



THE PURPOSE OF THIS MAGAZINE, *The Watchtower*, is to honor Jehovah God, the Supreme Ruler of the universe. Just as watchtowers in ancient times enabled a person to observe developments from afar, so this magazine shows us the significance of world events in the light of Bible prophecies. It comforts people with the good news that God's Kingdom, which is a real government in heaven, will soon bring an end to all wickedness and transform the earth into a paradise. It promotes faith in Jesus Christ, who died so that we might gain everlasting life and who is now ruling as King of God's Kingdom. This magazine has been published by Jehovah's Witnesses continuously since 1879 and is nonpolitical. It adheres to the Bible as its authority.

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Photo: Alain Leprince - La Piscine-musée, Roubaix / Courtesy of the former Bouchard Museum, Paris

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SHOOK hands with the devil." So said the commander of the United Nations forces in Rwanda, reflecting on their failure to stop the genocide in that land during 1994. Commenting on the unbelievable savagery at that time, another observer stated: "If someone still dares to deny Satan, meet me at a mass grave in Rwanda." Are such atrocities really the work of the Devil?

Most people do not regard wanton violence and cruelty as the work of an invisible wicked spirit creature. Many think that such things are a result of the evil inherent in human nature and that the main cause of evil is our own dark instincts. Others theorize that a group of the wealthy and powerful, some sort of a shadowy global network, has been manipulating people for decades in order to rule the world. Then, of course, there are those who blame the national governments and rulers for all the injustice and suffering they see.

What do you believe? Why is it that evil, cruelty, atrocities, and suffering run rampant throughout the world today in spite of efforts to curb them? Why is it that mankind seems to be dashing headlong into a self-destructive course, turning a deaf ear to repeated warnings? Is there someone behind it all? Who *really* rules the world? The answer might surprise you.

## Who Really Rules the World?

Likely you have never met any leaders of organized crime. Does that mean they do not exist? Criminal bosses are skilled at hiding their identity or even operating from behind prison bars. Yet, newspaper headlines about drug wars, prostitution rings, and human trafficking, to name a few, remind us of the corrupting influence and dire consequences of the activities and of the existence of such crime figures. By the mark they leave on human society, we know that criminal leaders exist.

God's Word, the Bible, reveals that Satan is a real person who, like a powerful criminal kingpin, sees to it that his will is accomplished through "lying signs" and "unrighteous deception." In fact, he "keeps transforming himself into an angel of light," says the Bible. (2 Thessalonians 2:9, 10; 2 Corinthians 11:14) The Devil's existence can likewise be ascertained by the marks left by him. Yet, most people find it difficult to believe in an invisible, wicked spirit being. Before we examine more closely what the Bible says about the Devil, let us look at some common obstacles and erroneous beliefs that prevent many from accepting the idea that the Devil is a real person.

■ "How could a loving God create the Devil?" Since the Bible says that God is good and perfect, it seems contradictory to think that he would have created an evil, malicious, and wicked being. The fact is that the Bible does not say that God created such a person. On the contrary, it says about God: "The Rock, perfect is his activity, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness, with whom there is no injustice; righteous and upright is he."—Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 5:4.

The point to consider is whether a perfect person created by God could do anything other than what is right. Far from making his creatures like robots, God granted them free will—the ability to make their own choices. Hence, a perfect, intelligent creature can choose to do good or to do evil. In reality, only deeds performed by an intelligent creature, human or spirit, endowed with free will could have real moral significance.

It follows, therefore, that God would not have granted his creatures moral freedom and at the same time prevented them from doing evil should they choose to do so. Jesus referred to a misuse of free will when he said of the Devil: "He did not stand fast in the truth." (John 8:44) That statement clearly indicates that the one who became the Devil was originally a perfect spirit person, who at one time did "stand fast in the truth."\* Jehovah God made his creatures free moral agents because he loves and trusts them.



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<sup>\*</sup> To understand why God did not immediately put an end to the Devil's rebellion, see chapter 11 of the book What Does the Bible Really Teach? published by Jehovah's Witnesses.



—See the box "Could a Perfect Creature Lose Perfection?" on page 6.

■ "The Devil is a servant of God" For some, the Bible seems to suggest this idea in the book of Job. According to one Bible commentary, the statement that the Devil was "roving about in the earth" refers to the role of ancient Persian spies, who traveled and reported matters in the service of their king. (Job 1:7) However, if the Devil were really God's spy, why would he have to explain to God that he had come from "roving about in the earth"? Far from depicting him as an ally of God, the account in Job calls the Devil by the name Satan, meaning "Resister," thus

Is the Devil a servant of God or a resister of God?

indicating that he is actually God's chief Adversary. (Job 1:6) Where, then, does the idea that the Devil is in God's service come from?

As early as the first century C.E., apocryphal books, such as the "Book of Jubilees" and the "Common Rule" of the Qumran sect, depicted the Devil as bargaining with God and yet subject to His will. In his book *Mephistopheles*, historian J. B. Russell explains that Protestant Reformer Martin Luther regarded the Devil as God's tool, "like a pruning hook or a hoe that he uses to cultivate his garden." The idea is, adds Russell, that "the hoe takes pleasure in destroying

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the weeds," but it remains in God's mighty hand, thus fulfilling God's will. Luther's teaching—later accepted by French theologian John Calvin—offended many believers' sense of justice. How could a loving God not only permit evil but even will it to happen? (James 1:13) This doctrine, along with the horrors of the 20th century, prevents many people from believing both in God and in the Devil.

■ "The Devil is merely a principle of evil" To consider the Devil a mere principle of evil would make some Bible passages almost impossible to understand. For instance, as described at Job 2:3-6, with whom was God having a conversation? Was he possibly speaking to an abstract principle of evil in Job, or was he perhaps even talking to himself? Furthermore, would God be praising the virtues of Job at one moment and allowing Job to be tested by a principle of evil the next? Ascribing such motives to God would amount to making him a perverse Being, not the one "in whom there is no unrighteousness." (Psalm 92:15) Quite the contrary. God refused to 'thrust out his hand' to harm Job. Clearly, the Devil is not a principle of evil or a dark side of God's personality but a spirit person who made himself God's Adversary.

#### Who Really Is Ruling the World?

Today, many feel that it is old-fashioned to believe in the Devil. However, no explanation for the harsh reality of evil, apart from the Devil, has proved satisfactory. In fact, the attempt to do away with the idea of the Devil has led many people to reject God and any moral boundaries altogether.

"The devil's deepest wile," wrote 19th-century poet Charles-Pierre Baudelaire, "is to persuade us that he does not exist." By concealing his identity, the Devil has actually raised doubts about the existence of God. If the Devil did not exist, would that not make God responsible for all evil? Is that not exactly what the Devil wants people to believe?

Like a criminal boss, the Devil conceals his identity in order to achieve his objective. What is that objective? The Bible answers: "The god of this system of things has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, that the illumination of the glorious good news about the Christ, who is the image of God, might not shine through."—2 Corinthians 4:4.

One important question remains. What will God do with this secret mastermind who is behind all evil and suffering? This we will consider in the following article.



#### **Could a Perfect Creature Lose Perfection?**

The perfection granted by God to his intelligent creatures is relative. Although created perfect, Adam needed to respect the physical limits imposed upon him by his Creator. For example, he could not eat dirt, gravel, or wood without suffering the consequences. If he had ignored the law of gravity and jumped from a high cliff, he would have died or been severely injured.

Likewise, no perfect creature—human or angelic—can go beyond the moral boundaries set by God without exposing himself to ill effects. Thus, when an intelligent creature misuses his free will, he easily falls into error and sin.—Genesis 1:29; Matthew 4:4.

## The World's Secret Ruler Exposed

THE ruler of this world will be cast out," said Jesus to the people on one occasion. Later, he added that 'the ruler of the world had no hold on him' and that "the ruler of this world has been judged." (John 12:31; 14: 30; 16:11) Of whom was Jesus speaking?

Considering what Jesus was saying about "the ruler of this world," it is obvious that he could not have been referring to his Father, Jehovah God. Who, then, is "the ruler of this world"? How will he be "cast out," and how has he been "judged"?

### "The Ruler of This World" Reveals Himself

Just as a master criminal often takes pride in boasting about his power, so did the Devil when tempting Jesus, the Son of God. After showing Jesus "all the kingdoms" of the world, Satan made him this offer: "I will give you all this authority and the glory of them, because it has been delivered to me, and to whomever I wish I give it. You, therefore, if you do an act of worship before me, it will all be yours."—Luke 4:5-7.

If the Devil were merely a principle of evil, as some have suggested, how could that temptation be explained? Was Jesus being tempted by some evil thought or by some inner turmoil that possibly followed his baptism? If so, how could it be said that "there is no sin in him"? (1 John 3:5) Far from denying the Devil's power over mankind, Jesus actually confirmed it by speaking of him as "the ruler of the world," describing him as "a murderer" and "a liar."—John 14:30; 8:44; *The New Jerusalem Bible*.

Some 60 years after Christ's encounter with the Devil, the apostle John reminded Christians of the Devil's powerful influence, saying that "the whole world is lying in the power of the wicked one." That one, John also said, "is misleading the entire inhabited earth." (1 John 5:19; Revelation 12:9) Clearly, the Bible speaks of an invisible spirit as "the ruler of the world." But what is the extent of his influence over mankind?

### The World Ruler Delegates Power to Associates

Writing about the Christians' fight for the faith, the apostle Paul clearly identified their worst enemies. "We have a wrestling," he candidly said, "not against blood and flesh, but against the governments, against the authorities, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the wicked spirit forces in the heavenly places." (Ephesians 6:12) Thus, this fight goes beyond the human sphere, since it is carried out, "not against blood and flesh," but against "wicked spirit forces."

According to most modern Bible translations, "the wicked spirit forces" here refer, not to an abstract principle of evil, but to powerful wicked spirit *persons*. Some versions offer such renderings as "the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" (*Revised Standard Version*), "the spiritual army of evil in the heavens" (*The Jerusalem Bible*), and "the superhuman forces of evil in the heavens" (*The New English Bible*). Thus, the Devil has been exercising his power through other rebel angels who forsook "their own proper dwelling place" in heaven.—Jude 6.

The prophetic Bible book of Daniel discloses how these "world rulers" have been exerting control over the world since ancient times. Deeply concerned about fellow Jews who in 537 B.C.E. had returned to Jerusalem from their Babylonian exile, the prophet Daniel prayed in their behalf for three weeks. An angel, sent by God to reassure the prophet, told him why his arrival had been delayed. He said: "The prince of the royal realm of Persia was standing in opposition to me for twenty-one days."—Daniel 10:2, 13.

Who was this 'prince of Persia'? The angel was obviously not referring to Persian King Cyrus, who at that time looked with favor upon Daniel and his people. Moreover, how could a mere human king resist a spirit creature for three weeks when it took one angel only one night to destroy 185,000 mighty warriors? (Isaiah 37:36) This hostile 'prince of Persia' could only be an agent of the Devil, that is, a demon who was given control over the realm of the Persian Empire. Later in the account, God's angel stated that he would once again have to fight against "the prince of Persia" and another demon prince, "the prince of Greece." -Daniel 10:20.

What can we conclude from this? Simply that there really are invisible "world rulers," demon princes who share control of the world under the authority of their chief, Satan the Devil. But what has been their aim until now?

#### The World Ruler Shows His True Face

In the last book of the Bible, Revelation, the apostle John relates how Jesus, as Michael the archangel, defeats the Devil and his demons and tells of the disastrous consequences resulting from their expulsion from heaven. We read: "Woe for the earth . . . be-

cause the Devil has come down to you, having great anger, knowing he has a short period of time."—Revelation 12:9, 12.

How has the Devil shown great anger? Just as many desperate criminals follow the policy of 'rule or ruin,' the Devil and his demons are determined to bring the earth and its inhabitants to ruin with them. Knowing that his time is short, the Devil has been using one of the key elements of human society under his control—big business—to promote a frenzied spirit of consumerism, which leads to depletion of natural resources and destruction of the environment worldwide, thus threatening humanity's survival. —Revelation 11:18; 18:11-17.

Since the beginning of human history, the Devil's thirst for power has also been reflected in politics and religion. The book of Revelation depicts political powers as wild beasts to whom the Devil has given "great authority." It also describes the shameless alliance between politics and religion as disgusting spiritual adultery. (Revelation 13:2; 17:1, 2) Think of the oppression, enslavement, wars, and ethnic conflicts over the centuries that have resulted in the loss of millions of lives. Can anyone honestly say that the shocking and horrifying events that have tainted the pages of human history were the normal activity of humans? Or were they the result of manipulation by unseen wicked spirit forces?

The Bible unmistakably identifies and unmasks the one who has been maneuvering human leaders and world powers. Whether consciously or not, human society reflects the personality of its ruler and his 'rule or ruin' policy. But for how long will human-kind suffer under the Devil's rulership?

#### The Devil's Last Gasp

Christ's activity on earth in the first century sounded the death knell for the Devil and

## Under Christ's loving rulership, righteous humans will turn the earth into a paradise

his demons. When Jesus' disciples related how they had cast out unseen demons, he told them: "I began to behold Satan already fallen like lightning from heaven." (Luke 10: 18) With those words, Jesus was rejoicing at his future victory over the ruler of the world, to take place once Jesus was back in heaven as Michael the archangel. (Revelation 12: 7-9) A thorough study of Bible prophecies indicates that this victory took place in heaven in or shortly after 1914.\*

Since that date, the Devil knows that the time remaining before his destruction is short. Although 'the whole world is lying in his power,' millions of people today have not been misled by his desperate attempts to control them. The Bible has opened their eyes to his true identity and his designs. (2 Corinthians 2:11) They draw hope from Paul's words to fellow Christians: "The God who gives peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly."#—Romans 16:20.

Soon will come the Devil's last gasp! Under Christ's loving rulership, righteous humans will turn God's symbolic footstool, the earth, into a paradise. Violence, hatred, and greed will be gone forever. "The former things will not be called to mind," says the Bible. (Isaiah 65:17) What a relief it will be for all who break free from the secret ruler of this world and his authority!

<sup>\*\*</sup> Paul's words here echo the first Bible prophecy, recorded at Genesis 3:15, pointing to the Devil's eventual destruction. To describe the event, Paul used a Greek word that means "to shatter, shiver, break in pieces by crushing."—Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words.



<sup>\*</sup> For more details on this date, see the appendix to the book *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* published by Jehovah's Witnesses, pages 215 to 218.

#### OUR READERS ASK . . .

#### What is Armageddon?

■ To many, the word "Armageddon" evokes scenes of mass destruction—nuclear war, large-scale natural disasters, or even an "environmental Armageddon" jump-started by global warming. This word as used in the Bible refers to none of these. What, then, is the Biblical Armageddon?

The term "Armageddon" ("Har–Magedon") appears in the Bible book of Revelation. It refers to a unique war, "the war of the great day of God the Almighty," in which "the kings of the entire inhabited earth" are mobilized for a final battle with God. Reference to such a war also appears in numerous other scriptures.—Revelation 16:14-16; Ezekiel 38:22, 23; Joel 3:12-14; Luke 21:34, 35; 2 Peter 3:11, 12.

What does this war entail? In symbolic terms, the book of Revelation tells us: "The kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to wage the war with the one seated on the horse and with his army." This "one seated on the horse" is God's Son, Jesus Christ, who is appointed by God to lead legions of angelic warriors to victory over God's enemies. (Revelation 19:11-16, 19-21) Jeremiah 25:33 reveals the magnitude of this destruction of the ungodly: "Those slain by Jehovah will certainly come to be in that day from one end of the earth clear to the other end of the earth."

Why is Armageddon necessary? The nations refuse to acknowledge God's sovereignty, but they proclaim their own. (Psalm 24:1) Their defiance is described at Psalm 2:2: "The kings of earth take their stand and high officials themselves have massed together as one against Jehovah and against his anointed one."

In effect, these rebels are like stubborn squatters who not only claim property that is not

theirs but also misuse and ruin it. The nations today are ruining the earth and polluting its environment. God's Word foretold this deplorable situation, saying: "The nations became wrathful, and [God's] own wrath came." God would then "bring to ruin those ruining the earth." (Revelation 11:18) Armageddon is the way sanctioned by God to resolve the issue of who has the right to rule over all humanity. —Psalm 83:18.

When will Armageddon take place? God's Son plainly stated: "Concerning that day and hour nobody knows, neither the angels of the heavens nor the Son, but only the Father." (Matthew 24:36) Even so, in speaking about Armageddon, the Warrior-King Jesus Christ added this warning: "Look! I am coming as a thief.

"The meek ones themselves will possess the earth, and they will indeed find their exquisite delight in the abundance of peace"

Happy is the one that stays awake." (Revelation 16:15) Thus, this global war is associated with Christ's presence, which Bible prophecies show is now here.

Armageddon will destroy only the incorrigibly wicked, and there will be "a great crowd" of survivors. (Revelation 7:9-14) They will see these words come true: "Just a little while longer, and the wicked one will be no more; and you will certainly give attention to his place, and he will not be. But the meek ones themselves will possess the earth, and they will indeed find their exquisite delight in the abundance of peace."—Psalm 37:10, 11.

# "THE SEVEN SPECIES" OF THE GOOD LAND

N THE Bible, the land of Israel is described as a land of hills and valleys, coastal plains and plateaus, rivers and springs. With such variety of soil types and climate zones, including parched desert in the south and snow-clad mountains in the north, this land yielded a remarkable variety of crops. When Moses heightened the Israelites' expectations regarding the "good land" that awaited them, he spoke of it as "a land of wheat and barley and vines and figs and pomegranates, a land of oil olives and honey," specifically mentioning seven agricultural products.—Deuteronomy 8:7, 8.

To this day, the expression "the seven species" is still used to describe the products of the land. At various times, these crops have appeared on local coins and postage stamps as a symbol of the land's fertility. How were they cultivated in Bible times? How did they affect the people's way of life? Let us see.

**"Wheat and Barley"** Although wheat and barley were both sown in the fall, barley ripened a month sooner. A sheaf of the firstfruits from the barley harvest was presented at the temple as an offering to Jehovah during the Festival of Unleavened Bread, in March or April. An offering of wheat loaves, on the other hand, was presented during the Festival of Weeks, or Pentecost, in May.—Leviticus 23:10, 11, 15-17.

For centuries and up until fairly recently, farmers in Israel sowed cereal seeds by hand, broadcasting the grain, which they held in a fold of their garment. Barley grains were simply scattered on the ground. Wheat seeds, however, needed covering. They were worked into the soil either by being trodden down by draft animals or by replowing the field.

The Bible often refers to sowing, reaping, threshing, winnowing, and grinding grain. Considerable physical effort was involved in each step. Every day, harvested grain was ground into flour at home and then baked into bread for the family. This gives meaning to Jesus'





7

Grapevines needed constant care—pruning, irrigating, and harvesting—to maintain their fruitfulness. A protective wall, carefully fashioned terraces, and a watchman's booth marked a well-kept hillside vineyard. The Israelites came to be well-acquainted with the work that needed to be done in a vineyard and understood what would happen if it was neglected.—Isaiah 5:1-7.

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At the grape harvest, wine making began. Clusters of grapes were trampled in a vat or squeezed in a winepress. The juice was either boiled to extract its natural sugar or allowed to ferment to become wine. The land of Israel was blessed with just the right conditions for grape growing and wine making.\*

People who live far from lands where figs grow may have seen only the dried and pressed variety. A fig straight from the tree seems to be a totally different fruit—sweet and juicy. To preserve them beyond the short harvesting period, figs have to be sun-dried and pack-

<sup>\*</sup> Grapes were also dried to make raisins.—2 Samuel 6:19.

aged. "Cakes of pressed figs" are mentioned often in the Bible.—1 Samuel 25:18.

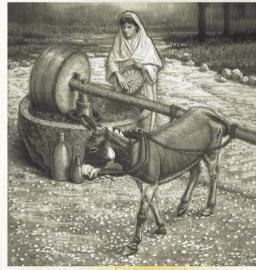
Breaking open the leathery skin of a ripe pomegranate exposes hundreds of closely packed "minifruits," ready for eating or juicing—a refreshing, healthful, and nourishing treat. Esteem for the pomegranate is seen in that representations of it once adorned the hem of one of the garments of the high priest as well as the pillars of Solomon's temple.—Exodus 39:24; 1 Kings 7:20.

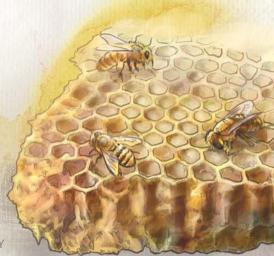
"Olives and Honey" The Bible contains close to 60 references to the olive, a valuable source of food and oil. Olive groves still dot most parts of Israel. (Deuteronomy 28: 40) To this day, the October harvest is a family affair in many communities. Harvesters beat the tree branches to shake the olives free and then gather the fallen crop. The olives are preserved and used as food for the family year-round or are taken to a communal oil press. In fact, hundreds of ancient presses of various types have been unearthed at archaeological sites. Today, it is fascinating to see the pale green oil flow into containers for the family's annual supply or for marketing as a source of income. Besides being used as a food item, olive oil also served as a cosmetic and as fuel for lamps.

The honey that Moses mentioned could have been either honey produced by bees or a syrup extracted from dates and grapes. Honey extracted from these fruits is still commonly used as a sweetener. But the honey mentioned in the Bible accounts of Samson and Jonathan was clearly wild honey from the comb. (Judges 14:8, 9; 1 Samuel 14:27) A recent discovery of an apiary of more than 30 beehives at Tel Rehov in northern Israel shows that beekeeping was practiced in the land as far back as the days of Solomon.

Today, anyone who takes a stroll through a colorful market in Israel—with its bakeries and well-stocked fruit and vegetable stalls—will find an abundant supply of "the seven species" in one form or another. These seven, of course, are just a few of the seemingly endless variety of foodstuffs produced locally. Modern agricultural methods have made it possible to cultivate plants native to other lands. All this abundance shows that this little strip of land does indeed live up to its reputation as the "good land."—Numbers 14:7.







#### **DID YOU KNOW?**

#### Why did God choose quail to feed the Israelites in the wilderness?



From the book Wood's Bible Animals, 1876

■ Following the Israelites' Exodus from Egypt. God twice provided them with an abundance of meat in the form of quail.—Exodus 16:13: Numbers 11:31.

Ouail are small birds, about 7 inches (18 cm) in length and weighing about 3.5 ounces (100 g). They breed in many parts of western Asia and Europe, Being migratory birds, they winter in North Africa and Arabia. During their seasonal passage, vast flocks traverse the eastern shores of the Mediterranean Sea and fly over the Sinai Peninsula.

According to The New Westminster Dictionary of the Bible, quail "fly rapidly and well, and take advantage of the wind; but if the wind changes its

course, or the birds become exhausted from long flight, the whole immense flock is apt to fall to the ground, where the birds lie stunned." Before continuing their migration, they have to rest on the ground for a day or two, thus becoming easy catch for hunters. In the early 20th century, Egypt was exporting some three million quail annually for food.

Both times that the Israelites fed on quail were in the spring. Although quail regularly flew over the Sinai area during that time, it was lehovah who caused 'a wind to burst forth' to drive these birds into the Israelite encampment.—Numbers 11:31.

#### What was "the festival of dedication" mentioned at John 10:22?



A DEPICTION OF **IUDAS MACCABAEUS.** LYON, 1553

■ The three seasonal festivals that God commanded the lews to observe—the Festival of Unfermented Cakes, the Festival of Pentecost, and the Festival of Ingathering—were held in early spring, late spring, and fall respectively. The festival mentioned at John 10:22, however, was held in "wintertime" and commemorated the rededication of lehovah's temple in 165 B.C.E. It was held for eight days, beginning on the 25th day of the month of Chisley, close to the winter solstice. What led to its institution?

In 168 B.C.E., the Syrian Seleucid ruler Antiochus IV (Epiphanes), in his effort to eradicate Jewish worship and customs, had a pagan altar erected atop the altar in Jehovah's temple in Jerusalem. Upon it, he had sacrifices offered to the Greek god Zeus.

This incident sparked the Maccabean uprising. The Jewish leader Judas Maccabaeus recovered Ierusalem from the Seleucids and then had the defiled altar demolished and a new one built in its place. Exactly three years after the altar had first been desecrated. Judas rededicated the cleansed temple to Jehovah. This "festival of dedication" (Hebrew, chanuk·kah') has been celebrated in December by the lews ever since. Today, the festival is known as Hanukkah.



#### DRAW CLOSE TO GOD

### "O Jehovah, . . . You Know Me"

**//** O GREATER burden can be born[e] by an individual than to know no one cares or understands."\* Can you relate to those words? Have you ever felt that no one cares about or understands what you are going through, let alone how you feel? If so, you may find comfort in this: Jehovah cares so deeply about his worshippers that he takes note of all that happens to them as they go about their daily life. David's words at Psalm 139 assure us of this truth.

Confident of God's interest in him. David says: "O Jehovah, you have searched through me, and you know me." (Verse 1) David uses a beautiful word picture here. The Hebrew verb rendered "search through" can refer to digging for ore (Job 28:3), exploring a land (Judges 18:2), or examining the facts of a legal case (Deuteronomy 13:14). Yes, Jehovah knows us so well that it is as though he has examined every aspect and every corner of our existence. By using the pronoun "me," David teaches us that God has a personal interest in his servants. He searches them through and comes to know them as individuals.

David enlarges on the thoroughness of God's searching, saying: "You yourself have come to know my sitting down and my rising up. You have considered my thought from far off." (Verse 2) In a sense, Jehovah is "far off," residing in the heavens. Yet, he knows when we sit down, perhaps at the end of a long day, and when we rise up in the morning and go about our daily life. He also knows our thoughts, desires, and intentions. Does David feel threatened by such close scrutiny? On the contrary, he invites it. (Verses 23, 24) Why is that?

\* Ouote is from author Arthur H. Stainback.

David knows that lehovah has a positive motive in scrutinizing His worshippers. David alludes to this motive, writing: "My journeying and my lying outstretched you have measured off, and you have become familiar even with all my ways." (Verse 3) Each day, Jehovah sees 'all our ways'-our mistakes as well as our good works. Does he focus on the bad or on the good? The Hebrew term rendered "measure off" can mean to "sift." or "winnow." much the way a

farmer winnows out the useless chaff in his quest for the valuable grain. The phrase "become familiar" translates a Hebrew word that can mean "to cherish." When examining the things his worshippers say and do each day, Jehovah treasures the good. Why? He cherishes their efforts to please him.



Psalm 139 teaches us that Jehovah deeply cares about his worshippers. He searches through them and watches over them as they go about their lives each day. He thus knows the problems they face, and he understands the pain of mind and heart that may result from these hardships. Are you moved to worship such a caring God? If you are, you can be sure of this: Jehovah will never "forget your work and the love you showed for his name." —Hebrews 6:10.

SUGGESTED BIBLE READING FOR SEPTEMBER:

■ Psalms 119-150



#### LEARN FROM GOD'S WORD

## How Can You Draw Close to God?

This article raises questions you may have asked and shows where you can read the answers in your Bible. Jehovah's Witnesses would be pleased to discuss these answers with you.

#### 1. Does God listen to all prayers?

Jehovah invites people of all nations to draw close to him in prayer. (Psalm 65:2) But he does not listen to all prayers. For example, when the Israelites persisted in badness, God refused to hear their prayers. (Isaiah 1:15)

Also, the prayers of a man who mistreats his wife can be hindered. (1 Peter 3:7) Yet, God will hear even gross sinners if they repent.

—Read 2 Chronicles 33:9-13.

#### 2. How should we pray?

Prayer is a privilege and a part of our worship, so we should pray only to Jehovah. (Matthew 4:10; 6:9) Since we are imperfect, we should pray in the name of Jesus because he is the appointed "way." (John 14:6) Jehovah does not want us to repeat memorized or written prayers but to pray from the heart.—Read Matthew 6:7; Philippians 4:6, 7.

Our Creator can even hear silent prayers. (1 Samuel 1:12, 13) He invites us to pray on every occasion, such as at the beginning and the end of the day, at mealtimes, and when we face problems.—Read Psalm 55:22: Matthew 15:36.





#### 3. Why do Christians meet together?

Drawing close to God is not easy because we live among people who lack faith in God and ridicule his promise of peace on earth. (2 Timothy 3:1, 4; 2 Peter 3:3, 13) So we need to have encouraging association with fellow believers.—*Read Hebrews 10:24, 25.* 

You can come near to God if you make friends with people who love God. The meetings of Jehovah's Witnesses provide opportunities to benefit from the faith of others.—*Read Romans* 1:11, 12.



#### 4. How can you draw close to God?

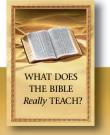
You can draw close to Jehovah by meditating on what you have learned from his Word. Contemplate his activities, his directions, and his promises. Prayerful meditation builds heart appreciation for God's love and wisdom.—*Read Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1:1-3.* 

You can be close to God only if you trust in him, if you have faith in him. But faith is like a living thing that needs to be sustained. You must constantly feed your faith by reviewing the basis for your beliefs. —Read 1 Thessalonians 5:21; Hebrews 11:1, 6.

## 5. How will drawing close to God benefit you?

Jehovah cares for those who love him. He protects them from anything that could jeopardize their faith and their hope of everlasting life. (Psalm 91:1, 2, 7-10) He warns us against ways of life that threaten our health and happiness. Jehovah teaches us the best way of life.—Read Psalm 73:27, 28; James 4:4, 8.





## Olivétan

## "The Humble Little Translator" of the French Bible

It was September 13, 1540. The police were searching the home of Collin Pellenc. In a secret room, they found some suspicious documents, among them a large book. On the second page were the words: "P. Robert Olivetanus, the humble little translator." It was a Waldensian Bible! Collin Pellenc was arrested, convicted of heresy, and burned alive.

N France at that time, as elsewhere in Europe, the Catholic Church was in pursuit of Reformers in an effort to stamp out their "insidious" doctrines. One of the Reformers, the fiery Guillaume Farel, was determined to win the French-speaking world over to the views of Martin Luther, a leading figure of the Protestant Reformation. Farel, from Dauphiné Province in southeastern France, knew that a key player in the battle of ideas was the printed page. To accomplish his mission, he needed supplies of pamphlets and treatises, as well as Bibles. But who would finance such an undertaking? Why not the Waldenses, an independent religious group devoted to preaching the Bible?

#### A Synod at Chanforan

Back in mid-September 1532, the Waldensian *barbes* (pastors) held a synod, or conference, at Chanforan, a hamlet near Turin, Italy. For several years, there had been interchanges between the Waldenses and leaders of the Reformation. Thus, Farel and several others were invited to the synod. The Waldenses wanted to know if their own doc-

trines agreed with those preached by Luther and his disciples.\*

At Chanforan, Farel's eloquence was convincing. When the Waldensian *barbes* showed him their old handwritten Bibles in their own dialect, he convinced them to finance the printing of a Bible in French. In contrast with the 1523 version by Lefèvre d'Étaples, based on the Latin, this one was to be translated from the Hebrew and Greek. But who was capable of handling such a task?

Farel knew just such a man. His name was Pierre Robert, but he was known as Olivétan, a young teacher born in the Picardy region of northern France. Olivétan, a cousin of John Calvin, was an early Reformer and a trustworthy man. He also spent several years in Strasbourg diligently studying Bible languages.

<sup>\*</sup> For information on how the Waldenses were absorbed by the Reformation, see *The Watchtower* of March 15, 2002, pages 20-23.

<sup>\*</sup>Born Louys Robert, he adopted the first name Pierre. The nickname Olivétan likely refers to the abundance of olive oil he used in order to provide light for his long hours of work.







Like Farel and many others, Olivétan had taken refuge in Switzerland. His friends begged him to accept the translation project. After refusing several times, he finally accepted the commission to translate the Bible "according to the Hebrew and Greek languages into French." At the same time, the Waldenses put up 500 of the 800 gold crowns—a fortune!—needed to finance a printery.

#### The Crow and the Nightingale

Early in 1534, Olivétan isolated himself in the Alps and began his work, surrounded by his "silent teachers," his books. His library would be the envy of any modern-day scholar. It included Syriac, Greek, and Latin versions of the Bible, rabbinical commentaries, Chaldean grammar books, and many other books. Most important, he had a current Venetian version of the original Hebrew text of the Bible.

Olivétan based his rendering of what is commonly called the New Testament on the French text of Lefèvre d'Étaples, although the Greek text established by the Dutch scholar Erasmus was taken into account on many occasions. Olivétan's choice of vocabulary was often aimed at loosening the grip of Catholicism. For example, he preferred "overseer" to "bishop," "secret" to "mystery," and "congregation" to "church."

For what many term the Old Testament, Olivétan was determined to render the original Hebrew word for word. He jokingly said that translating Hebrew into French was like "teaching the sweet nightingale to sing the song of the hoarse crow"!

In the Hebrew text, Olivétan came across the divine name in the form of the Tetragrammaton thousands of times. He chose to translate it "The Eternal," an expression that later became common in French Protestant Bibles. In several places, however, he opted for "Jehovah," notably at Exodus 6:3.

Remarkably, on February 12, 1535, after only a year or so, the translator declared his work complete! Since he admitted that he had "already long borne this yoke [of translation] all alone," evidently the year 1534/1535 was the culmination of an ongoing, painstaking process. "I have done the best I could," said the translator modestly. All that remained now was to print the first French Bible translated with the original languages in mind.

#### In Pirot's Workshop

Pierre de Wingle, alias Pirot Picard, a friend of Farel's and a Reformist printer, now entered the picture. After being hounded out of Lyon by the Catholic Church, he settled in Neuchâtel, Switzerland, in 1533. With Waldensian money, he began printing "subversive" material in abundance. It was his workshop, for example, that produced posters condemning the Mass, some of which made their way to Catholic King Francis I of France.

Once again, de Wingle set his presses in motion—this time to produce a Bible! To speed up the process, a team of four or five workers operated each of two presses, setting the type and printing the sheets. Finally, in "the year 1535, the 4th day of June," de Wingle signed the printer's page of Olivétan's Bible. In his preface, the translator dedicated his work to those poor believers "crushed and weighed down" by "vain traditions."

The final result met all expectations. The beauty and simplicity of the French text was enhanced by crisp, elegant, gothic script set in two columns and divided into chapters and paragraphs. Marginal notes attest to the scholarship of the translator. Introductory comments, appendixes, tables, and poems also embellish the work. At the end of the volume, a short rhyming acrostic reveals that "the Waldenses, who the Gospel preach, placed this treasure within public reach."



#### A Masterpiece . . . and a Failure

Once scorned, the work of Olivétan is today unanimously recognized as a veritable masterpiece of scholarship. Moreover, his text went on to serve as the basis for Protestant Bible versions for three centuries.

Though about a thousand copies of Olivétan's Bible were produced, they did not sell well. That was because there was no solid distribution network and also because it was a time when the French language itself was undergoing rapid change. Besides, a large 11-pound (5-kg) volume was not the ideal format for traveling preachers or clandestine readers.

In spite of the fact that a copy had made its way to Collin Pellenc's home in France, as mentioned at the beginning of this article, Olivétan's Bible was actually a commercial failure. In 1670, nearly a century and a half later, a bookshop in Geneva still had a copy for sale.

#### "No Name From No Place"

His mission accomplished, Olivétan slipped back into obscurity. Under assumed names, he revised his New Testament and parts of the Old Testament. He also dedicated himself to his other passion—teaching. A thoughtful schoolteacher, he reedited his *Instruction for Children*, a book for youngsters providing moral lessons and an introduction to French reading based entirely on the Scriptures. Among the pseudonyms that he adopted was *Belisem de Belimakom*, meaning "No Name From No Place."

Olivétan died in 1538 while in his early 30's, possibly in Rome. Few people today are aware of the key role that this young scholar from Picardy played in the circulation of the French Bible. His name seldom appears in dictionaries, if at all. This would probably have suited "the humble little translator," Louys Robert, alias Olivétan!



## **TAXES** MUST YOU PAY THEM?

**T**EW people enjoy paying taxes. Many feel that their tax money is wasted by inefficiency, misappropriation, or outright fraud. Some, though, object to taxation on moral grounds. Explaining their decision to withhold payment of their taxes, residents of one Middle Eastern town stated: "We will not finance the bullets that kill our children."

Such sentiments are neither isolated nor new. The late Hindu leader Mohandas K. Gandhi expressed his conscientious stance this way: "He or she who supports a State organized in the military way—whether directly or indirectly—participates in the sin. Each man old or young takes part in the sin by contributing to the maintenance of the State by paying taxes."

Similarly, 19th-century philosopher Henry David Thoreau cited moral grounds to defend his refusal to pay taxes used to support war. He asked: "Must the citizen ever for a moment, or in the least degree, resign his conscience to the legislator? Why has every man a conscience, then?"

This issue concerns Christians, for the Bible clearly teaches that they should maintain a clean conscience in all matters. (2 Timothy 1:3) On the other hand, the Bible also acknowledges the authority of governments to collect taxes. It states: "Let every soul be in subjection to the superior authorities [human governments], for there is no authority except by God: the existing authorities stand placed in their relative positions by God. There is therefore compelling reason for you people to be in subjection, not only on account of that wrath but also on account of vour conscience. For that is why you are also paying taxes; for they are God's public servants constantly serving this very purpose. Render to all their dues, to him who calls for the tax, the tax,"—Romans 13:1, 5-7.

For this reason, first-century Christians were well-known for readily paying taxes, even though a substantial amount went to the support of the military. The same is true of Jehovah's Witnesses in modern times.\* How can this apparent conflict be explained? Must a Christian suppress his conscience when the tax man calls?

#### Taxes and Conscience

Significantly, a portion of the taxes that first-century Christians were instructed to pay went to the military. This is the very issue of conscience that later moved Gandhi and Thoreau to withhold taxes.

Notice that Christians obeyed the command in Romans chapter 13 not merely because they wanted to avoid punishment but also "on account of [their] conscience."

<sup>\*</sup> For information on the record of Jehovah's Witnesses as taxpayers, see The Watchtower, November 1, 2002, page 13, paragraph 15, and May 1, 1996, page 17, paragraph 7.

(Romans 13:5) Yes, a Christian's conscience actually *requires* him to pay taxes, even if these are used to support activities that he personally rejects. To understand this seeming paradox, we must recognize a key fact about our conscience, the inner voice that tells us whether our actions are right or wrong.

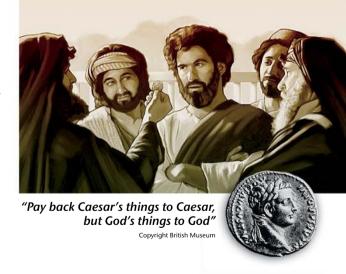
Everyone has such an inner voice, as Thoreau observed, but it is not necessarily trustworthy. In order for us to please God, our conscience must conform to his moral standards. We often need to adjust our thinking or viewpoint to align with God's because his thoughts are superior to ours. (Psalm 19:7) We should therefore endeavor to understand God's view of human governments. What is his view?

We note that the apostle Paul called human governments "God's public servants."

We need to adjust our viewpoint to align with God's because his thoughts are superior to ours

(Romans 13:6) What does that mean? Basically it means that they maintain order and perform valuable duties for society. Even the most corrupt governments often provide such services as mail delivery, public education, fire protection, and law enforcement. Although God is fully aware of the defects of these man-made authorities, he tolerates their existence for a time and mandates that we pay taxes out of respect for his arrangement, that is, his permitting such governments to rule mankind.

God's allowance of rule by human governments, however, is only temporary. It is his will to replace all of them with his heavenly Kingdom and ultimately undo all the damage that human rulership has inflicted upon



mankind through the centuries. (Daniel 2: 44; Matthew 6:10) In the meantime, though, God has not authorized Christians to engage in civil disobedience by refusing to pay taxes or by any other means.

What if, like Gandhi, you still feel that paying taxes that support war is sinful? Just as our view of an area is improved if we climb to higher ground, we can more readily adjust our thinking to match God's by reflecting on how much higher his viewpoint is than ours. Through the prophet Isaiah, God said: "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."—Isaiah 55: 8, 9.

#### **Absolute Authority?**

The Bible's teaching on the paying of taxes does not imply that human governments can claim absolute authority over their subjects. Jesus taught that God grants only limited authority to these governments. When asked whether it was proper in God's sight to pay taxes to the then ruling Roman government, Jesus responded with this profound statement: "Pay back Caesar's things to Caesar, but God's things to God."—Mark 12:13-17.

Governments—represented by "Caesar"—mint or print money and help establish its value. So in God's view, they have the

right to ask that it be paid back in the form of taxes. Yet, Jesus showed that "God's things"—our life and worship—cannot be claimed by any human institution. When human laws or requirements clash with God's laws, Christians "must obey God as ruler rather than men."—Acts 5:29.

Christians today may be disturbed by how some of their taxes are spent, but they do not attempt to interfere with or influence government actions by resisting them or refusing to pay taxes. That would betray a lack of trust in God's solution for mankind's woes.

By obediently paying taxes, Christians hold a good conscience before God and demonstrate that they trust him to meet their needs



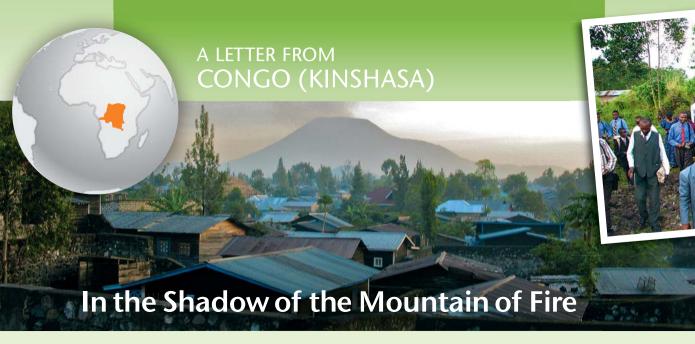
Instead, they patiently wait for God's due time to intervene in human affairs through the rule of his Son, Jesus, who said: "My kingdom is no part of this world."—John 18:36

### Benefits From Following the Bible's Teaching

You can gain several benefits by following the Bible's teaching regarding the paving of taxes. You will avoid the punishment reserved for lawbreakers as well as the fear of being caught. (Romans 13:3-5) More important, you will keep a clean conscience before God and honor him by your law-abiding conduct. Even though you may experience some financial loss compared with those who withhold payment or even cheat on their taxes, you can rely on God's promise to care for his loyal servants. The Bible writer David put it this way: "A young man I used to be, I have also grown old, and yet I have not seen anyone righteous left entirely, nor his offspring looking for bread."—Psalm 37:25.

Finally, understanding and following the Bible's command to pay taxes will give you peace of mind. God does not hold you responsible for all governmental actions supported by your taxes, just as the law does not hold you responsible for what your landlord does with the rent you pay. Before learning Bible truth, a man named Stelvio sought political change for years in southern Europe. Explaining why he abandoned his efforts, he said: "I had to admit that man is unable to bring justice, peace, and brotherhood into the world. Only God's Kingdom can truly bring about a different and better society."

Like Stelvio, if you loyally 'pay back God's things to God,' you too can enjoy that assurance. You will see the time when God brings righteous rule to all the earth, undoing the damage and injustice brought by human rulership.



As THE sun rises over the city of Goma, the sky is painted pink and orange. A breathtaking view of Mount Nyiragongo, one of the most active volcanoes in the world, greets us each day. A constant plume of smoke rises from the open crater. At night the plume glows red, reflecting the lava in the crater.

In Swahili, the mountain is referred to as *Mulima ya Moto*—Mountain of Fire. The last major eruption of Nyiragongo took place in 2002. Many of our neighbors and friends here in Goma lost everything. In some of the neighborhoods where my husband and I preach, we walk along a rippled lava-rock surface, and I imagine what walking on the moon might be like. The people are the opposite of the hardened lava. They are lively, with soft and open hearts receptive to the good news we proclaim. That makes serving in the shadow of the Mountain of Fire a joyful adventure.

Saturday morning, I awake with anticipation. My husband and I, along with our visiting friends and fellow missionaries, will be spending the day preaching in the refugee camp at Mugunga, just outside the city limits

to the west. Many here have fled violent attacks on their hometowns.

We load the truck with Bible literature in French, Kiswahili, and Kinyarwanda. Then we set off. As we bump along Route Sake, the city comes alive. Young men are already pushing their heavily laden *chukudus* (handmade wooden scooters for transporting loads). Women wearing brightly colored wrap skirts walk gracefully along the side of the road with large bundles on their heads. The mototaxis are busy transporting people to work and to the market. The landscape is dotted with wooden houses stained brownblack and painted with blue trim.

We arrive at the Ndosho Kingdom Hall to meet some of our fellow Jehovah's Witnesses who will join us in preaching at the camp. I am touched to see young ones, widows, orphans, and those with physical limitations. Many of them have experienced profound suffering but have improved their lives by choosing to follow Bible principles. The Bible's hope burns bright in their hearts, and they are eager to share it with others. After a short meeting to give us some suggestions on what Bible verses would be encouraging







to the people we meet, 130 of us head out in five minibuses and a four-wheel-drive truck

About 30 minutes later, we arrive at the camp. Hundreds of little white tents are pitched over a lava field. In the middle of the camp are neat rows of public toilets and common washing stations for doing laundry. There are people everywhere—washing. cooking, shelling beans, and sweeping in front of their tents.

We meet a man called Papa Jacques, who is responsible for a certain section of the camp. He is concerned about raising his children during these difficult times. He was thrilled when we left him the book Questions Young People Ask—Answers That Work and said that he would like to read it and then gather small groups together to share what he learns.

A little farther along, we meet a lady named Mama Beatrice. She asks us why God allows suffering. She thinks that God must be punishing her. Her husband was killed in the war, her daughter is a single mother struggling to raise her baby in the camp, and her son was kidnapped several months ago. She has had no news of his whereabouts.

Mama Beatrice's laments remind me of how Job must have felt upon receiving all his terrible news. We show her the reasons for suffering and assure her that her suffering is not punishment from God. (Job 34:10-12;

James 1:14, 15) We also highlight the changes that God will soon bring to the earth by means of his Kingdom. Her face relaxes into smiles, and she says she is determined to continue studying the Bible and praying to God for help.

Everyone in the group has enjoyed the day, and we all feel that Jehovah has really helped us to bring hope and encouragement to the people we met. As we leave the camp. many residents hold up their tracts, magazines, and books as they wave good-bye to us.

The ride home provides time for reflection. I am filled with gratitude for such a special day. I remember the appreciation shown by Papa Jacques, the relief in the eyes of Mama Beatrice, the strong handshake from an old woman who could communicate with me only by smiles. I think of the adolescents who asked intelligent questions and showed maturity beyond their years. I admire the strength of character that I observed in people who can still smile and laugh in spite of unimaginable suffering.

In this part of the world, we see the sincere efforts of many others who are trying to bring relief to those who suffer. Today, it has been a real privilege to use the Bible to show people the permanent solution to their problems. I feel very happy to be a part of the greatest spiritual relief effort that the world will ever know.



## A Man Agreeable to Jehovah's Heart

HAT comes to your mind when you think of the Bible character David? His victory over the Philistine giant Goliath? His flight in the wilderness on account of King Saul's hostility toward him? His sin with Bath-sheba and the difficulties he suffered as a result? Or perhaps his inspired poetry preserved in the Bible book of Psalms?

David's life was filled with privileges, triumphs, and tragedies. Yet, what attracts us to him above all else is what the prophet Samuel stated of David—he would prove to be "a man agreeable to [Jehovah's] heart." -1 Samuel 13:14.

Samuel's prophecy was fulfilled when David was but a youth. Would you not like to be described as a person agreeable to Jehovah's heart? So, what is there in David's life, especially in his early years, that can help you to become such a person? Let us see.

#### **Family and Occupation**

Jesse, the father of David and grandson of Ruth and Boaz, was likely a devout man. When David, his seven brothers, and his two sisters were still young, Jesse instructed them in the Law of Moses. In one of his psalms, David refers to himself as the son of Jehovah's "slave girl." (Psalm 86:16) This has led some to conclude that David's mother, unnamed in the Bible, also had a positive influence on his spirituality. "It was most likely from her

lips," says one scholar, "that he first heard the wondrous story of God's former dealings with his people," including the history of Ruth and Boaz.

When we are introduced to David, he is a young shepherd boy with the responsibility of looking after his father's sheep. This task likely involved his spending long, lonely days and nights in the open fields. Try to imagine the scene.

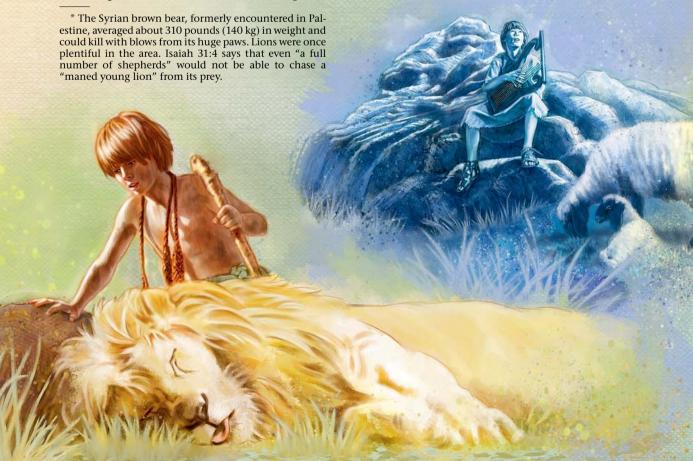
David's family lived in Bethlehem, a little town on the summit and slopes of a ridge in the hills of Judah. The stony fields around Bethlehem produced good crops of grain. Orchards, olive groves, and vineyards covered the gentler slopes and valley. In David's day, the uncultivated uplands were likely used for pasture. Beyond lay the wilderness of Judah.

David's occupation was not without its dangers. It was among these hills that he faced both a lion and a bear that tried to carry off sheep from the drove.\* This courageous

youth went after the predators, killed them, and rescued his sheep from their mouths. (1 Samuel 17:34-36) Perhaps it was in this period of his life that David developed his skill with a sling. Not far from his hometown lay the territory of Benjamin. The marksmen of that tribe could sling stones "to a hair-breadth and would not miss." David's aim was just as accurate.—Judges 20:14-16; 1 Samuel 17:49.

#### **Time Well Spent**

For the most part, shepherding was a tranquil and solitary occupation. But David did not allow himself to become bored. On the contrary, the peaceful stillness afforded him numerous opportunities for meditation. It seems likely that some of David's reflections included in his psalms are traceable to his youth. Was it during moments of solitude



that he pondered man's place in the universal order and the wonders of the heavens—sun, moon, and stars, "the works of [Jehovah's] fingers"? Was it in the fields around Bethlehem that he contemplated the productive land, the cattle and oxen, the birds and "the beasts of the open field"?—Psalm 8: 3-9; 19:1-6.

No doubt David's own experience as a shepherd made him feel all the more deeply Jehovah's tenderness toward His faithful ones. David thus sang: "Jehovah is my Shepherd. I shall lack nothing. In grassy pastures he makes me lie down; by well-watered resting-places he conducts me. Even though I walk in the valley of deep shadow, I fear nothing bad, for you are with me; your rod and your staff are the things that comfort me."—Psalm 23:1, 2, 4.

You might be wondering just what all of this has to do with you. The answer is that one of the reasons David enjoyed intimacy

with Jehovah and could be called "a man agreeable to his heart" was that he had meditated deeply and seriously on Jehovah's works and on his own relationship with God. Can the same be said of you?

Have you ever felt moved to praise and glorify the Creator after carefully considering some aspect of his handiwork? Did you ever feel your heart fill with love for Jehovah upon seeing his qualities as reflected in his dealings with mankind? Naturally, in order to feel any such appreciation for Jehovah, you need to dedicate time to quiet, prayerful reflection on God's Word and on his creation. Such contemplation can help you to come to know Jehovah intimately-and thus to love him. Young and old alike can have this

privilege. In all likelihood, David was close to Jehovah right from his youth. How do we know?

#### **David Is Anointed**

When King Saul proved unfit to lead God's people, Jehovah said to the prophet Samuel: "For how long will you be mourning for Saul, while I, on the other hand, have rejected him from ruling as king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and go. I shall send you to Jesse the Bethlehemite, because I have provided among his sons a king for myself." —1 Samuel 16:1.

When God's prophet arrived in Bethlehem, he had Jesse summon his sons. Which of them was Samuel to anoint as king? On seeing good-looking Eliab, the eldest, Samuel thought: 'This is he.' But Jehovah told Samuel: "Do not look at his appearance and at the height of his stature, for I have rejected him. For not the way man sees is the way



God sees, because mere man sees what appears to the eyes; but as for Jehovah, he sees what the heart is." In the same way, Jehovah rejected Abinadab, Shammah, and four others of their brothers. "Finally," continues the account, "Samuel said to Jesse: 'Are these all the boys?' To this he said: 'The youngest one has till now been left out, and, look! he is pasturing the sheep.'"—1 Samuel 16:7, 11.

Jesse's answer seems to imply: 'David can't possibly be the one you are seeking.' As the youngest and most insignificant of the family, David had been given the work of looking after the sheep. But *he* was the one God had chosen. Jehovah sees what the heart is, and evidently he saw something very precious in this youth. So when Jesse sent for David, Jehovah told Samuel: "'Get up, anoint him, for this is he!' Accordingly Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers. And the spirit of Jehovah began to be operative upon David from that day forward."—1 Samuel 16:12, 13.

Just how old David was when this happened is not stated. Some time later, however, the three oldest brothers, Eliab, Abinadab, and Shammah, were serving in Saul's army. Perhaps the other five were too young to accompany them. It is possible that none of them were yet 20 years old, the age at which men joined Israel's army. (Numbers 1:3; 1 Samuel 17:13) In any case, David was very young when Jehovah chose him. Yet, it would seem that David was already a very spiritually-minded person. He evidently had a close relationship with Jehovah, which he developed by pondering over what he knew about God.

Young people today should be encouraged to do the same. So, parents, are you encouraging your children to meditate on spiritual matters, to appreciate God's creation, and to study what the Bible says about the Creator?

(Deuteronomy 6:4-9) And you young people, are you doing this on your own? Biblebased publications such as the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines\* are designed to help you.

#### Skilled With the Harp

Just as the text of many of David's psalms tells us something about his days as a shepherd, so in all likelihood, does the music. Of course, none of the music that originally accompanied these sacred songs has survived till our day. We do know, though, that their composer was an excellent musician. In fact, the reason David was called away from the pastures to attend to King Saul was that he was skilled on the harp.—1 Samuel 16:18-23.#

Where and when did David develop this ability? Probably during the days that he spent out in the fields tending the sheep. And surely we need not stretch our imagination to think that even at such a young age, David was already singing heartfelt praises to his God. After all, Jehovah selected and commissioned him because of his devotion and spirituality, did He not?

What David turned out to be in later years is really another story. But the spirit that characterized him throughout his life is reflected in words that may well hark back to his early experiences in the fields around Bethlehem. Just imagine David singing to Jehovah: "I have remembered days of long ago; I have meditated on all your activity; I willingly kept myself concerned with the work of your own hands." (Psalm 143:5) The warmth of this psalm and of many other psalms of David is an inspiration to all who desire to be agreeable to Jehovah's heart.

<sup>\*</sup> Published by Jehovah's Witnesses.

<sup>&</sup>quot;The royal adviser who recommended David also said that he was "an intelligent speaker and a well-formed man, and Jehovah [was] with him."—1 Samuel 16:18.

### FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

## Falsely Accused! JOSEPH—PART 2

**Instructions:** Do this exercise in guiet surroundings. As you read the scriptures, imagine that you are part of the event. Visualize the scene. Hear the voices. Feel the emotions of the characters. Let the account come to life.

Main characters: Joseph, Potiphar, and his wife

Summary: Joseph is unjustly imprisoned, but Jehovah is with him.

What emotions do you sense in the voice of Potiphar's wife as she falsely

• ANALYZE THE SCENE.—READ GENESIS 39:7, 10-23.
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accused Joseph?
Describe the prison house as you imagine it.
At first, what type of treatment did Joseph have to endure while he was in
prison? (Clue: See Psalm 105:17, 18.)
DIG DEEPER.
If Joseph's faith had been weak, what wrong conclusion might he have reached while remaining in prison? (Clue: See Job 30:20, 21.)
How do we know that Joseph did not blame Jehovah for his suffering? (Clue: See Genesis 40:8; 41:15, 16.)
What qualities do you think helped Joseph to endure his unjust imprisonment? (Clue: Read and reflect on the following scriptures: Micah 7:7; Luke 14:11; James 1:4.)

What training did Joseph receive in prison, and how might this training have benefited him later in life? (Clue: See Genesis 39:21-23; 41:38-43.)

(3) APPLY WHAT YOU LEARNED. WRITE DOWN WHAT YOU LEARNED ABOUT...

The benefits that come to those who endure.

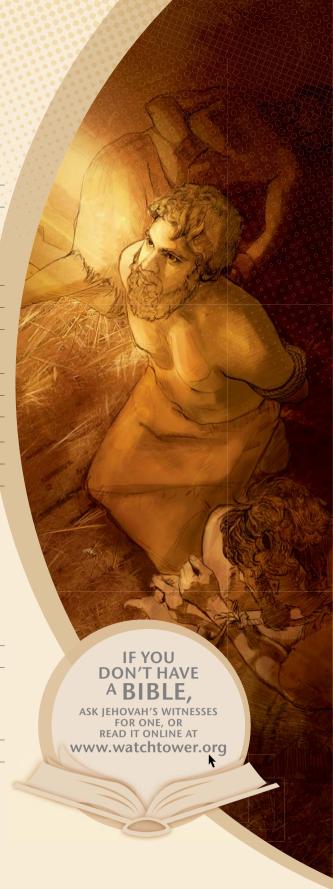
The training that you can receive while undergoing a hardship.

Jehovah's support during times of trial.

#### FOR FURTHER APPLICATION.

Have you ever been in a situation in which you felt troubled and isolated? Even while you were undergoing the trial, how might Jehovah have been helping you? (Clue: Read and reflect on 1 Corinthians 10:13.)

WHAT ASPECT OF THIS ACCOUNT IS MOST MEANINGFUL TO YOU, AND WHY?







Is there really someone behind all the evil in the world? SEE PAGES 3-9.



What are "the seven species" that made Israel the good land? SEE PAGES 11-13.



Learn how one early French translator struggled to produce a Bible in the people's tongue. SEE PAGES 18-20.



What role does a Christian's conscience play in the matter of paying taxes? SEE PAGES 21-23.



Can you become agreeable to God's heart, as David did? SEE PAGES 26-29.

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