

NOVEMBER 1, 2007

# THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



## HUMILITY

The Challenge  
of Being Humble

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 fellow men and that it will turn the earth into a paradise. It encourages faith in God's now-reigning King, Jesus Christ, whose shed blood opens the way for mankind to gain eternal life. *The Watchtower*, published by Jehovah's Witnesses continuously since 1879, is nonpolitical. It adheres to the Bible as its authority.

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# The Challenge of Humility

TO MANY people, it might appear that humility has no place in today's world. Those who command attention and who seem to be the most successful are the self-promoters, the proud, the ones who insist on getting their own way. Society in general envies the lifestyles of the rich and famous, not the humble and meek. Those who are successful usually like to boast that they are self-made. Far from being humble, they proudly take full credit for their success.

A Canadian researcher spoke of the "emergence of an 'all-about-me' attitude" in his country. Others feel that we live in a society in which self-indulgence outweighs responsibility and observe that people today are increasingly self-involved. In such a world, humility may not seem to have much to recommend it.

Of course, few would disagree with the idea that humility is fine for *others*, since unassuming people are easy to live with. However, in our competitive world, some fear that if they personally act humbly, they will be viewed by others as weak.

God's Word, the Bible, foretold that in our time people would be "self-assuming, haughty." (2 Timothy 3:1, 2) Would you not agree that this prophecy is being fulfilled? Can you see any value in being humble? Or do you think that a humble person would be viewed as weak, easy to take advantage of?

The fact is that the Bible gives good reasons for valuing and cultivating humility. It provides a balanced and positive view of the quality and shows that true humility is a mark of strength, not weakness. The following article will explain why.



*How should we feel about our accomplishments?*

# 'Clothe Yourselves with Lowliness of Mind'

THE man came from a prominent city. He enjoyed the status of having been born a Roman citizen and likely was from a distinguished family. That man, Saul, had received some of the best education available in the first century C.E. He spoke at least two languages and belonged to a well-known Jewish religious group—the Pharisees.

Saul must have learned to look down on the common people and to be proud of his own righteousness. (Luke 18:11, 12; Acts

26:5) Saul's fellow Pharisees assumed an air of superiority and loved prominence and flattering titles. (Matthew 23:6, 7; Luke 11:43) Associating with such people probably made Saul arrogant. We know that he was a zealous persecutor of Christians. Years later, as the apostle Paul, he called his younger self "a blasphemer and a persecutor and an insolent man."—1 Timothy 1:13.

Yes, Saul became a Christian, the apostle Paul, and his personality changed completely. As a Christian apostle, he humbly declared that he was "a man less than the least of all holy ones." (Ephesians 3:8) He was a successful evangelizer, but he did not take any credit for this. Rather, he gave all honor to God. (1 Corinthians 3:5-9; 2 Corinthians 11:7) It was Paul who admonished fellow Christians: "Clothe yourselves with the tender affections of compassion, kindness, *lowliness of mind*, mildness, and long-suffering."—Colossians 3:12.

Does that advice apply in our 21st century? Does it pay to be humble? Can humility really be a sign of strength?

*Paul was able to overcome arrogance and pride*



## Is the Almighty Creator Humble?

Any discussion of humility has to take into account God's viewpoint. Why? Because he is our Sovereign and our Creator. In contrast with him, we have to recognize our own limitations. We are dependent on him. "As for the Almighty, we have not found him out; he is exalted in power," said an ancient wise man named Elihu. (Job 37:23) Why, just contemplating the vast universe around us is a humbling experience! "Raise your eyes high up and see," invites the prophet Isaiah. "Who has created these things? It is the One who is bringing forth the army of them even by number, all of whom he calls even by name. Due to the abundance of dynamic energy, he also being vigorous in power, not one of them is missing."—Isaiah 40:26.

Along with being almighty, Jehovah God is humble. King David prayed to him: "You will give me your shield of salvation, and it is your humility that makes me great." (2 Samuel 22:36) God is humble in the sense that he shows concern for lowly humans who try to please him, extending mercy to them. From the heavens Jehovah reaches down, as it were, in order to deal kindly with God-fearing ones.—Psalm 113:5-7.

Further, Jehovah values humility in his servants. The apostle Peter wrote: "God opposes the haughty ones, but he gives undeserved kindness to the humble ones." (1 Peter 5:5) Regarding God's view of pride,



Anglo-Australian Observatory/David Malin Images

a Bible writer observed: "Everyone that is proud in heart is something detestable to Jehovah." (Proverbs 16:5) How, though, can humility be a sign of strength?

### What Humility Is Not

Humility is not the same as humiliation. In some ancient cultures, a typical humble person was a slave—a servile, miserable, pitiful individual. In contrast, the Bible stresses that lowliness of mind leads to honor. For instance, the wise man wrote: "The result of humility and the fear of Jehovah is riches and glory and life." (Proverbs 22:4) And at Psalm 138:6, we read: "Jehovah is high, and yet the humble one he sees; but the lofty one he knows only from a distance."

To be humble does not mean that one has no abilities or achievements. For example, Jesus Christ never claimed that he was not Jehovah's only-begotten Son, and he never pretended that his ministry on earth was not significant. (Mark 14:61, 62; John 6:51) Yet, Jesus showed humility by giving credit for his works to his Father and by using his power to serve and assist others rather than to dominate and oppress them.

### A Sign of Strength

Unquestionably, Jesus Christ became known to his contemporaries "through powerful works." (Acts 2:22) Yet, in the eyes of some, he was "the lowliest one of mankind." (Daniel 4:17) Not only did he live an unassuming life but he also repeatedly taught the value of humility. (Luke 9:48; John 13:2-16) However, his humility did not make him weak. He was fearless as he defended his Father's name and accomplished his ministry. (Philippians 2:6-8) In the Bible, Jesus is depicted as a courageous lion. (Revelation 5:5) Jesus' example shows that humility is compatible with moral fortitude and strength of character.

As we strive to cultivate genuine humility, we realize that it takes real effort to make lowliness of mind a way of life. It involves always submitting to God's will instead of following the way of least resistance or suc-

cumbing to fleshly inclinations. Developing humility requires moral strength, for we need to push aside personal interests in order to serve Jehovah and the interests of others selflessly.

### The Benefits of Humility

Humility involves freedom from pride or conceit. The Scriptures use the expression "lowliness of mind" to describe it. (Ephesians 4:2) A humble mind-set results from a realistic assessment of ourselves—our strengths and weaknesses, our successes and failures. Paul gave fine counsel in this regard when he wrote: "I tell everyone there among you not to think more of himself than it is necessary to think; but to think so as to have a sound mind." (Romans 12:3) Any who follow that counsel are showing humility.

Humility is also manifested when we sincerely place the interests of others above our own. Under inspiration, Paul admonished Christians: "[Do] nothing out of contentiousness or out of egotism, but with lowliness of mind considering that *the others are superior* to you." (Philippians 2:3) This was in harmony with Jesus' command to his followers: "The greatest one among you must be your minister. Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted."—Matthew 23:11, 12.

Yes, lowliness of mind leads to exaltation in God's eyes. The disciple James emphasized that point when he wrote: "Humble yourselves in the eyes of Jehovah, and he will exalt you." (James 4:10) Who would not want to be exalted by God?

Lack of humility has caused much confusion and strife between groups of people and between individuals. On the other hand, being humble yields positive results. We can enjoy the warmth of God's approval. (Micah 6:8) We can enjoy peace of mind because

### IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

A Meaningful Life Is Possible!

—  
Luke—A Beloved Fellow Worker  
—

Cultivate Qualities That Can Help You  
Make Disciples

a humble individual is more likely to be happy and content than a haughty person. (Psalm 101:5) Our dealings with family, friends, colleagues, and others will be smoother and more pleasant. Humble ones avoid becoming disagreeable and demanding, behavior that can easily lead to anger, estrangement, resentment, and bitterness.

—James 3:14-16.

Yes, cultivating lowliness of mind is a fine way to maintain good relations with others. It can assist us in facing up to the challenges

of a selfish, competitive world. With God's help, the apostle Paul was able to overcome the arrogance and pride that he formerly had. Similarly, we do well to curb any inclination toward haughtiness or toward thinking that we are better than others. "Pride is before a crash, and a haughty spirit before stumbling," warns the Bible. (Proverbs 16:18) Following the example and the advice of Paul, we will see the wisdom of 'clothing ourselves with lowliness of mind.'—Colossians 3:12.

*Having lowliness of mind helps us to maintain good relations with others*





## I LEARNED TO TRUST FULLY IN JEHOVAH

AS TOLD BY  
**AUBREY BAXTER**

One Saturday evening in 1940, two men attacked me, knocking me to the ground. Two policemen stood nearby, but instead of helping me, they hurled abuse at me and praised the bullies. The events in my life that led up to this cruel treatment began about five years earlier when I was employed in a coal mine. Let me explain.

THE third of four boys, I was born in 1913 in Swansea, a coastal town in New South Wales, Australia. When I was five years old, our whole family came down with the dreaded Spanish influenza, which claimed millions of lives worldwide. Happily, we all survived. In 1933, however, tragedy struck when Mum died at the age of 47. A godly woman, she had earlier acquired the two volumes of the book *Light*, Bible study aids distributed by Jehovah's Witnesses.

At the time, I worked in a coal mine. Because my job consisted of brief, hectic peri-

ods followed by quiet spells, I would take the books to work and read them by the light of the carbide lamp fixed to my helmet. Soon I realized that I had found the truth. I also began to listen to Bible lectures broadcast on the radio by the Witnesses. Adding to my joy, Dad and my brothers all began to take an interest in Bible truth.

In 1935 tragedy struck again when my younger brother, Billy, caught pneumonia and died. He was only 16 years of age. This time, however, our family was comforted by the resurrection hope. (Acts 24:15) In time,

Dad and my older brothers, Verner and Harold, as well as their wives dedicated their lives to God. Of my immediate family, I am the only one still alive. However, Verner's second wife, Marjorie, and Harold's wife, Elizabeth, are also still active in Jehovah's service.

### Learning to Trust in Jehovah

I had my first direct contact with Jehovah's Witnesses later in 1935 when a Ukrainian lady riding a bicycle called at our home. On the following Sunday, I attended my first Christian meeting, and a week later, I joined the group for the field ministry. The Witness conducting the meeting for field service gave me some booklets and, to my great surprise, sent me off alone! At my first door, I was so nervous that I wanted the ground to open up and swallow me! But the householder was pleasant and even accepted literature.

Such scriptures as Ecclesiastes 12:1 and Matthew 28:19, 20 deeply impressed me, and I wanted to become a pioneer, or full-time minister. Dad supported my decision. Though not yet baptized, I set July 15, 1936, as my starting date. On that day, I went to the branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses in Sydney, where I was invited to work with a group

*We used this sound car in north Queensland*



of 12 pioneers in the Sydney suburb of Dulwich Hill. They introduced me to the hand-turned wheat grinder that pioneers used at the time to make flour and thus reduce food costs.

### Pioneering in the Bush

After my baptism later that year, I was assigned to central Queensland along with two other pioneers—Aubrey Wills and Clive Shade. Our equipment consisted of Aubrey's van, some bicycles, a portable phonograph for broadcasting Bible lectures, a tent that became our home for the next three years, three beds, a table, and an iron pot for cooking. One evening when it was my turn to cook, I thought I'd prepare a "special" dinner of vegetables and wheatmeal. But none of us could eat it. A horse happened to be nearby, so I offered it to him. He sniffed it, shook his head, and walked away! That ended my culinary experiments.

In time, we decided to speed up the coverage of our territory by dividing it into three sections and working a section each. At day's end, I was often too far from our base camp to ride home, and I would sometimes spend the night with hospitable rural people. On one occasion I slept in a luxuri-

ous bed in the guest room of a cattle station (ranch), and the following night I lay on the dirt floor of a kangaroo hunter's hut, surrounded by piles of putrid hides. I often slept in the bush. Once, dingoes (wild dogs) circled me at a distance, their eerie howls filling the darkness. After a sleepless night, I discovered that they were interested, not in me, but in offal that had been dumped nearby.

## Preaching With a Sound Car

We made good use of a sound car to announce God's Kingdom. In the north Queensland city of Townsville, the police permitted us to set up in the city center. The recorded lecture, though, angered some members of the Salvation Army, who told us to leave. When we refused, five of them gave our van a good shaking. At the time, I was inside, operating the sound gear! It seemed imprudent to insist on our rights, so when the men backed off, we left the area.

In Bundaberg an interested man lent us a boat so that we could broadcast from the Burnett River, which runs through town. Aubrey and Clive headed off in the boat with the sound equipment while I stayed at the hall we had rented. That night, the powerful recorded voice of Joseph F. Rutherford, from the world headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses, boomed through Bundaberg, proclaiming a hard-hitting Bible message. To be sure, those were exciting times that called for boldness and faith on the part of God's people.

## War Brings More Challenges

Just after World War II started in September 1939, *The Watchtower* of November 1 discussed Christian neutrality toward politics and war. Later, I would be glad that I had studied that timely material. Meanwhile, after three years together, Aubrey, Clive, and I received assignments that took us our separate ways. I was appointed as a traveling overseer in north Queensland, an assignment that would often put my trust in Jehovah to the test.

In August 1940, I served the congregation in Townsville, which had four pioneers—Percy and Ilma Iszlaub\* and siblings Norman and Beatrice Bellotti. Six years later, Beatrice would become my wife. One Saturday eve-



*Assisting the Kilpatrick sisters to move their vehicle during the wet season in north Queensland*

ning after a group of us had finished street witnessing, the attack mentioned at the outset took place. This injustice, however, only spurred me on in Jehovah's service.

Two pioneer sisters, Una and Merle Kilpatrick, were doing a fine work in the north. I spent an enjoyable day with them in the ministry, and then they asked me to row them across a river to the home of an interested family. That meant swimming to a rowboat moored on the other side, rowing it back, and then taking the sisters across. When I got to the boat, however, the oars were missing! We later learned that an opposer had hidden them. But his ploy did not stop us. I had been a lifeguard for a number of years and was still a strong swimmer. So I tied the anchor rope around my waist, pulled the boat across to the girls, and towed them back. Jehovah blessed our efforts, for in time the interested family became Witnesses.

\* Percy Iszlaub's life story appeared in the May 15, 1981, issue of this magazine.

## **Under the Shadow of Jehovah's Hand**

For security reasons, the military set up a roadblock just below the town of Innisfail. Having resident status, I could obtain entry permits, which proved invaluable when representatives from the branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses visited. To get them through the roadblock, I would conceal them in a hidden compartment under the backseat of my car.

Gasoline was rationed at the time, and many vehicles were fitted with a gas producer. To fuel the engine, this device extracted combustible gas from hot charcoal. I would travel at night with bags of charcoal stacked on the compartment where the brother was hiding. When pulling up at a roadblock, I distracted the guards by keeping the engine running fast and making sure that the charcoal hopper was white hot. "If I stop the motor," I shouted to the guards on one such night, "I'll upset the gas-air mixture, and restarting will be hard." Put off by the heat, noise, and soot, the guards gave the car a cursory inspection and sent me off.

During those days, I was assigned to organize a convention in Townsville for the local Witnesses. Food was being rationed, and to get what we needed required approval from the local magistrate. At the time, our Christian brothers were being imprisoned because of their neutrality. So when I made an appointment to see the magistrate, I thought, 'Am I being wise, or am I poking a tiger?' Nevertheless, I went ahead as instructed.

Sitting behind an imposing desk, the magistrate asked me to be seated. When I told him the purpose of my visit, he stiffened and gave me a long, hard look. Then he relaxed and said, "How much food do you want?" I handed him a list of the very least of what was necessary. He examined it and said: "That seems inadequate. We had better double it." I left his office, deeply grateful to Jehovah,

who had taught me yet another lesson in trust.

In January 1941 the work of Jehovah's Witnesses was banned in Australia. Many people became suspicious of us and even accused us of spying for the Japanese! On one occasion, two carloads of police and soldiers stormed Kingdom Farm, a parcel of land on the Atherton Plateau that we had purchased for growing food. They were looking for a searchlight that we were allegedly using to signal the enemy. We were also accused of planting corn in code that could be read from the air! Of course, all these allegations were shown to be false.

Because of the ban, we had to be careful—and creative—when delivering literature. For example, when the book *Children* was released, I obtained a carton in Brisbane, traveled north by train, and left books at stops where there was a congregation. To discourage police and army inspectors from opening the carton, I brought along a circular saw blade and would strap it onto the box before disembarking. Though simple, the ploy never failed. Much to the relief of Jehovah's people, the ban—described by a court justice as "arbitrary, capricious and oppressive"—was lifted in June 1943.

## **Called Up for Military Service**

During the preceding year, Aubrey Wills, Norman Bellotti, and I were called up for military service. Aubrey and Norman were summoned a week before I was and received six-month prison sentences. At the time, the post office was confiscating *Watchtower* magazines addressed to known Witnesses but not those sent to other subscribers. Our assignment was to find one of these people, duplicate the magazines, and distribute copies to fellow Witnesses. In this way, we received regular spiritual food.

When my expected six-month sentence was handed down, I immediately appealed it,

as instructed by the branch office in Sydney. Our objective was to stall for time until someone else could be appointed to care for the work. I took advantage of my freedom to visit some of the 21 Witnesses incarcerated in north Queensland. Most were in one prison, and the warden there hated us. When I reminded him that the ministers of other religions could visit their people, he became enraged. "If I had my way," he shouted, "all of Jehovah's Witnesses would be lined up and shot!" The guards hastily escorted me out.

When my appeal hearing came up, I received legal aid as required by law. In reality, though, I conducted my own case, which meant relying heavily on Jehovah. He, in turn, did not let me down. (Luke 12:11, 12; Philippians 4:6, 7) Amazingly, the appeal was successful because clerical errors were found on the charge sheet!

In 1944, I was assigned to a large circuit covering all of South Australia, northern Victoria, and the New South Wales city of Sydney. The following year, a worldwide public speaking campaign was inaugurated, and each speaker had to prepare his own discourse, basing it on a one-page outline that was provided. Giving one-hour talks presented a new challenge, but we went ahead with full trust in Jehovah, and he blessed our efforts.

### Marriage and New Responsibilities

In July 1946, Beatrice Bellotti and I were married, and we served together as pioneers. Our home was a plywood caravan, or trailer. Our daughter and only child, Jannyce (Jann), was born in December 1950. We pioneered in a number of places, including the town of Kempsey, New South Wales, where we were the only Witnesses. Each

Sunday we went to a local community hall, and I would be prepared to give a public talk that we had advertised with leaflets. For a few months, Beatrice and baby Jann were my only audience. Before long, though, others began to trickle in. Today Kempsey has two thriving congregations.

When Jann was two years old, we settled in Brisbane. Then when she completed her schooling, we pioneered as a family for four years in the New South Wales town of Cessnock before returning to Brisbane to help Beatrice's ailing mother. At present, I have the privilege of serving as an elder in the Chermside Congregation.

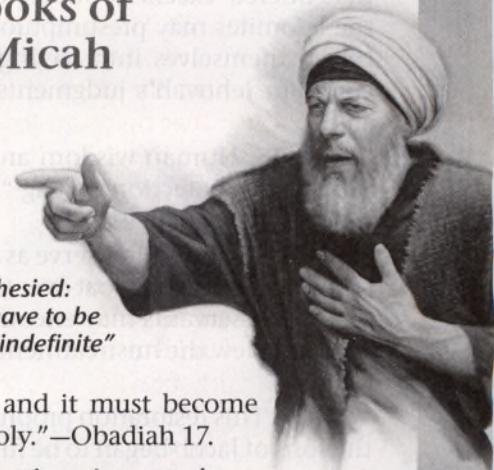
Beatrice and I thank Jehovah for his countless blessings, including the privilege of helping 32 people come to know him. Personally, I thank Jehovah for my dear wife who, although gentle and mild, has been a fearless fighter for Bible truth. Her love for God, her trust in him, and her 'simple eye' have made her a truly capable wife and mother. (Matthew 6:22, 23; Proverbs 12:4) Along with her, I can say with all my heart: "Blessed is the able-bodied man who puts his trust in Jehovah."—Jeremiah 17:7.

*On our wedding day*



# Jehovah's Word Is Alive

## Highlights From the Books of Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah



**T**HE vision of Obadiah." (Obadiah 1) These words begin the Bible book of Obadiah. The prophet reveals nothing about himself except his name in the book that he composed in 607 B.C.E. In a book completed over two centuries earlier, the prophet Jonah candidly relates what he personally experienced in connection with his missionary assignment. The 60 years of Micah's prophetic activity lie between those of Obadiah and Jonah, stretching from 777 B.C.E. to 717 B.C.E. All that Micah relates about himself is that he is "of [the village] Moresheth" and that Jehovah's word occurred to him "in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, kings of Judah." (Micah 1:1) The prophet's familiarity with rural life is evident in the type of illustrations he uses to stress the points of his message.

### EDOM "WILL HAVE TO BE CUT OFF TO TIME INDEFINITE" (Obadiah 1-21)

Regarding Edom, Obadiah says: "Because of the violence to your brother Jacob, shame will cover you, and you will have to be cut off to time indefinite." The prophet has fresh in mind the Edomites' recent acts of violence against the sons of Jacob—the Israelites. In 607 B.C.E., when the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem, the Edomites "stood off on the side" and allied themselves with the invading "foreigners."—Obadiah 10, 11.

In contrast, a restoration is in store for the house of Jacob. Obadiah's prophecy states: "In Mount Zion is where those escaping will

*Obadiah prophesied:  
"[Edom] will have to be  
cut off to time indefinite"*

prove to be, and it must become something holy."—Obadiah 17.

### Scriptural Questions Answered:

5-8—What is significant about the comparison of Edom's destruction to the coming of despoilers by night and of grape gatherers? If thieves had come into Edom, they would have taken only what they wanted. Had harvesters come into her, they would have left behind some of the crop for gleaning. When Edom falls, though, her treasures will be thoroughly searched out and she will be completely plundered by "the very men in covenant with [her]"—her allies, the Babylonians.—Jeremiah 49:9, 10.

10—How was Edom "cut off to time indefinite"? As foretold, the nation of Edom, with a government and people in a specific region of the earth, became extinct. Babylonian King Nabonidus conquered Edom about the middle of the sixth century B.C.E. By the fourth century B.C.E., Edom's territory was inhabited by the Nabataeans, and the Edomites had to take up residence in the southern part of Judea, the area of the Negev that later came to be known as Idumea. After the Romans destroyed Jerusalem in 70 C.E., the Edomites ceased to exist.

### **Lessons for Us:**

**3, 4.** Because they lived in a rugged region of high mountains and deep ravines that offered excellent strategic advantages, the Edomites may presumptuously have deceived themselves into feeling safe and secure. But Jehovah's judgments are inescapable.

**8, 9, 15.** Human wisdom and mightiness provide no protection during "the day of Jehovah."—Jeremiah 49:7, 22.

**12-14.** The Edomites serve as a warning example to those who gloat over the difficulties that God's servants may encounter. Jehovah does not view the mistreatment of his people lightly.

**17-20.** This restoration prophecy regarding the sons of Jacob began to be fulfilled when a remnant returned to Jerusalem from Babylon in 537 B.C.E. Jehovah's word always comes true. We can have full confidence in his promises.

### **"NINEVEH WILL BE OVERTHROWN"** **(Jonah 1:1-4:11)**

Instead of obeying God's command to "go to Nineveh the great city, and proclaim against her" a judgment message, Jonah flees in the opposite direction. By hurling "a great wind at the sea" and by using "a great fish," Jehovah redirects Jonah and commissions him a second time to go to the Assyrian capital.—Jonah 1:2, 4, 17; 3:1, 2.

Jonah enters Nineveh and proceeds to proclaim a straightforward message: "Only forty days more, and Nineveh will be overthrown." (Jonah 3:4) The unexpected outcome of his preaching work causes Jonah to become "hot with anger." Jehovah uses "a bottle-gourd plant" to teach Jonah a lesson in mercy.—Jonah 4:1, 6.

### **Scriptural Questions Answered:**

**3:3—Did the size of Nineveh really amount to "a walking distance of three**

**days"?** Yes. In ancient times, Nineveh was likely understood to include other settlements stretching from Khorsabad in the north to Nimrud in the south. All the settlements identified with Nineveh form a quadrangle with a circumference of 60 miles.

**3:4—Did Jonah have to learn the Assyrian language in order to preach to the Ninevites?** Jonah may already have known the Assyrian language, or he may have miraculously received the ability to speak it. Another possibility is that he delivered his succinct message in Hebrew, with someone interpreting for him. If the latter was the case, his words would have aroused even greater curiosity about his message.

### **Lessons for Us:**

**1:1-3.** Deliberately scheduling other activities in order to avoid having a full share in the Kingdom-preaching and disciple-making work is an indication of a wrong motive. Someone who does so runs away from a God-given assignment, so to speak.

**1:1, 2; 3:10.** Jehovah's mercy is not limited to one nation or race or to a special group of people. "Jehovah is good to all, and his mercies are over all his works."—Psalm 145:9.

**1:17; 2:10.** Jonah's three days and nights in a big fish prophetically point to Jesus' death and resurrection.—Matthew 12:39, 40; 16:21.

**1:17; 2:10; 4:6.** Jehovah delivered Jonah from the raging sea. God also "appointed a bottle-gourd plant, that it should come up over Jonah, in order to become a shade over his head, to deliver him from his calamitous state." Jehovah's present-day worshippers can trust in their God, and in his loving-kindness, to safeguard and deliver them.—Psalm 13:5; 40:11.

**2:1, 2, 9, 10.** Jehovah hears the prayers of his servants and pays attention to their entreaties.—Psalm 120:1; 130:1, 2.

**3:8, 10.** The true God “felt regret over,” or changed his mind about, the calamity that he had spoken of, and he “did not cause it.” Why? Because the Ninevites “had turned back from their bad way.” Similarly today, God’s adverse judgment can be averted if a sinner manifests genuine repentance.

**4:1-4.** No human can cause God to put a limit on His mercy. We should be careful not to be critical of Jehovah’s merciful ways.

**4:11.** Jehovah is patiently having the Kingdom message preached earth wide because—as he did for the 120,000 men in Nineveh—he feels sorry for those “who do not at all know the difference between their right hand and their left.” Should we not feel sorry for the people in our territory and have a zealous share in the Kingdom-preaching and disciple-making work?—2 Peter 3:9.

### ‘THEIR BALDNESS IS TO BE BROADENED OUT’ (Micah 1:1–7:20)

Micah exposes the sins of Israel and Judah, foretells the desolation of their capitals, and promises restoration. Samaria shall become “a heap of ruins of the field.” Because of their idolatrous course, Israel and Judah deserve “baldness,” or shame. By their being sent into captivity, their baldness is to be broadened out “like that of the eagle”—apparently a type of vulture that has only a few soft hairs on its head. Jehovah promises: “I shall positively gather Jacob.” (Micah 1:6; 16; 2:12) On account of the corrupt leaders and the delinquent prophets, Jerusalem too “will become mere heaps of ruins.” But Jehovah will “collect [his people] together.” Out of “Bethlehem Ephrathah” will come “the one who is to become ruler in Israel.”—Micah 3:12; 4:12; 5:2.

Has Jehovah been unfair to Israel? Are his requirements too severe? No. All that Jehovah asks of his worshippers is that they ‘exer-

cise justice, love kindness, and be modest’ in walking with their God. (Micah 6:8) Micah’s contemporaries, though, have become so bad that “their best one is like a brier, their most upright one is worse than a thorn hedge,” causing hurt and pain to anyone coming near. But the prophet asks: “Who is a God like [Jehovah]?” God will again show mercy to his people and “throw into the depths of the sea all their sins.”—Micah 7:4, 18, 19.

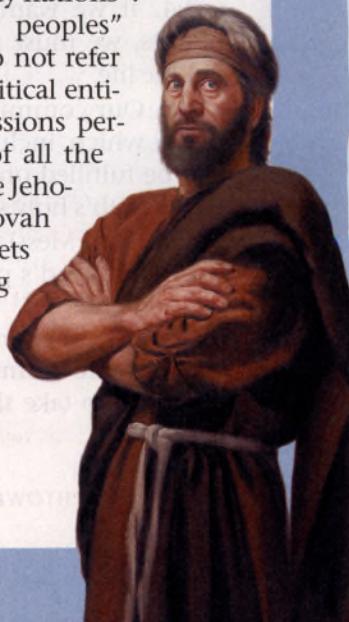
### Scriptural Questions Answered:

**2:12—When was the prophecy about ‘collecting the remaining ones of Israel’ fulfilled?** Its first fulfillment was in 537 B.C.E. when a Jewish remnant returned to their homeland from Babylonian exile. In modern times, the prophecy finds its fulfillment in “the Israel of God.” (Galatians 6:16) Since 1919, anointed Christians have been collected together “like a flock in the pen.” Being joined by the “great crowd” of “other sheep,” especially since 1935, they have become “noisy with men.” (Revelation 7:9; John 10:16) Together, they zealously promote true worship.

**4:1-4—In the final part of the days, how does Jehovah “render judgment among many peoples, and set matters straight respecting mighty nations”?**

The expressions “many peoples” and “mighty nations” do not refer to national groups or political entities. Rather, these expressions pertain to individuals out of all the nations who have become Jehovah’s worshippers. Jehovah renders judgment and sets matters straight respecting them in a spiritual way.

*Micah ‘showed a waiting attitude for Jehovah,’ and so can you*





### *The preaching work is a privilege to be cherished*

**5:7, 8.** To many people, anointed Christians today are “like dew from Jehovah”—a blessing from God. This is so because he uses the anointed to proclaim the Kingdom message. The “other sheep” help in bringing spiritual refreshment to people by actively supporting the anointed in the preaching work. (John 10:16) What a privilege it is to share in this work, which brings true refreshment to others!

**6:3, 4.** We should imitate Jehovah God and be kind and compassionate even to those who are hard to get along with or are spiritually weak.

**7:7.** As we deal with problems at the end of this wicked system of things, we should not become downhearted. Instead, like Micah, we need to “show a waiting attitude for [our] God.”

**7:18, 19.** As Jehovah is willing to pardon our errors, we should be willing to forgive those who sin against us.

### **Continue ‘Walking in the Name of Jehovah’**

Those who fight against God and his people “will have to be cut off to time indefinite.” (Obadiah 10) However, Jehovah’s anger can be turned back by our heeding the divine warning and ‘turning back from bad ways.’ (Jonah 3:10) “In the final part of the days,” that is, during these “last days,” true worship is being exalted above all false religion and obedient ones are streaming to it. (Micah 4:1; 2 Timothy 3:1) May we therefore be determined to “walk in the name of Jehovah our God to time indefinite, even forever.”—Micah 4:5.

What valuable lessons the books of Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah teach us! Though written over 2,500 years ago, their message “is alive and exerts power,” even today.—Hebrews 4:12.

### **Lessons for Us:**

**1:6, 9; 3:12; 5:2.** Samaria was devastated by the Assyrians in 740 B.C.E.—during Micah’s lifetime. (2 Kings 17:5, 6) The Assyrians came as far as Jerusalem during Hezekiah’s reign. (2 Kings 18:13) Jerusalem was set ablaze by the Babylonians in 607 B.C.E. (2 Chronicles 36:19) As prophesied, the Messiah was born in “Bethlehem Ephrathah.” (Matthew 2:3-6) Jehovah’s prophetic word never fails.

**2:1, 2.** How dangerous it would be for us to claim to serve God but seek first riches rather than “the kingdom and his righteousness.”—Matthew 6:33; 1 Timothy 6:9, 10.

**3:1-3, 5.** Jehovah expects the responsible ones among his people to act justly.

**3:4.** If we want Jehovah to answer our prayers, we must not practice sin or live a double life.

**3:8.** Our commission to preach the good news, which includes judgment messages, can be fulfilled only if we are strengthened by Jehovah’s holy spirit.

**5:5.** This Messianic prophecy assures us that when God’s people come under attack by their enemies, “seven [representing completeness] shepherds” and “eight dukes”—a considerable number of capable men—are raised up to take the lead among Jehovah’s people.

# "THE SILVER IS MINE, AND THE GOLD IS MINE"

**I**N THE sixth century B.C.E., King Cyrus of Persia released God's people from captivity in Babylon. Thousands of them returned to Jerusalem to rebuild Jehovah's temple, which lay in ruins. The economic situation of those returnees was precarious, and hostile neighbors opposed the reconstruction. Hence, some of the builders wondered if they would ever finish that momentous project.

Through his prophet Haggai, Jehovah reassured the builders that He was with them. "I will rock all the nations, and the desirable things of all the nations must come in; and I will fill this house with glory," God said. As for the builders' economic concerns, Haggai conveyed this message: "'The silver is mine, and the gold is mine,' is the utterance of Jehovah of armies." (Haggai 2:7-9) Within five years after Haggai spoke those stirring words, the project was completed.—Ezra 6:13-15.

Haggai's words have also motivated God's servants in more recent times during large projects related to the worship of Jehovah. In 1879 when the faithful and discreet slave class began publishing this journal, then called *Zion's Watch Tower and Herald of Christ's Presence*, it contained the following statement: "'Zion's Watch Tower' has, we believe, JEHOVAH for its backer, and while this is the case it will never *beg* nor *petition* men for support. When He who says: 'All the gold and silver of the mountains are mine,' fails to provide necessary funds, we will understand it to be time to suspend the publication."

Publication has never been suspended. The first issue had a printing of 6,000 copies, in English only. Today, the average printing

per issue is 28,578,000 copies, in 161 languages.\* *Awake!*, the companion magazine to *The Watchtower*, has an average printing of 34,267,000 copies, in 80 languages.

Jehovah's Witnesses undertake many projects that have the same objective that *The Watchtower* has—that of exalting Jehovah as Sovereign Lord of the universe and announcing the good news of his Kingdom. (Matthew 24:14; Revelation 4:11) The conviction of the Witnesses today is like that voiced by this journal in 1879. They believe that God is backing their work and that funds will be available for projects that have his blessing. In practical terms, though, how are the activities of Jehovah's Witnesses financed? And what kinds of projects are they undertaking in order to preach the good news worldwide?

## How Is the Work Financed?

As they preach publicly, it is not uncommon for Jehovah's Witnesses to hear the question, "Do you get paid to do this?" The answer is no, they do not. Their time is given freely. These evangelizers spend many hours speaking to others about Jehovah and the Bible's promise for a better future because they are motivated by gratitude. They appreciate what God has done for them and the extent to which the message of good news has improved their own lives and outlook. Therefore, they want to share these good things with others. In doing so, they follow the principle stated by Jesus: "You received free, give free." (Matthew 10:8) Indeed, their desire to be witnesses for Jehovah and Jesus moves

\* For a list of the languages, see page 2 of this magazine.

them to spend money out of their own pockets in order to share their beliefs with people, even those who live far away from them.—Isaiah 43:10; Acts 1:8.

The scale of this preaching work and the means used to accomplish it—printeries, offices, Assembly Halls, missionary homes, and so on—demand large expenditures. Where does the money come from? Financing for all these matters comes from voluntary contributions. Jehovah's Witnesses do not require congregation members to give money to support organizational activities, nor do they charge for publications they distribute. If anyone desires to make a donation to support their educational activity, the Witnesses are happy to accept it. Let us consider what is involved in just one aspect of the efforts to preach the good news worldwide—translation.

#### Publications in 437 Languages

For decades the publications of Jehovah's Witnesses have been among the most widely

#### "THEY MAKE US THINK SERIOUSLY"

A 14-year-old girl wrote to the Cameroon branch of Jehovah's Witnesses: "After buying my school supplies for the year, I was able to sell two of last year's textbooks for 2,500 francs [\$5, U.S.]. I am contributing this amount plus an additional 910 francs [\$1.82, U.S.] from my savings. I would like to encourage you to continue the fine work you are doing. Thank you for the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines. They make us think seriously."

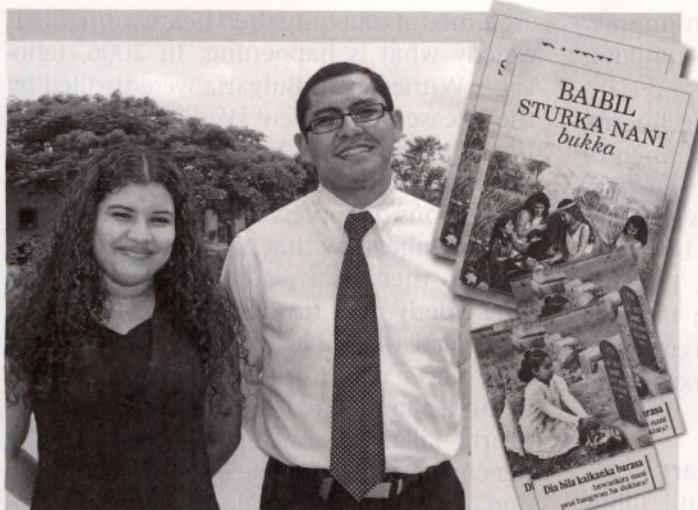


#### A SINGULAR DONATION

The Mexico branch of Jehovah's Witnesses received the following letter from Manuel, an appreciative six-year-old who lives in Chiapas State. As he does not yet know how to write, a friend wrote for him. Manuel says: "My grandmother gave me a mother pig. When it had baby pigs, I picked out the nicest one and raised it with the help of the brothers. With much love, I am sending as a donation what I received from selling the pig. It weighed 220 pounds, and I got 1,250 pesos [\$110, U.S.] for it. Please use the money for Jehovah."

translated in the world. Tracts, brochures, magazines, and books have been translated into 437 languages. Translation, of course, like the other activities involved in preaching the good news, requires considerable resources. Just what does the translation process entail?

When the editors of the publications of Jehovah's Witnesses finalize the contents of an English item, the text is made available electronically to teams of trained translators located around the globe. Each translation team is responsible for one of the languages in which publications are produced. Depending on the number of projects they are handling and the complexity of the language into which they translate—the target language—these teams may be made up of anywhere from 5 to 25 members.



Miskito translators, Nicaragua branch

The translated text is checked and proofread. The aim is to convey the thoughts contained in the original as accurately and as clearly as possible. This presents various challenges. When working on a text that uses specialized vocabulary, translators and proof-readers might have to do extensive research in both the source language (English or a secondary source language, such as French, Russian, or Spanish) and the target language to ensure accuracy. For example, when an article in *Awake!* discusses a technical or historical topic, a great deal of research is necessary.

Many translators work at branch offices of Jehovah's Witnesses, either full-time or part-time. Others work in the area where the target language is spoken. Translators do not get paid for what they do. Full-time translators are simply provided with room and board and a modest reimbursement for basic personal expenses. Worldwide, there are some 2,800 Witnesses who serve as translators. Currently, 98 branch offices of Jehovah's Witnesses host translation teams or supervise teams at other locations. To

give just one example, the Russia branch supervises more than 230 full-time or part-time translators who translate into more than 30 languages, including some not widely known outside the area, such as Chuvash, Ossetian, and Uighur.

### Improving the Quality of Translation

As anyone who has ever attempted to learn another language knows, it is not a simple thing to translate complex thoughts accurately. The goal is to represent accurately the facts and thoughts of the source text

and at the same time make the translation read naturally, as though it were originally written in the target language. To achieve this is an art. It takes new translators years to master translation, and Jehovah's Witnesses provide them with an ongoing program of education. Instructors sometimes

### 'USE THIS TO TRANSLATE THE BIBLE'

At the 2005 district conventions of Jehovah's Witnesses in Ukraine, the *New World Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures* in Ukrainian was released. The next day, this message was found in a convention contribution box: "I am nine years old. Thank you very much for the *Greek Scriptures*. Our mother gave my little brother and me this money to take the bus to school. But when it was not raining, we walked to school and saved these 50 hryvnia [\$10, U.S.]. My brother and I would like you to use this to translate the whole Bible into Ukrainian."

visit the teams to give assistance in improving translation skills and using computer software.

This training program is yielding fine results. For instance, the Nicaragua branch of Jehovah's Witnesses reports: "For the first time, our Miskito translators received training in procedures and techniques by an instructor from the Mexico branch. This has made a tremendous difference in the way our translators carry out their assignments. The quality of translation has markedly improved."

### Words That Touch the Heart

Efforts to produce the Bible and Bible-based literature in people's mother tongue

are aimed at touching their hearts, and that is exactly what is happening. In 2006, Jehovah's Witnesses in Bulgaria were thrilled by the release of the *New World Translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures* in Bulgarian. The Bulgaria branch reports receiving many expressions of appreciation for it. Congregation members say that "now the Bible really touches their heart, not just their minds." One elderly man from Sofia commented: "I have read the Bible for many years, but I have never read a translation that is easier to understand and that goes right to the heart." Likewise, in Albania, after receiving her copy of the complete *New World Translation* in Albanian, one local Witness commented: "How beautiful God's Word sounds

## WAYS IN WHICH SOME CHOOSE TO GIVE

### CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE WORLDWIDE WORK

Many set aside, or budget, an amount that they place in the contribution boxes labeled "Contributions for the Worldwide Work—Matthew 24:14."

Each month, congregations forward these amounts to the office of Jehovah's Witnesses that serves their respective countries. Voluntary donations of money may also be sent directly to **Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, Attention Treasurer's Office, 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, New York 11201-2483**, or to the branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses that serves your country. Checks sent to the above address should be made payable to "Watch Tower." Jewelry or other valuables may be donated as well. A brief letter stating that such items are an outright gift should accompany these contributions.

### CONDITIONAL-DONATION TRUST ARRANGEMENT

Money may be placed in trust with Watch Tower for use worldwide. However, upon request the funds will be returned. For more information,

please contact the Treasurer's Office at the address noted above.

### CHARITABLE PLANNING

In addition to outright gifts of money, there are other methods of giving to benefit Kingdom service worldwide. These include:

**Insurance:** Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania may be named as the beneficiary of a life insurance policy or a retirement/pension plan.

**Bank Accounts:** Bank accounts, certificates of deposit, or individual retirement accounts may be placed in trust for or made payable on death to Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, in accord with local bank requirements.

**Stocks and Bonds:** Stocks and bonds may be donated to Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania as an outright gift.

**Real Estate:** Salable real estate may be donated either by making an outright gift or, in the case of residential property, by reserving a life estate to the donor, who can continue to

in Albanian! What a privilege to have Jehovah speak to us in our own language!"

Translating the whole Bible may take a translation team several years. But when the result is that millions of people can truly grasp God's Word for the first time, would you not say that all the effort is worthwhile?

### "We Are God's Fellow Workers"

Translation, of course, is just one of the many activities necessary to preach the good news effectively. The writing, printing, and shipping of Bible-based publications and the many other related activities of branches, circuits, and congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses require considerable effort

live therein during his or her lifetime. Contact the branch office in your country before deed-ing any real estate.

**Gift Annuity:** A gift annuity is an arrangement whereby one transfers money or securities to a designated corporation that is used by Jehovah's Witnesses. In exchange, the donor, or someone designated by the donor, receives a specified annuity payment every year for life. The donor re-ceives an income-tax deduction for the year in which the gift annuity is established.

**Wills and Trusts:** Property or money may be bequeathed to Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania by means of a legally execut-ed will, or Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania may be named as beneficiary of a trust agreement. A trust benefiting a religious organization may provide certain tax advantages.

As the term "charitable planning" implies, these types of donations typically require some planning on the part of the donor. To assist individuals desiring to benefit the worldwide work of Jehovah's Witnesses through some form of chari-table planning, a brochure has been prepared in

and expense. Yet, God's people "offer them-selves willingly" to carry out this work. (Psalm 110:3) They consider it a privilege to be able to make their own contribution and view it as an honor that as a result, Jehovah considers them to be his "fellow workers."—1 Corinthians 3:5-9.

It is true that he who says "the silver is mine, and the gold is mine" does not depend on our financial assistance in order to accom-plish his work. Yet, Jehovah has dignified his servants with the privilege of having a share in sanctifying his name by their contributing to the preaching of lifesaving truths "to all the nations." (Matthew 24:14; 28:19, 20) Are you not moved to do all you can to support this never-to-be-repeated work?

English and Spanish entitled *Charitable Plan-ning to Benefit Kingdom Service Worldwide*. The brochure was written to provide information on a variety of ways that gifts may be made either now or through a bequest at death. After read-ing the brochure and conferring with their own legal or tax advisers, many have been able to help support the religious and humanitarian ac-tivities of Jehovah's Witnesses worldwide and maximize their tax benefits while doing so. This brochure may be obtained by requesting a copy directly from the Charitable Planning Office.

For more information, you may contact the Charitable Planning Office, either in writing or by telephone, at the address listed below, or you may contact the branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses that serves your country.

### Charitable Planning Office

Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of  
Pennsylvania  
100 Watchtower Drive  
Patterson, New York 12563-9204  
Telephone: (845) 306-0707

# THE WORD OF JEHOVAH NEVER FAILS

*"Not one word out of all the good words that Jehovah your God has spoken to you has failed. They have all come true for you."—JOSHUA 23:14.*

**H**E WAS a dynamic and fearless military commander, a man of faith and integrity. He walked with Moses and was hand-picked by Jehovah to lead the nation of Israel out of a fear-inspiring wilderness into a land flowing with milk and honey. Toward the end of his life, this highly respected man, Joshua, gave a moving farewell speech to the older men of Israel. Doubtless, that speech fortified the faith of those who listened to him. It can do the same for you.

<sup>2</sup> Picture the setting, as described in the Bible: "It came about many days after Jehovah had given Israel rest from all their enemies all around, when Joshua was old and advanced in days, that Joshua proceeded to call all Israel, its older men and its heads and its judges and its officers, and to say to them: 'As for me, I have grown old, I have advanced in days.'"—Joshua 23:1, 2.

<sup>3</sup> Joshua was approaching 110 years of age, having lived during one of the most exciting periods in the history of God's people. He had been an eyewitness to mighty acts of God, and he had seen the fulfillment of many of Jehovah's promises. Thus, it was with the absolute conviction of firsthand experience that he said: "You well know with all your hearts and with all your souls that not one word out of all the good words that

1. Who was Joshua, and what did he do toward the end of his life?

2, 3. When Joshua addressed the older men of Israel, what was the situation of Israel, and what did Joshua say?

Jehovah your God has spoken to you has failed. They have all come true for you. Not one word of them has failed."—Joshua 23:14.

<sup>4</sup> What words of Jehovah had come true in Joshua's lifetime? We will consider three assurances that Jehovah gave the Israelites. First, God would deliver them from bondage. Second, he would protect them. Third, he would sustain them. Jehovah has given similar assurances to his modern-day people, and we have seen them come true during our lifetime. Before we discuss what Jehovah has done in modern times, though, let us consider his activity in Joshua's day.

## Jehovah Delivers His People

<sup>5</sup> When the Israelites cried out to God because of their slavery in Egypt, Jehovah took notice. (Exodus 2:23-25) At the burning bush, Jehovah said to Moses: "I am proceeding to go down to deliver [my people] out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a land good and spacious, to a land flowing with milk and honey." (Exodus 3:8) How exciting it must have been to see Jehovah bring this about! When Pharaoh refused to let Israel leave Egypt, Moses informed him that God would turn the waters of the Nile into blood. Jehovah's word did not fail. The water in the Nile River was turned into blood. The fish died, and the river water was undrinkable. (Exodus 7:14-21)

4. What assurances did Jehovah give the Israelites?

5, 6. How did Jehovah deliver the Israelites from Egypt, and what did this demonstrate?



*Jehovah intervened to deliver his people*

Pharaoh remained obstinate, and Jehovah brought nine more plagues, describing each one in advance. (Exodus, chapters 8-12) After the tenth plague struck dead the firstborn of Egypt, Pharaoh ordered the Israelites to leave—and leave they did!—Exodus 12:29-32.

<sup>6</sup> That deliverance opened the way for Jehovah to adopt Israel as his chosen nation. It magnified Jehovah as the Fulfiller of promises, the one whose word never fails. It demonstrated Jehovah's supremacy over the gods of the nations. Reading about that deliverance strengthens our faith. Imagine what it must have been like to experience it! Joshua saw that Jehovah was without doubt “the Most High over all the earth.”—Psalm 83:18.

### **Jehovah Protects His People**

<sup>7</sup> What of the second assurance—Jehovah would protect his people? This assurance was implicit in Jehovah's promise that he would deliver them from Egypt and let them enter the Promised Land. Recall that the enraged Pharaoh pursued Israel with his powerful army, equipped with hundreds of chariots. How confident that arrogant man must have been, especially when the Israelites appeared to be trapped be-

7. How did Jehovah protect the Israelites from Pharaoh's army?

tween the mountains and the sea! Now God stepped in to protect his people by stationing a cloud between the two camps. On the Egyptian side was darkness; on the Israelite side was light. While the cloud stalled the Egyptian advance, Moses lifted his rod and the waters of the Red Sea parted, providing both an escape path for the Israelites and a trap for the Egyptians. Jehovah utterly destroyed Pharaoh's mighty military machine, protecting His people from certain defeat.—Exodus 14:19-28.

<sup>8</sup> After crossing the Red Sea, the Israelites wandered in a land described as a “vast and terrible wilderness infested with poisonous snakes and scorpions, a thirsty, waterless land.” (Deuteronomy 8:15, *The New English Bible*) Jehovah protected his people there too. And what of their entry into the Promised Land? Powerful Canaanite armies opposed them. Yet, Jehovah said to Joshua: “Get up, cross this Jordan, you and all this people, into the land that I am giving to them, to the sons of Israel. Nobody will take a firm stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I proved to be with Moses I shall prove to be with you. I shall neither desert you nor leave you entirely.” (Joshua 1:2, 5) Those

8. What protection did the Israelites enjoy (a) in the wilderness and (b) when they entered the Promised Land?

### *How did Jehovah protect his people at the Red Sea?*



words of Jehovah did not fail. Within roughly six years, Joshua defeated 31 kings and subjugated large sections of the Promised Land. (Joshua 12:7-24) That conquest would have been impossible without Jehovah's protective care.

### Jehovah Sustains His People

<sup>9</sup> Consider now the third assurance—Jehovah would sustain his people. Shortly after their deliverance from Egypt, God promised the Israelites: "Here I am raining down bread for you from the heavens; and the people must go out and pick up each his amount day for day." Sure enough, God provided that 'bread from heaven.' "When the sons of Israel got to see it, they began to say to one another: 'What is it?'" It was manna, the bread that Jehovah had promised them.—Exodus 16:4, 13-15.

<sup>10</sup> For 40 years in the wilderness, Jehovah cared for the Israelites, providing them with food and water. He even saw to it that their mantles did not wear out and that their feet did not become swollen. (Deuteronomy 8:3, 4) Joshua witnessed it all. Jehovah delivered, protected, and sustained his people, just as he had promised them.

9, 10. How did Jehovah sustain his people in the wilderness?

### Deliverance in Modern Times

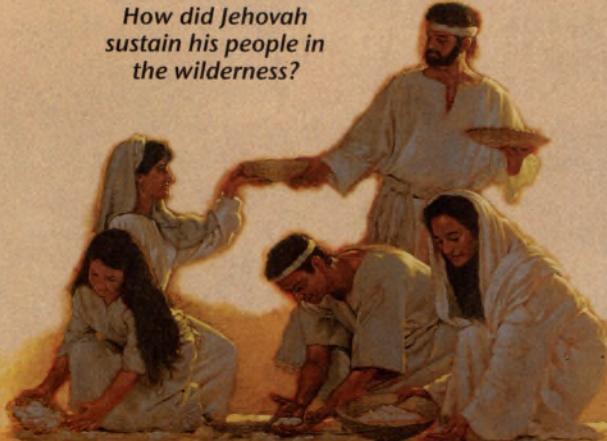
<sup>11</sup> What of our time? On Friday morning, October 2, 1914, Charles Taze Russell, who took the lead at that time among the Bible Students, strode into the dining room at Bethel in Brooklyn, New York. "Good morning, all," he said cheerily. Then, before taking his seat, he joyfully announced: "The Gentile times have ended; their kings have had their day." Once again, the time had come for Jehovah, the Sovereign of the universe, to act in behalf of his people. And act he did!

<sup>12</sup> Just five years later, Jehovah delivered his people from "Babylon the Great," the mighty world empire of false religion. (Revelation 18:2) Few of us are old enough to have witnessed that exciting deliverance. Yet, we plainly see the results. Jehovah reestablished pure worship and united those who yearned to worship him. This had been foretold through the prophet Isaiah: "It must occur in the final part of the days that the mountain of the house of Jehovah will become firmly established above the top of the mountains, and it will certainly be lifted up above the hills; and to it all the nations must stream."—Isaiah 2:2.

11. What occurred in Brooklyn, New York, in 1914, and the time for what had then arrived?

12. What deliverance occurred in 1919, and for what did this pave the way?

*How did Jehovah sustain his people in the wilderness?*





### *Jehovah cares for his people today*

<sup>13</sup> Isaiah's words did not fail to come true. In 1919 the anointed remnant began a bold worldwide witnessing campaign that raised the worship of the true God on high. In the 1930's, it became evident that the "other sheep" were being gathered in. (John 10:16) First came thousands, then hundreds of thousands, and now millions are taking a stand for pure worship! In a vision given to the apostle John, they are described as "a great crowd, which no man was able to number, out of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues." (Revelation 7:9) What have you seen during your lifetime? How many Witnesses of Jehovah were there on earth when you first learned the truth? Today, those who serve Jehovah number more than 6,700,000. By delivering his people from Babylon the Great, Jehovah opened the way for the thrilling increase that we now see on a global scale.

<sup>14</sup> Another act of deliverance is yet to come—one that will involve everyone on the face of the earth. In a stunning display of power, Jehovah will sweep aside all who oppose

13. What increase among Jehovah's people have you seen?

14. What deliverance is yet to come?

him, and he will deliver his people into a new world in which righteousness is to dwell. What a delight it will be to see an end to wickedness and the dawn of the most glorious era in all human history!—Revelation 21:1-4.

### **Jehovah's Protection in Our Day**

<sup>15</sup> As we have seen, the Israelites of Joshua's day needed Jehovah's protection. Are Jehovah's people in modern times any different? Hardly! Jesus warned his followers: "People will deliver you up to tribulation and will kill you, and you will be objects of hatred by all the nations on account of my name." (Matthew 24:9) Over the years, Jehovah's Witnesses in many lands have endured bitter opposition and cruel persecution. Yet, Jehovah has proved to be with his people. (Romans 8:31) His Word assures us that nothing—"no weapon formed against us"—will stop our Kingdom-preaching and teaching work. —Isaiah 54:17.

<sup>16</sup> Despite the world's hatred, Jehovah's people have prospered. Jehovah's Witnesses

15. Why has there been a need for Jehovah's protection in modern times?

16. What evidence have you seen that Jehovah protects his people?

are flourishing in 236 lands—compelling evidence, indeed, that Jehovah is with us to protect us from those who wish to crush or silence us. Can you recall the names of mighty political or religious leaders who during your lifetime bitterly oppressed God's people? What has happened to them? Where are they now? Most have been brought to nothing, just like Pharaoh in the days of Moses and Joshua. And what of God's modern-day servants who died faithful? They are protected in Jehovah's memory. There is no safer place for them to be. Clearly, in the matter of protection, Jehovah's words have proved true.

### Jehovah Sustains His People Today

<sup>17</sup> Jehovah sustained his people in the wilderness, and he sustains them today. We are spiritually fed by "the faithful and discreet slave." (Matthew 24:45) We receive knowledge of spiritual truths that were kept secret for centuries. The angel told Daniel: "Make secret the words and seal up the book, until the time of the end. Many will rove about, and the true knowledge will become abundant."—Daniel 12:4.

<sup>18</sup> We are now living in the time of the end, and true knowledge is indeed abundant. Worldwide, holy spirit has led lovers

17. Jehovah gave what assurance concerning spiritual food?

18. Why can it be said that true knowledge is abundant today?

### Can You Explain?

- Joshua saw the fulfillment of what assurances of Jehovah?
- What divine assurances have you seen fulfilled?
- Of what may we be certain concerning the word of God?

of truth to an accurate knowledge of the true God and his purposes. Bibles abound in the earth today, and so do publications that help people understand the precious truths that the Bible contains. Consider, for example, the table of contents in the study publication *What Does the Bible Really Teach?*\* Among its chapters are: "What Is the Truth About God?," "Where Are the Dead?," "What Is God's Kingdom?," and "Why Does God Allow Suffering?" Humans have pondered such questions for thousands of years. Now the answers are readily available. Even after centuries of ignorance and Christendom's apostate teaching, God's Word prevails, sustaining all who yearn to serve Jehovah.

<sup>19</sup> Surely from what we have seen with our own eyes, we can say: "Not one word out of all the good words that Jehovah your God has spoken to you has failed. They have all come true for you. Not one word of them has failed." (Joshua 23:14) Jehovah delivers, protects, and sustains his servants. Can you point to any promise of his that failed to be fulfilled at his appointed time? It is impossible to do so. We wisely trust in the reliable Word of God.

<sup>20</sup> What of the future? Jehovah has told us that most of us can hope to live on an earth transformed into a delightful paradise. A few among us have the hope of ruling with Christ in heaven. Whatever our hope, we have every reason to remain faithful as did Joshua. The day will come when our hope will be realized. Then we will look back on all the promises that Jehovah has made, and we too will say: "They have all come true."

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19. What promises have you seen fulfilled, and what conclusion have you come to?

20. Why may we look to the future with confidence?



## SEARCHING INTO “THE DEEP THINGS OF GOD”

*“The spirit searches into all things,  
even the deep things of God.”—1 CORINTHIANS 2:10.*

MOST of us in the Christian congregation can recall the joy we felt when we first learned the truth. We discovered why Jehovah's name is important, why he permits suffering, why some people go to heaven, and what the future holds for faithful mankind in general. We may have looked into the Bible before that, but these things were hidden from us, as they are from most of mankind. We were like a man peering through the water at a coral reef. Unaided, he sees little of the beautiful things below the surface. But with the aid of diving goggles or a glass-bottomed boat, he is thrilled to see for the first time brilliantly colored

corals, fish, sea anemones, and other fascinating creatures. Similarly, when someone began to help us to understand the Scriptures, we had our first glimpse of “the deep things of God.”—1 Corinthians 2:8-10.

Should we be satisfied with only a glimpse of Bible truth? The expression “the deep things of God” includes the understanding of God's wisdom that is revealed to Christians by holy spirit but is obscured to others. (1 Corinthians 2:7) What a limitless field of exploration the wisdom of God provides for our enjoyment! We will never know everything about the wisdom of God's ways. The joy we experienced when

1. What are some Bible truths that cause new Bible students to be joyful?

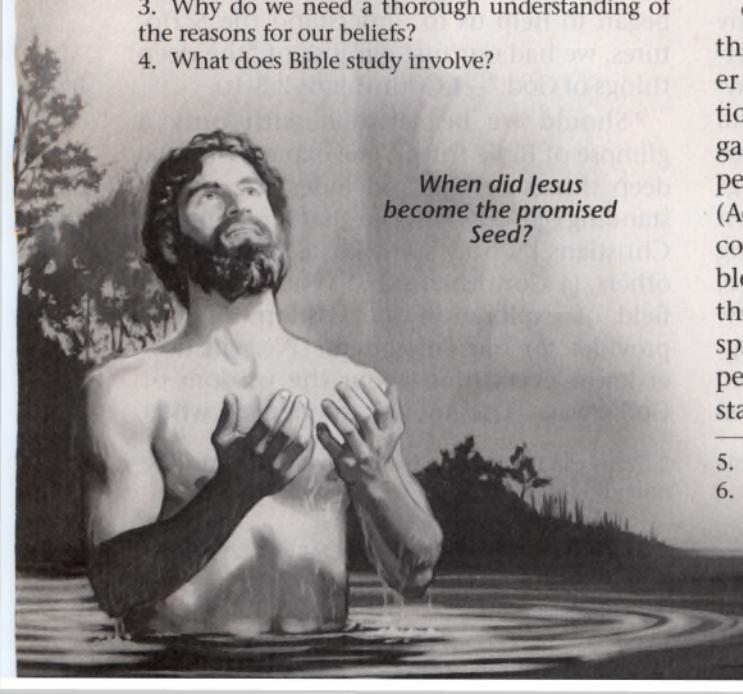
2. Why can the joy of learning from God's Word be unending?

we first learned the primary Bible teachings can remain with us indefinitely if we continue without letup searching into “the deep things of God.”

<sup>3</sup> Why do we need to understand those “deep things”? Understanding not only what we believe but why we believe it—the underlying reasons for our beliefs—strengthens our faith and confidence. The Scriptures tell us to use our “power of reason” to “prove to [ourselves] the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” (Romans 12:1, 2) Understanding why Jehovah asks us to live in a certain way fortifies our resolve to obey him. Therefore, knowledge of “the deep things” can give us strength to resist temptation to engage in lawless acts and can move us to be “zealous for fine works.”—Titus 2:14.

<sup>4</sup> Understanding deep things requires study. However, study is not the same as reading something superficially. It involves carefully examining information to see how it fits the pattern of what we already know. (2 Timothy 1:13) It entails perceiving the reasons for what is said. Bible study should include meditating on how we can use what we learn in making wise deci-

3. Why do we need a thorough understanding of the reasons for our beliefs?
4. What does Bible study involve?



*When did Jesus become the promised Seed?*

sions and in helping others. Also, since “all Scripture is inspired of God and beneficial,” our study should include “every utterance coming forth through Jehovah’s mouth.” (2 Timothy 3:16, 17; Matthew 4:4) Bible study can be hard work! But it can also be delightful, and understanding “the deep things of God” is not too difficult.

### Jehovah Helps the Meek to Understand

<sup>5</sup> Even if you did not excel at school and are unaccustomed to study, you should not imagine that “the deep things of God” are beyond your grasp. During Jesus’ earthly ministry, Jehovah revealed an understanding of His purpose, not to wise and intellectual ones, but to unlettered and ordinary men who were humble enough to be taught by God’s servant. They seemed like babes in comparison with those educated in the schools. (Matthew 11:25; Acts 4:13) Concerning “the things that God has prepared for those who love him,” the apostle Paul wrote to his fellow believers: “It is to us God has revealed them through his spirit, for the spirit searches into all things, even the deep things of God.”—1 Corinthians 2:9, 10.

<sup>6</sup> How does God’s spirit search “into all things, even the deep things of God”? Rather than give each Christian a separate revelation, Jehovah uses his spirit to direct his organization, which provides God’s unified people with an understanding of the Bible. (Acts 20:28; Ephesians 4:3-6) Worldwide, all congregations enjoy a similar program of Bible study. Over a period of years, they cover the entire range of Bible teachings. Holy spirit acts through the congregation to help people adopt the attitude needed to understand “the deep things of God.”—Acts 5:32.

5. Who can understand “the deep things of God”?
6. What does 1 Corinthians 2:10 mean?

## What “the Deep Things of God” Include

<sup>7</sup> We should not think that “deep things” are necessarily difficult things. Knowledge of “the deep things of God” is obscured from most people, not because the wisdom of God is too difficult to acquire, but because Satan deceives people into rejecting the help that Jehovah provides through His organization.—2 Corinthians 4:3, 4.

<sup>8</sup> The third chapter of Paul’s letter to the Ephesians shows that “the deep things of God” include many truths that most of Jehovah’s people understand quite well, such as the identity of the promised Seed, the selection from among mankind of individuals with a heavenly hope, and the Messianic Kingdom. Paul wrote: “In other generations this secret was not made known to the sons of men as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by spirit, namely, that people of the nations should be joint heirs and fellow members of the body and partakers with us of the promise in union with Christ Jesus.” Paul said that he had been assigned to “make men see how the sacred secret is administered which has from the indefinite past been hidden in God.”—Ephesians 3:5-9.

<sup>9</sup> Paul went on to explain God’s will that also “in the heavenly places there might be made known through the congregation the greatly diversified wisdom of God.” (Ephesians 3:10) Angels benefit by observing and understanding the wisdom of Jehovah’s dealings with the Christian congregation. What a privilege for us to understand things that interest even angels! (1 Peter 1:10-12) Next, Paul says that we should strive to

7. Why do many people not understand “the deep things of God”?
8. To what deep things did Paul refer in the third chapter of his letter to the Ephesians?
9. Why is it a privilege to understand “the deep things of God”?

“grasp mentally with all the holy ones what is the breadth and length and height and depth” of the Christian faith. (Ephesians 3:11, 18) Let us now consider some examples of deep things that could expand our comprehension.

### Examples of Deep Things

<sup>10</sup> We know that Jesus is the primary part of the “seed” of God’s heavenly “woman” referred to at Genesis 3:15. To broaden our understanding, we might ask: ‘When did Jesus become the promised Seed? Was it sometime during his prehuman existence, at his birth as a human, at his baptism, or upon his being resurrected?’

<sup>11</sup> God had promised that the heavenly part of his organization, referred to in prophecy as his “woman,” would produce a seed that would bruise the serpent in the head. But thousands of years went by, and God’s woman produced no seed capable of destroying Satan and his works. Consequently, Isaiah’s prophecy calls her “barren” and “hurt in spirit.” (Isaiah 54:1, 5, 6) Eventually, Jesus was born in Bethlehem. But only after his baptism, when he was begotten by the spirit to become a spiritual son of God, did Jehovah announce: “This is my Son.” (Matthew 3:17; John 3:3) The primary part of the “seed” of the woman had finally presented himself. Later, followers of Jesus were also anointed and begotten by holy spirit. Jehovah’s “woman,” who for so long had felt like a “woman that did not give birth,” could at long last “cry out joyfully.”—Isaiah 54:1; Galatians 3:29.

<sup>12</sup> A second example of deep things that

<sup>10, 11.</sup> According to the Scriptures, when did Jesus become the primary part of the “seed” of God’s heavenly “woman”?

<sup>12, 13.</sup> What scriptures show that all anointed Christians on earth constitute “the faithful and discreet slave”?

have been revealed to us concerns God's purpose to select 144,000 from among mankind. (Revelation 14:1, 4) We accept the teaching that all of the anointed ones living on earth at any given time constitute "the faithful and discreet slave" that Jesus said would provide timely "food" for his domestics. (Matthew 24:45) What Bible texts prove that this understanding is correct? Might Jesus have referred in a general sense to any Christian who builds up his brothers with spiritual nourishment?

<sup>13</sup> God told the nation of Israel: "You are my witnesses . . . even my servant whom I have chosen." (Isaiah 43:10) But on Nisan 11 of the year 33 C.E., Jesus told the leaders of Israel that God had rejected their nation from being His servant. He said: "The kingdom of God will be taken from you and be given to a *nation* producing its fruits." Jesus said to the crowds: "Look! Your house is abandoned to you." (Matthew 21:43; 23:38) As Jehovah's slave, the house of Israel was neither faithful nor discreet. (Isaiah 29:13, 14) Later that same day, when Jesus asked: "Who really is the faithful and discreet slave?" he was in effect asking, 'What discreet nation will replace Israel to be God's faithful slave?' The apostle Peter gave the answer when he told the congregation of anointed Christians: "You are . . . 'a holy na-

*tion, a people for special possession.'*" (1 Peter 1:4; 2:9) That spiritual nation, "the Israel of God," became Jehovah's new slave. (Galatians 6:16) Just as all members of ancient Israel formed one "servant," so also all anointed Christians on earth at any one time form one "faithful and discreet slave." What a privilege it is for us to receive "food" through God's slave!

### Personal Study Can Be Enjoyable

<sup>14</sup> When fresh understanding of the Scriptures is opened to us, do we not feel happy because of the way it strengthens our faith? That is why Bible study, more so than mere reading, can be such a joy. Therefore, when you read Christian publications, ask yourself: 'How does this explanation compare with what I previously understood about the subject? What additional Scripture texts or arguments can I think of that would provide further support for the conclusions being presented in this article?' If further research is required, make a note of the question you would like to have answered, and make it the subject of a future study project.

<sup>15</sup> What study projects would give you the joy of new insight? Such projects as an in-depth analysis of the various covenants that God has entered into for mankind's benefit are enlightening. You could strengthen your faith by making a study of the prophecies pointing to Jesus Christ or a verse-by-verse consideration of one of the prophetic books of the Bible. Faith-strengthening too is a review of the modern-day history of Jehovah's Witnesses, using the book *Jehovah's Witnesses—Proclaimers of God's Kingdom*, if you have this publication available in your lan-

### Can You Explain?

- What are "the deep things of God"?
- Why should our study of deep things never cease?
- Why is the joy of understanding "the deep things of God" open to all Christians?
- How could you benefit more fully from "the deep things of God"?

14. Why does Bible study, more than mere reading, bring joy?

15. What study projects can be enjoyable, and how can they have lasting benefit?



*Parents can assign their children subjects to research in preparation for the family study*

prove that what they have been taught is true. In addition, you can use the brochure "See the Good Land"\*\* to teach Bible geography and to clarify what you are covering in your weekly Bible reading.

<sup>17</sup> Personal Bible study projects can be fascinating and faith strengthening, but be careful not to allow them to overshadow

guage.\* And a review of past "Questions From Readers" published in *The Watchtower* would surely lead you to a fresh understanding of certain texts. Take special note of the Scriptural reasoning used to reach the conclusions presented. This will help you to train your "perceptive powers" and to develop discernment. (Hebrews 5:14) As you study, make notes either in your personal copy of the Bible or on a sheet of paper so that your study will have lasting benefit for you and those you are able to help.

### Help Young Ones to Enjoy Bible Study

<sup>16</sup> Parents can do much to stimulate the spiritual appetite of their children. Do not underestimate the ability of youths to understand deep things. If you assign youngsters a subject to research in preparation for the family Bible study, you can ask them about what they learned. Family study can also include practice sessions to help young people to learn how to defend their faith and to

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16. How can you help young people to enjoy Bible study?

your preparation for congregation meetings. The meetings are another way that Jehovah instructs us through "the faithful and discreet slave." However, additional research may contribute to your making meaningful comments at meetings—for example, at the Congregation Book Study or during highlights from the weekly Bible reading for the Theocratic Ministry School.

<sup>18</sup> Deep personal study of God's Word can help you to draw close to Jehovah. Showing the value of such study, the Bible says: "Wisdom is for a protection the same as money is for a protection; but the advantage of knowledge is that wisdom itself preserves alive its owners." (Ecclesiastes 7:12) Therefore, the effort required to deepen your understanding of spiritual things is worthwhile. The Bible promises those who keep searching: "You will find the very knowledge of God."—Proverbs 2:4, 5.

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17. Why do we need to be balanced in our personal Bible study projects?

18. Why is the effort required to study "the deep things of God" worthwhile?

# Do You Seize Opportunities to Share Your Beliefs?

**D**OES absolute truth exist?" That was the subject of a national essay competition in Poland. The instructions for the essay noted: "We do not need absolute truth. Nobody needs it. There is no absolute truth anyway." Agata, a 15-year-old high school student and one of Jehovah's Witnesses, decided to use this opportunity to share her religious beliefs with others.

To prepare for the essay, Agata first asked Jehovah for his guidance and then started to collect material on the subject. She found related information in *The Watchtower* of July 1, 1995. She quoted the question that Pontius Pilate asked Jesus: "What is truth?" (John 18:38) That question, she noted, reflected a cynical attitude, as if saying: 'Truth? What is that? There is no such thing!' "Pilate's question," wrote Agata, "reminds me of the instructions for the essay."

Next she discussed the development of relativism—the idea that what is true to one person may not be true to another and that both may be "right." She asked such questions as, "Who of us would dare to board an airplane if we did not think that the laws of aerodynamics were absolute truths?" Then she pointed to the Bible, saying: "Reliance on God's Word is firmly grounded in verifiable facts." She expressed her hope that those who sincerely seek absolute truth will have enough patience to find it.

Agata won a special diploma and had a chance to give a presentation in front of the whole class. Several of her schoolmates accepted her offer to study the Bible with them. Agata is grateful that she used this opportunity to share her beliefs with many others. Yes, being alert to an opportunity to speak about your faith can bear fruit. What opportunities can you seize?