4:13) How vital that parents know what is involved in training their young ones!

Discipline—What It Means

⁴ For fear of being accused of abuse—physical, verbal, or emotional—some parents shy away from correcting their children. We need not harbor such fears. The word "discipline" as used in the Bible does not imply any kind of abuse or cruelty. The Greek word for "discipline" primarily relates to instruction, education, correction and, at times, firm but loving chastisement.

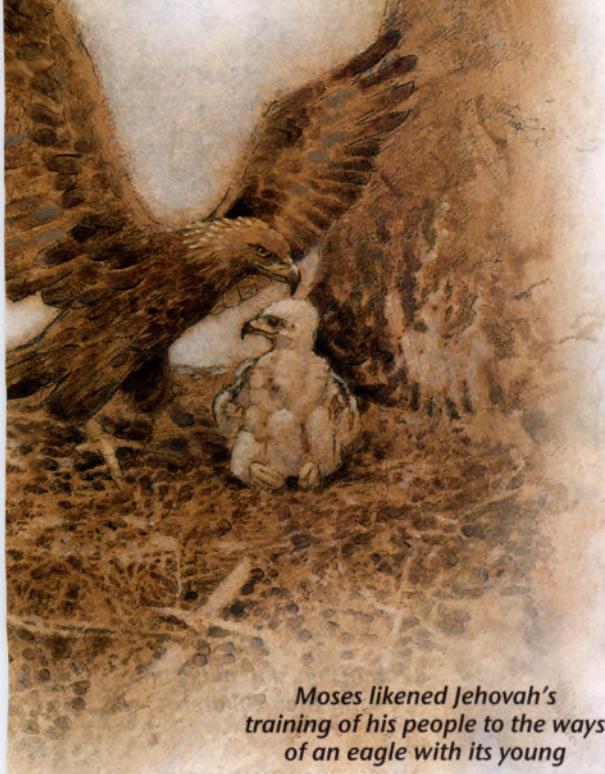
⁵ In providing such discipline, Jehovah God sets a perfect example. Comparing Jehovah to a human father, the apostle Paul wrote: "Don't all parents correct their children? . . . Our human fathers correct us for a short time, and they do it as they think best. But God corrects us for our own good, because he wants us to be holy." (Hebrews 12:7-10, *Contemporary English Version*) Yes, Jeho-

1. Why do parents have trouble rearing their children today?

2. Why is parental training and guidance essential for bringing up children successfully?

3. What is the primary meaning of "discipline" as used in the Bible?

4. Why is it beneficial to consider Jehovah's way of dealing with his people?



Moses likened Jehovah's training of his people to the ways of an eagle with its young

vah disciplines his people to the end that they may be holy, or pure. We can certainly learn much about disciplining children by considering how Jehovah has trained his people.—Deuteronomy 32:4; Matthew 7:11; Ephesians 5:1.

Love—The Motivating Force

⁶ “God is love,” says the apostle John. So, then, the training Jehovah provides is always motivated by love. (1 John 4:8; Proverbs 3:11, 12) Does this mean that parents who have natural affection for their offspring would find it easy to imitate Jehovah in this regard? Not necessarily. God’s love is principled love. And one Greek scholar points out that such love “does not always run with the natural inclinations.” God is not blinded by sentimentality. He always considers what is best for his people.—Isaiah 30:20; 48:17.

6. Why may it be difficult for parents to imitate Jehovah’s love?

⁷ Consider the love Jehovah showed in dealing with the Israelites. Moses used a beautiful analogy to describe Jehovah’s love for the young nation of Israel. We read: “Just as an eagle stirs up its nest, hovers over its fledglings, spreads out its wings, takes them, carries them on its pinions, Jehovah alone kept leading [Jacob].” (Deuteronomy 32:9, 11, 12) To teach her young to fly, the mother eagle ‘stirs up her nest,’ fluttering and flapping her wings to urge her young ones to take off. When a young bird finally dives out of the nest, which is often lodged on a high crag, the mother “hovers over” the young. If it seems that the fledgling might hit the ground, the mother swoops down under it, carrying it ‘on her pinions.’ Lovingly, Jehovah cared for the newborn nation of Israel in a similar way. He gave the people the Mosaic Law. (Psalm 78:5-7) God then watched over the nation with a keen eye, ready to come to the rescue when his people were in trouble.

⁸ How may Christian parents imitate Jehovah’s love? First, they must teach their children the principles and standards found in God’s Word. (Deuteronomy 6:4-9) The goal is to help the young learn to make decisions in harmony with Bible principles. In doing this, loving parents hover over their young ones, so to speak, observing how they apply the principles they have learned. As the children get older and are gradually given greater freedom, the caring parents are ready to “swoop down” and ‘carry their young on their pinions’ whenever there is danger. What type of danger?

⁹ Jehovah God warned the Israelites of the consequences of bad associations. (Numbers 25:1-18; Ezra 10:10-14) Associating with the

7, 8. (a) What example of principled love did Jehovah set in dealing with his people? (b) How can parents imitate Jehovah in helping their children to develop the ability to follow Bible principles?

9. To what danger in particular must loving parents be alert? Illustrate.

wrong crowd is also a common peril today. (1 Corinthians 15:33) Christian parents do well to imitate Jehovah in this regard. A 15-year-old girl named Lisa became interested in a boy who did not share her family's moral and spiritual values. "My parents immediately noticed a change in my attitude and showed concern," relates Lisa. "At times they corrected me, and at other times they tenderly encouraged me." They sat down with Lisa and listened patiently, thus helping her to deal with what they discerned to be the underlying problem—the desire to be accepted by her peers.*

Keep the Lines of

Communication Open

¹⁰ To be successful in training children, parents must strive to keep open the lines of communication with their young ones. Jehovah, though fully aware of what is in our heart, encourages us to communicate with him. (1 Chronicles 28:9) After giving the Israelites the Law, Jehovah assigned the Levites to instruct them, and he sent the prophets to reason with them and to correct them. He also showed a willingness to hear their prayers.—2 Chronicles 17:7-9; Psalm 65:2; Isaiah 1:1-3, 18-20; Jeremiah 25:4; Galatians 3:22-24.

¹¹ How can parents imitate Jehovah when

* The experiences found in this article and the next may be from lands culturally different from yours. Try to discern the principles involved, and apply them in your cultural setting.

10. In what ways did Jehovah set a fine example in communicating with the Israelites?
11. (a) How can parents promote good communication with their children? (b) Why is it important for parents to be good listeners when communicating with their children?



*Parents need to make time
for their children*

they communicate with their children? First and foremost, they must make time for them. Parents also do well to avoid thoughtless comments that ridicule, such as, "Is that all? I thought it was something important"; "That is silly"; "Well, what do you expect? You are just a child." (Proverbs 12:18) To encourage children to open up, wise parents endeavor to be good listeners. Parents who ignore their children when the children are little may find themselves ignored when the children are older. Jehovah has always been willing to listen to his people. He keeps his ear open to those who humbly turn to him in prayer.—Psalm 91:15; Jeremiah 29:12; Luke 11:9-13.

¹² Consider also how certain aspects of God's personality have made it easy for his people to approach him freely. For example, King David of ancient Israel sinned

12. What qualities on the part of parents can make it easier for children to approach them?

gravely by having an adulterous relationship with Bath-sheba. Being an imperfect human, David committed other serious sins in his life. Yet, he never failed to approach Jehovah and seek his forgiveness and reproof. Undoubtedly, God's loving-kindness and mercy made it easier for David to return to Jehovah. (Psalm 103:8) By displaying such godly qualities as compassion and mercy, parents can help keep open the lines of communication even when children err.—Psalm 103:13; Malachi 3:17.

Be Reasonable

¹³ When giving ear to their children, parents must be reasonable and reflect "the wisdom from above." (James 3:17) "Let your reasonableness become known to all men," wrote the apostle Paul. (Philippians 4:5) What does it mean to be reasonable? One definition of the Greek word translated "reasonable" is "not insisting on the letter of the law." While upholding firm moral and spiritual standards, how can parents be reasonable?

¹⁴ Jehovah sets an outstanding example in reasonableness. (Psalm 10:17) When he urged Lot and his family to leave the doomed city of Sodom, Lot "kept lingering." Later, when Jehovah's angel asked him to escape to the mountainous region, Lot said: "I am not able to escape to the mountainous region . . . Please, now, this city [Zoar] is nearby to flee there and it is a small thing. May I, please, escape there—is it not a small thing?" How did Jehovah react to this? He said: "Here I do show you consideration to this extent also, by my not overthrowing the city of which you have spoken." (Genesis 19:16-21, 30) Jehovah was willing to consent to Lot's request. Yes, parents need to adhere to the standards

13. What does being reasonable include?
14. How did Jehovah show reasonableness in dealing with Lot?

that Jehovah God sets out in his Word, the Bible. Still, it might be possible to accommodate the young ones' wishes when Bible principles are not jeopardized.

¹⁵ Being reasonable includes preparing the children's heart so that they are ready to accept counsel. In an illustrative way, Isaiah compared Jehovah to a farmer and said: "Is it all day long that the plow plows in order to sow seed, that he loosens and harrows his ground? Does he not, when he has smoothed out its surface, then scatter black cumin and sprinkle the cumin, and must he not put in wheat, millet, and barley in the appointed place, and spelt as his boundary?"—Isaiah 28:24, 25.

¹⁶ Jehovah "plows in order to sow seed" and "loosens and harrows his ground." He thus prepares the heart of his people before disciplining them. In correcting their children, how can parents 'plow' their offspring's heart? One father imitated Jehovah when correcting his four-year-old boy. When his son hit a neighbor boy, the father first listened patiently to his son's excuses. Then, as if to 'plow' the son's heart, the father told a story of a little boy who suffered terrible hardship at the hands of a bully. Upon hearing the story, the boy was moved to say that the bully must be punished. Such 'plowing' prepared the boy's heart and made it easier for him to see that hitting the neighbor boy was the act of a bully and was wrong.—2 Samuel 12:1-14.

¹⁷ Isaiah further compared Jehovah's correction to another farming process—threshing. A farmer uses different threshing instruments according to the toughness of the chaff of the grain. A rod is used for tender black cumin and a staff for cumin, but

- 15, 16. What lesson can parents learn from the illustration found at Isaiah 28:24, 25?
17. What lesson in parental correction is provided at Isaiah 28:26-29?

"It was one of the most enjoyable evenings in the week"

a sledge or cart wheel is used for grains with tougher chaff. Still, he will not tread the harder grains to the point of crushing them. Likewise, when Jehovah wants to remove anything undesirable in his people, he varies his treatment according to existing needs and circumstances. He is never arbitrary or heavy-handed. (Isaiah 28:26-29) Some children respond to just a glance from their parents, and nothing more is needed. Others require repeated reminders, while still others may need persuasion of a stronger kind. Reasonable parents will apply correction according to the individual child's needs.

Make Family Discussions Enjoyable

¹⁸ Among the best ways to instruct your children are a *regular* family Bible study and a *daily* Scriptural discussion. A family study is

18. How can parents make time for a regular family Bible study?

What Is Your Answer?

- How can parents imitate Jehovah's love described at Deuteronomy 32: 11, 12?
- What have you learned from the way Jehovah communicated with the Israelites?
- What does Jehovah's giving ear to Lot's plea teach us?
- What lesson in correcting children have you learned from Isaiah 28:24-29?



most effective when it is regular. If left up to chance or to a spur-of-the-moment decision, it is likely to be infrequent at best. So parents must 'buy out the time' for the study. (Ephesians 5:15-17) Coming up with a definite time that is convenient for all can be a challenge. One family head found that as the children grew older, their different schedules were making it harder to get the whole family together. Yet, the family was always together on the nights of the congregation meetings. The father therefore arranged to have the family study on one of those nights. This worked out well. All three children are now baptized servants of Jehovah.

¹⁹ However, it is not enough just to cover some Scriptural material during the study. Jehovah taught the restored Israelites through the priests, who 'expounded and put meaning into' the Law, "giving understanding in the reading." (Nehemiah 8:8) One father who successfully helped all seven of his children to love Jehovah always retreated to his room before the family study in order to prepare, tailoring the material to the needs of each child. He made the study enjoyable for

19. How can parents imitate Jehovah when conducting a family study?

his children. "The study was always fun," recalls one of his grown sons. "If we were out playing ball in the yard when we were called for the family study, we instantly put our ball away and ran in for the study. It was one of the most enjoyable evenings in the week."

²⁰ The psalmist declared: "Look! Sons are an inheritance from Jehovah; the fruitage of the belly is a reward." (Psalm 127:3) Training our children takes time and effort, but doing

20. What possible problem in bringing up children must yet be considered?

so properly can mean everlasting life to our young ones. What a fine reward that would be! May we, then, eagerly imitate Jehovah when training our children. However, while parents are entrusted with the responsibility of "bringing [children] up in the discipline and mental-regulating of Jehovah," there is no guarantee of success. (Ephesians 6:4) Even with the very best care, a child could become rebellious and stop serving Jehovah. What then? That will be the subject for the next article.

HOW CAN YOU HELP A "PRODIGAL" CHILD?

"Rejoice because . . . he was lost and was found."—LUKE 15:32.

"I'M LEAVING the truth!"

How shocking it is for God-fearing parents who have tried hard to bring up their children in the Christian way to hear these words from a child! Other youths just "drift away" without actually declaring their intentions. (Hebrews 2:1) Many of these resemble the prodigal son in Jesus' parable, who left his father's house and squandered his inheritance in a distant land.

—Luke 15:11-16.

² Though most of Jehovah's Witnesses do not have this problem, for those who do,

1, 2. (a) How have some young ones reacted to Christian truth? (b) How might parents and children in such situations feel?



no words of comfort can completely remove their grief. And not to be overlooked is the unhappiness that the wayward youth himself can experience. Deep down, his conscience may trouble him. In Jesus' parable, the prodigal son eventually "came to his senses," to the joy of his father. How can parents and others in the congregation help prodigals to 'come to their senses'?

—Luke 15:17.

Why Some Decide to Leave

³ There are hundreds of thousands of

3. What are some reasons why young ones decide to leave the Christian congregation?

young ones who serve Jehovah happily in the Christian congregation. Why, then, do other young ones leave? They may feel that they are losing out on something that the world offers. (2 Timothy 4:10) Or they may consider Jehovah's protective sheepfold too restrictive. A guilty conscience, a strong interest in the opposite sex, or a desire to be accepted by one's peers can also cause a youngster to drift away from Jehovah's flock. A youth may quit serving God because of what seems to be hypocrisy on the part of his parents or some other Christian.

⁴ A child's rebellious attitude and behavior are usually symptoms of spiritual weakness, reflections of what is in his heart. (Proverbs 15:13; Matthew 12:34) For whatever reason a youth goes astray, the root of the problem often lies in his not having "an accurate knowledge of truth." (2 Timothy 3:7) More than merely going through the motions of worshiping Jehovah, it is important that young ones cultivate a close personal relationship with him. What will help them do so?

Draw Close to God

⁵ "Draw close to God," wrote the disciple James, "and he will draw close to you." (James 4:8) To do so, a young person must be helped to cultivate a taste for the Word of God. (Psalm 34:8) Initially he will need "milk"—the basic teachings of the Bible. But as he takes delight in God's Word and acquires a taste for "solid food"—deep spiritual information—spiritual maturity will not be far off for him. (Hebrews 5:11-14; Psalm 1:2) A youth who admitted that he had been swallowed up in the way of the world began to appreciate spiritual values. What helped

4. What is often the root cause of young ones' going astray?
5. What is essential in order for a young person to cultivate a personal relationship with God?

him turn around? Responding to a suggestion to read the whole Bible, he kept to a regular Bible reading schedule. Yes, reading the Word of God regularly is essential for cultivating a close bond with Jehovah.

⁶ How vital that parents help their children to cultivate a fondness for God's Word! Despite having a regular family study, one teenage girl associated with delinquents. Regarding her family study, she recalls: "When Father asked the questions, I just read off the answers, without even looking at his face." Instead of just covering the material during a family study, wise parents employ the art of teaching. (2 Timothy 4:2) For a youth to enjoy the study, he must feel involved. Why not ask viewpoint questions and let him express himself? Encourage the young one to make practical application of the material under consideration.*

⁷ Moreover, make the Scriptural discussion lively. When appropriate, have young ones act out Bible events and dramas. Help them visualize the location and features of the land where events being discussed took place. Using maps and charts may help. Yes, with a little imagination, a family study can be made lively and varied. Parents also do well to examine their own relationship with Jehovah. As they themselves draw closer to Jehovah, they can help their children to do so.—Deuteronomy 6:5-7.

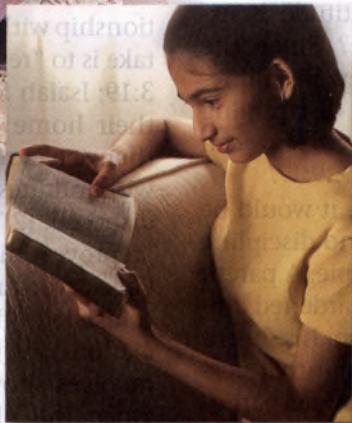
⁸ Prayer also helps one draw close to God. A girl in her early teens felt torn between the Christian way of life and her association with friends who did not share her beliefs. (James 4:4) What did she do about it? "For the very first time," she confessed, "I really

* For further suggestions on how to teach young ones effectively, see *The Watchtower*, July 1, 1999, pages 13-17.

- 6, 7. How can parents help their children develop a fondness for God's Word?
8. How does prayer help one draw close to God?



**Reading the Word of God
is vital for cultivating
a close bond with Jehovah**



prayed to Jehovah about how I felt." She concluded that her prayer was answered when she eventually found within the Christian congregation a friend in whom she could confide. Feeling that Jehovah was guiding her, she began to build a personal relationship with God. Parents can help their children by improving the quality of their own prayers. When praying as a family, parents can pour out their heart so that their children can feel the personal bond between the parents and Jehovah.

Be Patient but Firm

⁹ When a youth starts to drift away, he may try to isolate himself and resist any effort to bring him back to Jehovah. (See脚注 9, 10. What example did Jehovah set in being long-suffering with the wayward Israelites? See page 15.)

Parents' heartfelt prayer can help their children feel the personal bond between the parents and Jehovah

fort by his parents to have a spiritual discussion with him. What can parents do in such a trying situation? Consider what Jehovah did with ancient Israel. He put up with the "stiff-necked" Israelites for over 900 years before abandoning them to their wayward path. (Exodus 34:9; 2 Chronicles 36:17-21; Romans 10:21) Despite their repeatedly 'putting him to the test,' Jehovah "was merciful" to them. "Many times he made his anger turn back, and he would not rouse up all his rage." (Psalm 78:38-42) God was faultless in his dealings with them. Loving parents imitate Jehovah and are patient when the child does not immediately respond to

their efforts to help him.

¹⁰ Being long-suffering, or patient, does not mean "suffering long"; it denotes a refusal to give up all hope for improvement in a disturbed relationship. Jehovah set an example of how to be long-suffering. He took the initiative by sending his messengers to the Israelites "again and again." Jehovah "felt compassion for his people," even though "they were continually making jest at the messengers of the true God and despising his words." (2 Chronicles 36:15, 16) He appealed to the Israelites, saying: "Turn back, please, every one from his bad way." (Jeremiah 25:4, 5) Yet, Jehovah did not compromise his righteous principles. The Israelites were instructed to "turn back" to God and to his ways.

¹¹ Parents can imitate Jehovah in being long-suffering by not hastily giving up on the deviating child. Without losing hope, they can take the initiative to keep the lines of communication open or to reestablish communication. While sticking to righteous principles, they can "again and again" appeal to the child to return to the way of the truth.

When a Minor Is Disfellowshipped

¹² What if a minor who lives with his parents gets involved in serious wrongdoing and because of his unrepentant attitude is expelled from the congregation? Since the child lives with his parents, they are still responsible for instructing and disciplining him in harmony with God's Word. How can this be done?—Proverbs 6:20-22; 29:17.

¹³ It may be possible—indeed, it would be best—to give such instruction and discipline during a private study of the Bible. A parent must look beyond the child's hardened attitude and try to see what is in his heart. What is the whole range of his spiritual sickness? (Proverbs 20:5) Can the tender part of his heart be reached? What scriptures can be

11. How can parents be long-suffering but firm in dealing with a deviating child?
12. What responsibility do parents have toward a minor who lives with them but who is expelled from the congregation?
13. How may parents try to reach the heart of an erring offspring?

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

The Key to a Happy World

Acquire a Heart Agreeable to Jehovah

We Do the Best We Can!

used effectively? The apostle Paul assures us: "The word of God is alive and exerts power and is sharper than any two-edged sword and pierces even to the dividing of soul and spirit, and of joints and their marrow, and is able to discern thoughts and intentions of the heart." (Hebrews 4:12) Yes, parents can do more than simply tell their offspring not to get involved in wrongdoing again. They can try to initiate and nurture the healing process.

¹⁴ An erring youth needs to restore his relationship with Jehovah. The first step he must take is to "repent . . . and turn around." (Acts 3:19; Isaiah 55:6, 7) In helping the youth in their home to repent, parents must 'keep themselves restrained under evil, instructing with mildness' the child who is not favorably disposed. (2 Timothy 2:24-26) They need to "reprove" him in the Biblical sense. The Greek word rendered "reprove" can also be translated "give convincing evidence." (Revelation 3:19; John 16:8) To reprove, therefore, involves showing enough evidence to convince the child of the sinfulness of his course. Admittedly, doing so is not easy. Where possible, the parents can appeal to his heart, using all means Scripturally appropriate to convince him. They should try to help him to appreciate the need to "hate what is bad, and love what is good." (Amos 5:15) He may come back to his "proper senses out from the snare of the Devil."

¹⁵ In restoring one's relationship with Jehovah, prayer is a must. Of course, no one should "make request" concerning blatant sin that is clearly being practiced unrepentantly by any individual once associated with the Christian congregation. (1 John 5:16, 17;

14. What is the first step an erring youth should take to restore his relationship with Jehovah, and how can parents help the child to take that step?
15. What part does prayer play in restoring an erring one's relationship with Jehovah?



Welcome a prodigal child

when he 'comes to his senses'

Jeremiah 7:16-20; Hebrews 10:26, 27) Yet, parents can ask Jehovah to give them wisdom to deal with the situation. (James 1:5) If a disfellowshipped youth gives evidence of repentance but does not have "freeness of speech toward God," the parents might pray that if God finds a basis for pardoning the child's error, that His will be done. (1 John 3:21) Hearing these prayers should help the youth to see Jehovah as a merciful God.*—Exodus 34:6, 7; James 5:16.

¹⁶ If a baptized youth is disfellowshipped,

* Such prayers will not be offered publicly in behalf of a disfellowshipped minor at congregation meetings, as others may not be aware of the condition of the disfellowshipped person.—See *The Watchtower*, October 15, 1979, page 31.

16. How can we help family members of minors who have been disfellowshipped?

the congregation members are expected "to quit mixing in company with" him. (1 Corinthians 5:11; 2 John 10, 11) This may eventually help him to 'come to his senses' and return to God's protective fold. (Luke 15:17) Whether he comes back or not, however, members of the congregation can encourage the family of the disfellowshipped youth. We can all look for opportunities to show "fellow feeling" and to be "tenderly compassionate" toward them.—1 Peter 3:8, 9.

How Others Can Help

¹⁷ What about a youth who is not disfellowshipped from the Christian congregation but who has become weak in faith? "If one member suffers," wrote the apostle Paul, "all the other members suffer with [him]."¹⁷ (1 Corinthians 12:26) Others can take an active interest in such a youth. Of course, a measure of caution is needed, since a spiritually ailing youth could adversely influence other young ones. (Galatians 5:7-9) In one congregation, well-meaning adults who wanted to help some youths who had become spiritually weak invited them to gatherings to play popular music together. Though the youths readily complied and enjoyed such sessions, their influence on one another eventually led them to cut their ties

17. What should congregation members keep in mind when trying to help a straying child?



Do Not Give Up

¹⁹ Helping a “prodigal” child ‘come to his senses’ requires patience and can be a challenge to parents and others. But do not give up. “Jehovah is not slow respecting his promise, as some people consider slowness, but he is patient with you because he does not desire any to be destroyed but desires all to attain to repentance.” (2 Peter 3:9) We have the Scriptural assurance that Jehovah wants people to repent and live. In fact, he has taken the initiative in making an arrangement to reconcile humans to himself. (2 Corinthians 5:18, 19) His patience has made it possible for millions to come to their senses.—Isaiah 2:2, 3.

²⁰ Should not parents, then, use every Scriptural method possible to help their prodigal minor come to his senses? Imitating Jehovah, be long-suffering as you take positive steps to help your child come back to Jehovah. Firmly stick to Bible principles, and try to reflect Jehovah’s qualities of love, justice, and wisdom while you pray to him for his help. Just as many hardened rebels have responded to Jehovah’s loving invitation to come back, your prodigal son or daughter may well return to God’s protective flock.—Luke 15:6, 7.

^{19, 20.} Why should we maintain a positive attitude regarding a prodigal child?

Do You Recall?

- What may be the root of the problem when youths leave the congregation?
- How can young ones be helped to cultivate a personal relationship with Jehovah?
- Why do parents need to be long-suffering but firm in helping a prodigal child?
- How can those in the congregation help a prodigal youth to return?

Take positive steps to help your child come back to Jehovah

with the congregation. (1 Corinthians 15:33; Jude 22, 23) What can help heal the ailing child is, not social gatherings with no spiritual direction, but association that helps him to cultivate a taste for spiritual things.*

¹⁸ When a youth who has left the congregation comes back to the Kingdom Hall or attends an assembly, think of how he may feel. Should we not show the welcoming attitude of the prodigal’s father in Jesus’ parable? (Luke 15:18-20, 25-32) A teenager who left the Christian congregation and later attended a district convention stated: “I thought everybody would ignore a person like me, but the brothers and sisters approached me and welcomed me. I was deeply moved.” He began studying the Bible again and was later baptized.

* For specific suggestions, see *Awake!* June 22, 1972, pages 13-16; September 22, 1996, pages 21-3.

18. How can we imitate the attitude of the prodigal’s father in Jesus’ parable?

Reaching Those Hard to Reach

JEOVAH'S WITNESSES strive to contact everyone they can with the Kingdom message. At times, it takes an extraordinary effort to reach those who are seldom at home. (Mark 13:10) In this regard, a special pioneer minister in a South American country relates the following experience.

"One day I became aware that the state governor would be visiting the territory to which my wife and I are assigned. Since he was obviously one of those who are rarely at home, I wrote a letter to him and enclosed several Bible publications, including the brochure *What Does God Require of Us?* and the books *Mankind's Search for God* and *Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life*. My letter explained the purpose of each of these publications.

"Because I was interested in finding out his reaction to the literature, I requested a meeting with him. Some weeks later I was granted a meeting, and I took along a copy of the video *Jehovah's Witnesses—The Organization Behind the Name*. The meeting lasted about two hours. After watching the video with the governor, I asked him what he thought of it. He replied: 'There is no other organization on earth like yours. I wish I had people like you who could help me complete my government projects!' Then he asked if I had ever been to the world headquarters of our organization. I told him that although it had been my goal since I was 14 years old, I had not had the opportunity to



visit our world headquarters in Brooklyn, New York. It was one of those hard-to-reach goals. He looked at me intently for a moment. Then he said that he wanted me to have that opportunity. He took care of our legal permits and gave us the airplane tickets as a gift!

"The governor now regularly receives the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines. We hope that soon we will be able to start a Bible study with him."

What Does It Mean to Be LOYAL?

THE Jewish Hasidim from the second century B.C.E. viewed themselves as truly loyal. Their name comes from *cha·sidh'*, the basic Hebrew term for "loyal." It is derived from the noun *che'sedh*, which is frequently translated "loving-kindness," "loyal love," "kindness," "goodness," "mercy." According to the *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, *che'sedh* "is active, social, and enduring [and] designates not just a human attitude, but also the act that emerges from this attitude. It is an act that preserves or promotes life. It is intervention on behalf of someone suffering misfortune or distress. It is demonstration of friendship."

Obviously, in many languages no one word can express the full meaning associated with this Hebrew term as used in the Bible. In any case, loyalty in the Biblical sense means more than faithful adherence to commitments. It includes the idea of loving attachment along with the taking of positive action so as to benefit others. To understand what true loyalty means, consider how Jehovah demonstrated it toward Abraham, Moses, David, the nation of Israel, and mankind in general.

Jehovah Demonstrated Loyalty

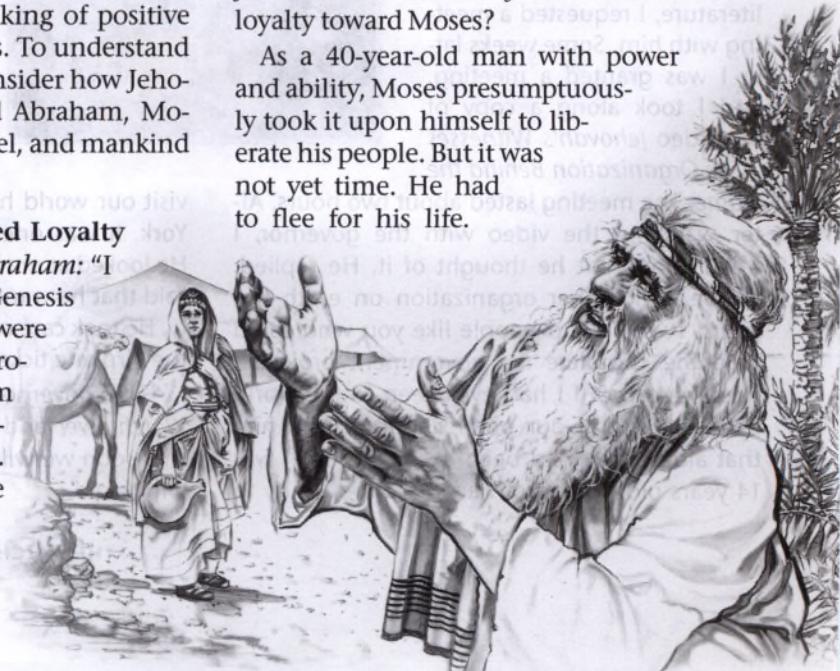
Jehovah told his friend *Abraham*: "I am a shield for you." (Genesis 15:1; Isaiah 41:8) These were not mere words. Jehovah protected and delivered Abraham and his household from Pharaoh and from Abimelech. He helped Abraham rescue

Lot from a four-king confederacy. Jehovah restored the procreative powers of 100-year-old Abraham and 90-year-old Sarah so that through them might come the promised Seed. Jehovah regularly communicated with Abraham through visions, dreams, and angelic messengers. In fact, Jehovah demonstrated loyalty to Abraham while he was alive and also long after his death. Over the centuries, Jehovah kept his promises to Abraham's descendants, the nation of Israel, despite their waywardness. Jehovah's relationship with Abraham was a demonstration of what true loyalty is—love translated into action.

—Genesis, chapters 12 to 25.

It was said that "Jehovah spoke to *Moses* face to face, just as a man would speak to his fellow." (Exodus 33:11) Yes, Moses had a relationship with Jehovah that was more intimate than that of any other prophet prior to Jesus Christ. How did Jehovah demonstrate loyalty toward Moses?

As a 40-year-old man with power and ability, Moses presumptuously took it upon himself to liberate his people. But it was not yet time. He had to flee for his life.





For 40 years he herded sheep in Midian. (Acts 7:23-30) Still, Jehovah did not abandon him. When the time was right, Moses was brought back to lead Israel out of Egypt.

Similarly, Jehovah demonstrated loyalty to *David*, the famous second king of Israel. While David was only a youth, Jehovah told the prophet Samuel: "Get up, anoint him, for this is he!" From then on, Jehovah loyally protected and

guided David while he matured as the future king of all Israel. Jehovah delivered him "from the paw of the lion and from the paw of the bear" and from the hand of the Philistine giant Goliath. He gave David victory after victory over Israel's enemies, and Jehovah delivered David from the spear of jealous, hateful Saul.—1 Samuel 16:12; 17:37; 18:11; 19:10.

Of course, David was not a perfect man. In fact, he sinned gravely. However, rather than abandoning him, Jehovah extended loyal love toward a deeply repentant David. Throughout David's life, Jehovah repeatedly acted to preserve and promote life. He intervened in behalf of the one suffering distress. Loving-kindness, indeed!—2 Samuel 11:1-12:25; 24:1-17.

The nation of Israel as a whole entered into a special dedicated relationship with Jehovah when they agreed

to the terms of the Mosaic Law covenant at Mount Sinai. (Exodus 19:3-8) Hence, Israel is depicted as being in a marriage relationship with Jehovah. To Israel it was said: "Jehovah called you as if you were a wife." And Jehovah said to her: "With loving-kindness to time indefinite I will have mercy upon you." (Isaiah 54:6, 8) How did Jehovah demonstrate loyalty in this special relationship?

Jehovah took the initiative to provide for the needs of the Israelites and to strengthen their ties with him. He delivered them from Egypt, organized them into a nation, and brought them into "a land flowing with milk and honey." (Exodus 3:8) He provided regular spiritual instruction through the priests, Levites, and a steady stream of prophets and messengers. (2 Chronicles 17:7-9; Nehemiah 8:7-9; Jeremiah 7:25) When the nation turned to serving other gods, Jehovah corrected them. When they repented, he forgave them. Admittedly, the nation of Israel was a difficult "wife." Yet, Jehovah was not quick to cast her off. Because of his promises to Abraham, He loyally stuck with the Israelites until His purposes in connection with them were fulfilled. (Deuteronomy 7:7-9) What a sterling example for married folk today!

Jehovah also demonstrates loyalty toward *man-kind in general* in that he provides the basic necessities of life for all men, righteous and unrighteous. (Matthew 5:45; Acts 17:25) More than that, he has provided the ransom sacrifice of his Son so that all mankind might have the opportunity to be released from bondage to sin and death and to enjoy the glorious prospects of perfect,



everlasting life in Paradise. (Matthew 20:28; John 3:16) The ransom provision was the ultimate act to preserve and promote life. It was indeed "intervention on behalf of someone suffering misfortune or distress."

Prove Your Loyalty With Positive Actions

Being synonymous with loving-kindness, loyalty also carries a strong sense of mutuality. If loving-kindness is demonstrated toward you, then the same can be expected in return. Loyalty is repaid in kind. That David understood the implications associated with *che'sedh* is evident in his words: "I shall bow down toward your holy temple, and I shall laud your name." Why? "Because of your loving-kindness and because of your truthness." (Psalm 138:2) As a recipient of Jehovah's loving-kindness, David was obviously moved to worship and praise him. Hence, as we contemplate Jehovah's demonstration of loving-kindness toward us, are we moved to reciprocate? For instance, if Jehovah's name is reproached, does your concern for his reputation motivate you to speak up in his defense?

That was what happened to one relatively new Christian and his wife when they attended the funeral of a relative who had been killed in a motorcycle accident. It was a non-religious service, and those in attendance were allowed to say something about the deceased. One speaker proceeded to blame God for this young man's untimely death by saying, 'God wanted him in heaven, so he took him.' Our Christian brother found it impossible to remain silent. He stepped up to the podium, even though he had neither Bible nor notes. "Do you think a merciful, compassionate, almighty God approves of situations like this?" he asked. He then proceeded with a ten-minute impromptu discourse with Scripture quotations explaining why we die,

what God has done to rescue mankind from death, and the marvelous prospect of a resurrection to everlasting life on a paradise earth. The more than 100 people in attendance broke out in extended applause. The brother later recalled: "I felt an inner joy that I had never felt before. I thanked Jehovah for educating me in his wisdom and for giving me the opportunity to defend his holy name."

Loyalty to Jehovah includes loyalty to his Word, the Bible. Why? Because through the pages of the Bible, Jehovah teaches us how to live. The laws and principles recorded therein are indeed the finest and most beneficial precepts for life. (Isaiah 48:17) Do not let pressure from others or your own weaknesses cause you to deviate from adherence to Jehovah's laws. Remain loyal to God's Word.

Loyalty to God also includes loyalty to his organization. Necessarily, over the years there have been corrections and adjustments to our understanding of certain scriptures. The fact is that no one is as spiritually well fed as we are. (Matthew 24:45-47) Unquestionably, Jehovah has stuck with his modern-day organization. Can we not do likewise? A. H. Macmillan did. Shortly before his death, he said: "I have seen Jehovah's organization grow from a small beginning, when I dedicated myself to God at the age of twenty-three in September 1900, to a worldwide society of happy people who are zealously proclaiming his truths. . . . I am convinced more than ever before, as I see the end of my service to God on earth approach, that Jehovah has directed his people and given them just what they needed at the proper time." Brother Macmillan served faithfully and loyally for nearly 66 years, until his death on August 26, 1966. He was a fine example of loyalty to God's visible organization.



A. H. Macmillan

In addition to being loyal to the organization, will we be loyal to one another? When faced with the threat of brutal persecution, will we remain loyal to our brothers and sisters? During World War II, our brothers in the

Netherlands set a fine example of loyalty. An elder from the Groningen Congregation, Klaas de Vries, was subjected to cruel, merciless interrogation by the Nazi Gestapo, placed in solitary confinement for 12 days with only bread and water, and then questioned again. With a revolver pointed at him and under threat of death, he was given two minutes to divulge the whereabouts of responsible brothers, as well as other vital information. The only thing Klaas would say was: "You will hear nothing more from me. . . . I will not become a traitor." Three times he was threatened with the revolver. Finally the Gestapo gave up, and Klaas was sent to another prison. Never did he betray his brothers.

Will our loyalty extend to our closest relative—our marriage mate? Even as Jehovah honored his covenant relationship with the nation of Israel, are we loyal to our wedding vows? More than being unwavering in allegiance, actively pursue a close relationship with your mate. Take the initiative to make your marriage secure. Spend time together, communicate freely and openly with each other, support and encourage each other, listen to each other, laugh together, cry together, play together, work together to achieve mutual goals, please each other, be friends. Be especially careful to avoid developing romantic feelings toward others. While it is

right and proper to develop acquaintances and even close friendships with others outside of your marriage, romantic feelings should be limited to your mate. Do not let anyone else come between you and your mate.—Proverbs 5:15-20.

Remain loyal to believing friends and family. As the years pass, do not forget them. Keep in touch, write, call, visit. Wherever life's path may lead you, try not to disappoint them. Make them happy to say that they know you or are related to you. Loyalty to them will keep you strong for what is right and will be a source of encouragement for you.—Esther 4:6-16.

Yes, true loyalty includes positive actions to preserve precious relationships. Do what you can to repay Jehovah's loving-kindness. Imitate Jehovah's loyalty in your dealings with the Christian congregation, your marriage mate, family, and friends. Loyally proclaim Jehovah's virtues to your neighbors. The psalmist had it right when he said: "Jehovah's expressions of loving-kindness I will sing about even to time indefinite. For generation after generation I shall make your faithfulness known with my mouth." (Psalm 89:1) Are we not drawn to such a God? Indeed, "his loving-kindness is to time indefinite."—Psalm 100:5.





A LIFE OF SURPRISES IN JEHOVAH'S SERVICE

AS TOLD BY
ERIC AND HAZEL BEVERIDGE

"I hereby sentence you to six months in prison." With those words ringing in my ears, I was taken off to Strangeways Prison in Manchester, England. It was December 1950, and I was 19 years old. I had just faced one of the toughest tests of my young life—I had refused to be conscripted for military service.—2 Corinthians 10:3-5.

I WAS a full-time pioneer minister of Jehovah's Witnesses, which should have meant exemption from military service, but British law did not accept our status. So I found myself alone in a prison cell. And I thought of my father. In an indirect way, I was in jail because of him.

You see, Dad, a prison officer, was a Yorkshireman of strong convictions and principles. Because of his experiences in the army and in the prison service, he had a deep antipathy to Catholicism. He first had contact with the Witnesses back in the early 1930's when he went to the door to get rid of them

—and came back with some of their books in his hands! Later he subscribed to the *Consolation* magazine (now *Awake!*). The Witnesses used to visit each year to encourage him to renew his subscription. When I was about 15, they engaged Dad in yet another discussion, and I joined in on the side of the Witnesses. That was when I started to study the Bible.

At the age of 17, I symbolized my dedication to Jehovah by being baptized in March 1949. Later that year I met John and Michael Charuk, recent graduates of the Gil-ead missionary school who were on their way to Nigeria. I was deeply impressed by

their missionary spirit. Whether they were aware of it or not, they implanted that spirit in my heart.

While studying the Bible, I lost interest in pursuing a place at a university. Within a year of leaving home to work in the Customs and Excise office in London, I felt that I could not fulfill my dedication to God by continuing in the civil service. When I quit my office job, one veteran office colleague congratulated me for leaving "a soul-destroying job."

Before this I faced another test—how to tell my father that I wanted to quit my secure job to become a full-time minister. One evening while at home on vacation, I dropped the bombshell. I waited for Dad's verbal explosion. To my surprise he simply said: "You make your bed; you lie on it. But if you fail, don't come running to me." My diary entry for January 1, 1950, states: "Told Dad about pioneering. I was completely taken aback by his reasonably helpful attitude. I could not help but weep at his kindness." I resigned from the civil service and accepted an assignment to be a full-time pioneer.

An Assignment With a "Cottage"

Then came my next test of devotion to God. I was offered a pioneer assignment, sharing a "cottage" in Lancashire with Lloyd Griffiths, a fellow Christian from Wales. Full of idealism and dreams of that cottage, I arrived in the drab, rain-soaked town of Bacup. I was soon brought down to earth when the cottage turned out to be a cellar! There were mice and cockroaches to keep us company at night. I was on the verge of turning around and going back home. Instead, in silent prayer I asked for strength to face this test. Suddenly, I felt a peace come over me, and I began to see the situation objectively. This was my assignment from Jehovah's organization. I would trust in Jehovah for help. How grateful I am that I stuck it out, for quitting

would have changed my life forever!—Isaiah 26:3, 4.

I preached in what was then the economically depressed Rossendale Valley for about nine months before I was hauled off to prison for refusing military service. After two weeks in Strangeways Prison, I was transferred to Lewes Prison on England's south coast. Eventually we were five Witnesses in there together, and we were able to commemorate the Memorial of Christ's death in a prison cell.

Dad came to see me once. That must have tested his pride—a well-known prison officer visiting his jailbird son! I will always be grateful for that gesture. Finally my day of release came in April of 1951.

On my release from Lewes, I took the train to Cardiff, Wales, where my father was then serving as principal officer at the prison. I was the eldest of four children—three boys and a girl. I had to find a part-time job so that I could pay my way and still be a pioneer. I went to work in a clothing store, but my main purpose in life was my Christian ministry. About this time our mother left us. That was a severe blow to Dad and to us children, aged from 8 to 19. Sadly, our parents were divorced.

He Who Finds a Good Wife . . .

There were several pioneers in the congregation. Among them was a sister who came down every day from the coal-mining Rhondda Valley for her work and preaching activity. Her name was Hazel Green—an excellent pioneer. Hazel had known the truth for more years than I had—her parents were attending meetings of the Bible Students (now known as Jehovah's Witnesses) back in the 1920's. But let her tell her own story.

"I did not take the Bible seriously until 1944 when I read the booklet *Religion Reaps the Whirlwind*. My mother induced me to go



*Strangeways Prison, Manchester,
where I started my prison sentence*

to a circuit assembly in Cardiff. With hardly any knowledge of the Bible, I found myself in the main shopping center with a placard around my neck announcing a public talk. I survived the experience in spite of being harassed by clergymen and others. I got baptized in 1946 and began to pioneer in December of that year. Then in 1951 a young pioneer turned up in Cardiff, fresh out of prison. It was Eric.

"We went out preaching together. We got on well. We had the same aims in life—to advance God's Kingdom interests. So we got married in December 1952. Although we were both in the full-time pioneer service and had a limited income, we never lacked for any of the basics. Sometimes we received a gift from a Witness who happened to have ordered too much jam or soap in her groceries—and just when we needed them! Practical gestures like those were greatly appreciated. But greater surprises were in store for us."

A Surprise That Changed Our Lives

In November 1954, Hazel and I received an unexpected surprise—an application from the branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses in London for me to be a traveling overseer, visiting a different congregation each week! We

were convinced that it was a mistake, so we told no one in the congregation. However, I filled out the form and sent it back, and we held our breath. A few days later, the reply came: "Come to London for training"!

At the London office, I could not believe that I, at the age of 23, was there with such outstanding brothers who seemed like spiritual giants to me—Pryce Hughes, Emlyn Wynes, Ernie Beavor, Ernie Guiver, Bob Gough, Glynn Parr, Stan and Martin Woodburn, and many others, most of whom have since passed off the scene. They laid a solid foundation of zeal and integrity in Britain back in the 1940's and 1950's.

Circuit Work in England—Never Boring

Our start in the traveling work began in the snow-laden winter of 1954/55. We were assigned to East Anglia, a flat area of England exposed to the cold North Sea winds. There were only 31,000 Witnesses in Britain at that time. That first circuit was a tough learning experience for us; nor was it always easy for the brothers we visited. With my inexperience and Yorkshire frankness, I sometimes trod on toes. Over the years, I have had to learn that kindness is more important than efficiency and that people are more important than procedures. I am still trying, but not always with success, to follow Jesus' example of refreshing others.—Matthew 11:28-30.

After 18 months in East Anglia, we were assigned to serve in a circuit in England's northeast, Newcastle upon Tyne and Northumberland. I loved the warmhearted people of that scenic region. A great help to me was the visiting district overseer, Don Ward, from Seattle, Washington, U.S.A. He was a graduate of the 20th class of Gilead. As a speaker, I used to rattle off information at a tremendous pace. He taught me to slow down, to pause, and to teach.

Another Surprise That Changed Our Lives

In 1958 we received a letter that changed our lives. We were invited to attend Gilead School in South Lansing, New York, U.S.A. We sold our little 1935 Austin Seven car and bought our tickets to sail to New York. First we attended the international convention of Jehovah's Witnesses in New York City. From there we went to Peterborough, Ontario, for six months of pioneering before heading south to Gilead School.

The school instructors included Albert Schroeder, who is now a member of the Governing Body, as well as Maxwell Friend and Jack Redford, who have since died. Association among the 82 students from 14 lands was very upbuilding. We began to understand a little about one another's cultures. Mingling with the foreign students who struggled with English gave us a taste of the problems we would face when learning another tongue. In five months we completed our training and were assigned to 27 countries. Then came graduation, and within days we were in New York City, waiting for our ship, the *Queen Elizabeth*, to take us back to Europe.

Our First Foreign Assignment

What assignment had we been given? Portugal! We arrived in Lisbon in November 1959. Now came the test of our adaptability to a new language and culture. In 1959 there were 643 Witnesses active in Portugal, in a population of nearly 9 million. But our preaching work was not legally recognized. Although we had Kingdom Halls, there were no exterior signs.

After being taught Portuguese by missionary Elsa Piccone, Hazel and I visited congregations and groups around Lisbon, Faro,



With our Austin Seven
in circuit work in England

Evora, and Beja. Then in 1961 things began to change. I was studying the Bible with a young man named João Gonçalves Mateus. He decided to take his stand as a neutral Christian on the issue of military service. Shortly after that, I was invited to police headquarters for questioning. Surprise! A few days later, we were notified that we had 30 days to leave the country! The same happened to fellow missionaries Eric and Christina Britten and Domenick and Elsa Piccone.

I appealed for a hearing, and we were allowed to see the chief of the secret police. He told us in no uncertain terms why we were being asked to leave and gave a name—João Gonçalves Mateus—a Bible student! He said that Portugal, unlike Britain, could not allow itself the luxury of conscientious objection. So we had to leave Portugal, and I lost track of João. Then, 26 years later, what a joy it was to see him with his wife and three daughters at the dedication of the new Portugal Bethel! Our ministry in Portugal had not been in vain!—1 Corinthians 3:6-9.

What was our next assignment? Surprise! Neighboring Spain. With tears in our eyes, in



*A clandestine assembly
in Cercedilla, Madrid, Spain, in 1962*

February 1962 we caught the train in Lisbon and headed for Madrid.

Adapting to Another Culture

In Spain we had to get used to a clandestine way of preaching and holding our meetings. When preaching, we usually never called at two adjacent homes. After witnessing at a door, we would go to another street, to another building. That made it difficult for the police—or the priests—to catch us. Remember, we were living under a Fascist, Catholic dictatorship, and our preaching work was prohibited. As foreigners, we took Spanish names as a protection against being identified. I became Pablo, and Hazel became Juana.

After a few months in Madrid, we were assigned to circuit work in Barcelona. We visited various congregations in the city, often spending two or three weeks in each one. The visits took that long because we had to visit each book study group as if it were a congregation, and that usually meant two groups weekly.

An Unexpected Challenge

In 1963 we were invited to take up the district work in Spain. To serve the nearly 3,000 active Witnesses, we had to cover the whole

country, visiting the nine circuits that then existed. We held some of our most memorable clandestine circuit assemblies in the woods near Seville, on a farm near Gijon, and by rivers near Madrid, Barcelona, and Logroño.

As a precaution when preaching from house to house, I used to check the layout of nearby streets for an escape route just in case anything went wrong. Once while preaching in Madrid, another Witness and I were on an upper floor when we suddenly heard shouting and screaming down below. When we got downstairs, there was a group of teenage girls, members of a Catholic group called Hijas de María (Daughters of Mary). They were warning the neighbors about us. We could not reason with them, and I knew that we would have to leave at once or else the police would catch us. So we escaped—and fast!

Those were thrilling years to be in Spain. We were trying to encourage the fine brothers and sisters there, including the special pioneer ministers. They risked prison and often endured privations in order to preach the good news of God's Kingdom and to establish and build up congregations.

During this period we also got some bad news. Hazel explains: "In 1964 my mother, a faithful Witness, died. It was a sad blow to lose her without even being able to say goodbye. That is one of the prices of missionary work that many others have also paid."

Freedom at Last

After years of persecution, in July 1970 our work was finally legally recognized by the Franco government. Hazel and I were thrilled at the opening of Kingdom Halls, the first in Madrid and the second in Lesseps, Barcelona. They always had large signs, often illuminated. We wanted the people to know that we were legal and here to stay! At this point,

1972, there were nearly 17,000 Witnesses in Spain.

About this time, I got some very encouraging news from England. My father had visited us in Spain in 1969. He was so impressed by the way the Spanish Witnesses treated him that on his return to England, he started to study the Bible. Then in 1971, I was told that Dad had got baptized! It was a touching moment when we visited home and he, as my Christian brother, asked the blessing on our meal. I had waited over 20 years for that day to come. My brother Bob and his wife, Iris, had become Witnesses in 1958. Their son, Phillip, is now serving as a circuit

**At our witnessing table
in Brooklyn**



overseer in Spain with his wife, Jean. It pleases us very much to see them serving in that wonderful country.

Our Most Recent Surprise

In February 1980, a member of the Governing Body visited Spain as a zone overseer. To my surprise he wanted to join me in the ministry. Little did I know that he was checking

me out! Then in September we were invited to move to the world headquarters in Brooklyn, New York! We were flabbergasted. We accepted the invitation, even though leaving our Spanish brothers was heartrending. At that point, there were 48,000 Witnesses!

When we left, a brother gave me a pocket watch as a gift. On it he had inscribed two texts—"Lucas 16:10; Lucas 17:10." He said that they were my theme texts. Luke 16:10 emphasizes that we should be faithful in small things, and Luke 17:10 says that we are "good-for-nothing slaves" and therefore have no reason to boast. I have always realized that whatever we do in Jehovah's service is simply our duty as dedicated Christians.

A Health Surprise

In 1990, I began to have heart problems. Eventually, I had to have a stent introduced in order to open up a blocked artery. During this difficult period of physical weakness, Hazel has supported me in many ways, often carrying bags and suitcases that I was too weak to handle. Then in May 2000, I had a pacemaker implanted. What a difference that has made!

Over the last 50 years, Hazel and I have seen that Jehovah's hand is not short and that his purposes are brought to fulfillment in his due time, not ours. (Isaiah 59:1; Habakkuk 2:3) We have had many joyful surprises in our lives and a few sad ones too, but through it all Jehovah has sustained us. Here at the world headquarters of Jehovah's people, we are blessed every day by contact with members of the Governing Body. Sometimes I ask myself, 'Are we really here?' It is an undeserved kindness. (2 Corinthians 12:9) We trust that Jehovah will continue to protect us against Satan's machinations and keep us so that we may enjoy the day of his righteous rulership over the earth. —Ephesians 6:11-18; Revelation 21:1-4.

Questions From Readers

What is the "rest" referred to at Hebrews 4:9-11, and how does one "enter into that rest"?

To the first-century Hebrew Christians, the apostle Paul wrote: "There remains a sabbath resting for the people of God. For the man that has entered into God's rest has also himself rested from his own works, just as God did from his own. Let us therefore do our utmost to enter into that rest."—Hebrews 4:9-11.

When Paul spoke of God's resting from His work, he was apparently referring to what is stated at Genesis 2:2, where we read: "By the seventh day God came to the completion of his work that he had made, and he proceeded to rest on the seventh day from all his work that he had made." Why did Jehovah proceed "to rest on the seventh day"? Surely it was not because he needed to recuperate "from all his work that he had made." The next verse provides a clue: "God proceeded to bless the seventh day and make it sacred, because on it he has been resting from all his work that God has created for the purpose of making."—Genesis 2:3; Isaiah 40:26, 28.

The "seventh day" was different from any of the preceding six days in that it was a day that God blessed and made sacred, that is, a day set aside for, or dedicated to, a special purpose. What was that purpose? Earlier, God had revealed his purpose regarding mankind and the earth. To the first man and his wife, God said: "Be fruitful and become many and fill the earth and subdue it, and have in subjection the fish of the sea and the flying creatures of the heavens and every living creature that is moving upon the earth." (Genesis 1:28) Although God had given mankind and the earth a perfect start, it would take time for the whole earth to be subdued and transformed into a paradise filled with a perfect human family, as God had purposed. Thus, on "the seventh day," God rested, or desisted, from further earthly creative works in order to allow

what he had already created to develop in accord with his will. By the end of that "day," all that God had purposed will have become a reality. How long will that rest be?

Getting back to Paul's statement in Hebrews, we note that he pointed out that "there remains a sabbath resting for the people of God," and he urged his fellow Christians to do their utmost "to enter into that rest." This shows that when Paul wrote those words, "the seventh day" of God's rest, which had started some 4,000 years earlier, was still in progress. It will not end until God's purpose regarding mankind and the earth is completely fulfilled at the end of the Thousand Year Reign of Jesus Christ, who is the "Lord of the Sabbath."—Matthew 12:8; Revelation 20:1-6; 21:1-4.

With that wonderful prospect in view, Paul explained how one might enter into God's rest. He wrote: "The man that has entered into God's rest has also himself rested from his own works." This tells us that although having a perfect start, mankind as a whole had not entered into God's rest. This was because Adam and Eve did not long observe God's rest on "the seventh day" by accepting his arrangement for them. Instead, they rebelled and wanted to become independent of God. In fact, they went along with Satan's scheme of things rather than accept God's loving direction. (Genesis 2:15-17) As a result, they lost the prospect of living forever on a paradise earth. From then on, all mankind became enslaved to sin and death.—Romans 5:12, 14.

Mankind's rebellion did not thwart God's purpose. His rest day continues. However, Jehovah made a loving provision—the ransom—through his Son, Jesus Christ, so that all who accept it on the basis of faith may look forward to release and rest from the burden of sin and death. (Romans 6:23) That is why Paul urged his fellow Christians to 'rest from their own works.' They needed to accept God's provision for salvation and not try to work out their own future in their own way, as

Adam and Eve had. They also needed to avoid pursuing their own works of self-justification.

Putting aside one's selfish or mundane pursuits in order to do God's will is indeed refreshing and restful. Jesus sounded this invitation: "Come to me, all you who are toiling and loaded down, and I will refresh you. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am mild-tempered and lowly in heart, and you will find refreshment for your souls. For my yoke is kindly and my load is light."—Matthew 11:28-30.

Paul's discussion of God's rest and how one might enter into it surely was a source of encouragement to the Hebrew Christians in Jerusalem, who had endured much persecution and ridicule for their faith. (Acts 8:1; 12:1-5) Similarly, Paul's words can be a source of encouragement to Christians today. Realizing that the fulfillment of God's promise to bring about a paradise earth under his righteous Kingdom is near at hand, we too should rest from our own works and do our utmost to enter into that rest.—Matthew 6:10, 33; 2 Peter 3:13.



*God's promise
of an earthly paradise
will be realized at the end
of his rest day*



A Lesson From the *Palm Tree*

A GRACEFUL silhouette of unique beauty." That is how one Bible encyclopedia describes the date palm. In Bible times and today, date palms beautify Egypt's Nile Valley, and they provide refreshing shade around oases of the Negeb Desert.

Like most species of palm tree, the date palm has a striking upright stance. Some reach a height of 100 feet and continue to bear fruit for 150 years.

Yes, the date palm is very pleasing to the eye and amazingly fruitful. Each year it bears several clusters of dates. Just one cluster may contain well over 1,000 dates. Of dates, one authority wrote: "Those who . . . only know the date from the dried specimens of that fruit shown beneath a label in shop-windows, can hardly imagine how delicious it is when eaten fresh."

Fittingly, the Bible likens certain humans to palm trees. To be pleasing in God's sight, like a fruitful palm tree, a person must be morally upright and must continue to produce good works. (Matthew 7:17-20) For this reason, engraved figures of palm trees were used as decoration in both Solomon's temple and Ezekiel's visionary temple. (1 Kings 6:29, 32, 35;



bloss, or blossoms, oaks, vine, fibres, etc., and mean...
...now, in the upper part of the above two lines, there is a
...long, thin, pointed, hollow, and, being planted,
...is often used to hold a small object in place.
...and, in the lower part of the same two lines, there is a
...long, thin, pointed, hollow, and, being planted,
...is often used to hold a small object in place.

Ezekiel 40:14-16, 20, 22) Thus, for one's worship to be acceptable to God, one must have the desirable characteristics of a date palm. God's Word explains: "The righteous himself will blossom forth as a palm tree does."

—Psalm 92:12.

