

MAY 1, 2002

# THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



Soon an End to  
**DISABILITIES!**

# THE WATCHTOWER®

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

May 1, 2002

Average Printing Each Issue: 24,147,000

Vol. 123, No. 9

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

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Publication of *The Watchtower* is part of a worldwide Bible educational work supported by voluntary donations.

The Bible translation used is the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures—With References*, unless otherwise indicated.

*The Watchtower* (ISSN 0043-1087) is published semimonthly by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.; M. H. Larson, President; G. F. Simons, Secretary-Treasurer; 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483. Periodicals Postage Paid at Brooklyn, NY, and at additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Watchtower, Wallkill, NY 12589.

Changes of address should reach us 30 days before your moving date. Give us your old and new address (if possible, your old address label).

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**NOW PUBLISHED IN 144 LANGUAGES. SEMIMONTHLY:** Afrikaans, Albanian, Amharic, Arabic, Bengali, Bicol, Bislama, Bulgarian, Cebuano,\* Chichewa, Chinese, Chinese (Simplified),\* Cibemba, Croatian,\* Czech,\*\* Danish,\*\* Dutch,\*\* East Armenian, Efik,\* English\*\* (also Braille), Estonian, Ewe, Fijian, Finnish,\*\* French,\*\* Ga, Georgian, German,\*\* Greek,\* Gujarati, Gun, Hebrew, Hiligaynon, Hindi, Hungarian,\* Igbo,\* Iloko,\* Indonesian, Italian,\* Japanese\*\* (also Braille), Kannada, Kinyarwanda, Korean\*\* (also Braille), Latvian, Lingala, Lithuanian, Macedonian, Malagasy, Malayalam, Maltese, Marathi, Myanmar, Nepali, New Guinea Pidgin, Norwegian,\*\* Pangasinan, Papiamento (Aruba), Papiamento (Curaçao), Polish,\*\* Portuguese\*\* (also Braille), Punjabi, Rarotongan, Romanian,\* Russian,\* Samar-Leyte, Samoan, Sango, Sepedi, Serbian, Sesotho, Shona, Silozi, Sinhala, Slovak,\* Slovenian, Solomon Islands Pidgin, Spanish,\*\* Sranantongo, Swahili,\* Swedish,\*\* Tagalog,\* Tahitian, Tamil, Telugu, Thai, Tigrinya, Tongan, Tshiluba, Tsonga, Tswana, Turkish, Twi, Ukrainian,\* Urdu, Venda, Vietnamese, Wallisian, Xhosa, Yoruba,\* Zulu\*

**MONTHLY:** Armenian, Azerbaijani (Cyrillic script), Azerbaijani (Roman script), Cambodian, Chitonga, Gilbertese, Greenlandic, Hausa, Hiri Motu, Icelandic, Isoko, Kaonde, Kazakh, Kiluba, Kirghiz, Kirundi, Kwanyama/Ndonga, Luganda, Luvali, Marshallese, Mauritanian Creole, Monokutuba, Moore, Niuean, Ossetian, Otetela, Palauan, Persian, Ponapean, Seychelles Creole, Tatar, Tiv, Trukese, Tumbuka, Tuvaluan, Umbundu, Yapese, Zande

\* Study articles also available in large-print edition.

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Semimonthly

ENGLISH

# DISABILITIES Know No Boundary



CHRISTIAN, who lives in an African country, was abducted by soldiers who tried to force him to join the army, but he refused to comply because of his Bible-trained conscience. The soldiers then took him to a military camp where, after he was beaten for four days, one of them shot him in the leg. Christian managed to get to a hospital, but his leg had to be amputated below the knee. In another African country, even little children have had limbs cut off by armed rebels. And from Cambodia to the Balkans, from Afghanistan to Angola, land mines continue to mutilate and disable young and old indiscriminately.

Also taking a toll are accidents and disease, such as diabetes. Even toxins in the environment can lead to disability. In adjacent neighborhoods in an Eastern European city, for instance, a number of children have been born without one of their forearms. They have only a short stump below the elbow. Evidence points to genetic damage caused by chemical pollution.

Countless other people still have all their limbs but are disabled nonetheless because of paralysis or some other affliction. Indeed, disabilities know no boundary.

Whatever the cause, disabilities can be devastating. Junior lost his lower left leg at the age of 20. He later said: "I had many emotional difficulties. I cried a lot over the fact that I would never again have my leg. I did not know what to do. I was confused." In time, however, Junior's attitude changed markedly. He began to study the Bible and learned things that not only have helped him to cope but also have given him a wonderful hope of a happy future right here on earth. If you are disabled, would you like to share that hope?

If so, then please read the following article. We recommend that you look up the Scripture references in your own Bible so that you can see for yourself what the Creator has in store for those who learn about his purpose and attune their lives to it.



# How DISABILITIES Will End

disabilities. Furthermore, most of his miracles were seen by many witnesses—even by his enemies. In fact, in at least one instance, skeptical opposers thoroughly investigated a healing in order to discredit Jesus. But much to their chagrin, all they did was confirm his miracle. (John 9:1, 5-34) After Jesus performed yet another undeniable miracle, they said in frustration: “What are we to do, because this man performs many signs?” (John 11:47) The common people, however, were not as insensitive, for many began to put faith in Jesus.—John 2:23; 10:41, 42; 12:9-11.

## Jesus’ Miracles

### —A Preview of Global Healing

Jesus’ miracles did more than prove that Jesus was the Messiah and the Son of God. They furnished a basis for faith in the Bible’s promises that obedient mankind will be cured in the future. These promises include the prophecy in Isaiah chapter 35, mentioned in the opening paragraph. Isaiah 33:24 states concerning the future health of God-fearing humans: “No resident will say: ‘I am sick.’” Similarly, Revelation 21:4 promises: “[God] will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things [today’s trials and suffering] have passed away.”

**I**MAGINE the eyes of the blind seeing, the ears of the deaf hearing every sound, the tongue of the speechless singing out with joy, and the feet of the lame being firm and able to walk about! We are talking, not about breakthroughs in medical science, but about the results of God’s own intervention in behalf of mankind. The Bible foretells: “At that time the eyes of the blind ones will be opened, and the very ears of the deaf ones will be unstopped. At that time the lame one will climb up just as a stag does, and the tongue of the speechless one will cry out in gladness.” (Isaiah 35:5, 6) But how can we be sure that this truly amazing prophecy will be realized?

To begin with, when Jesus Christ was on earth, he actually did cure people of all forms of disease and

People regularly pray for the fulfillment of these prophecies when they repeat Jesus' model prayer, which says in part: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." (Matthew 6:10, *King James Version*) Yes, God's will includes the earth and humankind. Disease and disabilities, although permitted for a reason, will soon have had their day; they will not blight God's "footstool" forever.—Isaiah 66:1.\*

### Healed Without Pain or Cost

No matter what affliction people suffered, Jesus cured them painlessly, without delay, and without cost. Inevitably, word of this spread like wildfire, and soon "great crowds approached him, having along with them people that were lame, maimed, blind, dumb, and many otherwise, and they fairly threw them at his feet, and he cured them." How did the people respond? Matthew's eyewitness account continues: "The crowd felt amazement as they saw the dumb speaking and the lame walking and the blind seeing, and they glorified the God of Israel."—Matthew 15:30, 31.

Note that those who were cured by Jesus were not carefully singled out from the crowd—a trick employed by charlatans. Rather, the many relatives and friends of the ailing ones "fairly threw them at [Jesus'] feet, and he cured them." Let us now review some specific examples of Jesus' ability to heal.

**Blindness:** While in Jerusalem, Jesus gave sight to a man who had been "blind from birth." This man was well-known in the city as a blind beggar. So you can imagine the excitement and hubbub when people saw him walking about seeing! Yet, not all were happy. Stung by Jesus' earlier exposure of their wickedness, some members of a prominent and influential Jewish sect called the Pharisees

were desperate to find evidence of trickery on Jesus' part. (John 8:13, 42-44; 9:1, 6-31) Hence, they interrogated the healed man, then his parents, and then the man again. But the Pharisees' inquiries merely confirmed Jesus' miracle, which angered them. Puzzled by the perversity of these religious hypocrites, the healed man himself said: "From of old it has never been heard that anyone opened the eyes of one born blind. If this man were not from God, he could do nothing at all." (John 9:32, 33) For that honest and intelligent expression of faith, the Pharisees "threw him out," which implies that they expelled the once-blind man from the synagogue.—John 9:22, 34.

**Deafness:** While Jesus was in the Decapolis, a region east of the Jordan River, "the people there brought him a man deaf and with a speech impediment." (Mark 7:31, 32) Not only did Jesus heal this person but he also revealed deep insight into the feelings of the deaf, who may be embarrassed in crowds. The Bible tells us that Jesus took the deaf man "away from the crowd privately" and healed him. Again, eyewitnesses were "astounded in a most extraordinary way," saying: "He has done all things well. He even makes the deaf hear and the speechless speak."—Mark 7:33-37.

**Paralysis:** While Jesus was in Capernaum, people approached him with a paralyzed man lying on a bed. (Matthew 9:2) Verses 6 to 8 describe what happened. "[Jesus] said to the paralytic: 'Get up, pick up your bed, and go to your home.' And he got up and went off to his home. At the sight of this the crowds were struck with fear, and they glorified God, who gave such authority to men." This miracle too was performed in the presence of both Jesus' disciples and his enemies. Observe that the former, not blinded by hatred and prejudice, "glorified God" for what they witnessed.

\* For a detailed discussion on why God has permitted suffering, see the brochure *Does God Really Care About Us?*, published by Jehovah's Witnesses.

*Disease:* "There also came to [Jesus] a leper, entreating him even on bended knee, saying to him: 'If you just want to, you can make me clean.' At that he was moved with pity, and he stretched out his hand and touched him, and said to him: 'I want to. Be made clean.' And immediately the leprosy vanished from him." (Mark 1:40-42) Note that Jesus did not heal this person begrudgingly but out of genuine compassion. Imagine that you were a leper. How would you feel if you were cured instantly and painlessly of a dreaded illness that progressively had disfigured your body and made you an outcast from society? No doubt you can understand why another leper who was miraculously cured "fell upon his face at Jesus' feet, thanking him."—Luke 17:12-16.

*Injury:* Jesus' last miracle before he was taken into custody and impaled was an act of healing. In a rash move against those who were about to take Jesus away, the apostle Peter, "as he had a sword, drew it and struck the slave of the high priest and cut his right ear off." (John 18:3-5, 10) The parallel account in Luke tells us that Jesus "touched the ear and healed him." (Luke 22:50, 51) Again, this humane gesture was performed within sight of Jesus' friends as well as his enemies—in this instance, his captors.

Yes, the closer we examine Jesus' miracles, the more we discern the distinguishing marks of authenticity. (2 Timothy 3:16) And as mentioned earlier, such study should strengthen our faith in God's promise to heal obedient humans. The Bible defines Christian faith as "the *assured expectation* of things hoped for, the *evident demonstration* of realities though not beheld." (Hebrews 11:1) Clearly, God encourages, not blind credulity or wishful thinking, but solid faith built on evidence. (1 John 4:1) As we acquire such faith, we find ourselves becoming spiritually stronger, healthier, and happier.—Matthew 5:3; Romans 10:17.

## Spiritual Healing Must Come First!

Many physically healthy people are unhappy. Some even attempt suicide because they have no hope for the future or because they feel overwhelmed with problems. They are, in effect, spiritually disabled—a far more serious condition in God's eyes than a physical disability. (John 9:41) On the other hand, many who are physically disabled, like Christian and Junior mentioned in the preceding article, live happy, fulfilling lives. Why? Because they are spiritually sound and are energized with a sure hope based on the Bible.

Referring to our unique need as humans, Jesus said: "Man must live, not on bread alone, but on every utterance coming forth through Jehovah's mouth." (Matthew 4:4) Yes, unlike the animal creation, humans need more than material sustenance. Created in God's "image," we need spiritual food—the knowledge of God and how we fit into his purpose as well as the doing of his will. (Genesis 1:27; John 4:34) Knowledge of God infuses our lives with meaning and spiritual vigor. It also lays the basis for eternal life in a paradise earth. "This means everlasting life," Jesus said, "their taking in knowledge of you, the only true God, and of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ."—John 17:3.

It is noteworthy that Jesus' contemporaries did not address him as "Healer" but as "Teacher." (Luke 3:12; 7:40) Why? Because Jesus taught people about the *permanent* solution to mankind's problems—God's Kingdom. (Luke 4:43; John 6:26, 27) This heavenly government in the hands of Jesus Christ will rule the entire earth and fulfill all the Biblical promises concerning the complete and lasting rehabilitation of righteous humans and their earthly home. (Revelation 11:15) That is why Jesus, in his model prayer, tied the coming of the Kingdom to God's will being done on earth.—Matthew 6:10.

For many disabled individuals, learning about this inspiring hope has caused their tears of sadness to change into tears of joy. (Luke 6:21) In fact, God will do even more than eliminate sickness and disability; he will obliterate the very cause of human suffering—sin itself. Indeed, Isaiah 33:24 and Matthew 9:2-7, quoted earlier, link sickness to our sinful condition. (Romans 5:12) Hence, with sin vanquished, mankind will at last enjoy “the glorious freedom of the children of God,” a freedom that includes perfection of mind and body.—Romans 8:21.

Those who enjoy reasonably good health can easily take their situation for granted. But not so with those who suffer the trauma of disabilities. They know just how precious health and life are and how suddenly and unexpectedly things can change. (Ecclesiastes 9:11) Hence, it is our hope that the disabled among our readers will give special consideration to God’s wonderful promises as recorded in the Bible. Jesus gave his life in order to ensure their fulfillment. What better guarantee could we have?—Matthew 8:16, 17; John 3:16.





## How a Son HELPED HIS FATHER

JAMES, from England, in his early 30's, has severe mental disabilities and mild autism. Yet, for many years he has attended the meetings of Jehovah's Witnesses with his mother and sister. However, his father had never shown much interest in their beliefs. One evening after a meeting that featured a demonstration showing how to invite an acquaintance to the Memorial of Christ's death, James quickly went to his room. Anxiously, his mother followed him and found him frantically sorting through old issues of the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines. He selected one with a reproduction of a Memorial invitation on the back page and rushed to his father. He pointed first to the picture and then to his father and said "You!" His mother and father looked at each other in amazement as they realized that James was inviting his father to the Memorial. His father said that he might attend.

On the evening of the Memorial, James went to his father's closet, selected a pair of trousers, took them to his father, and gestured that he should put them on. His father replied that he would not be going to the meeting. Thus, James and his mother set off for the Kingdom Hall alone.

Some time later, however, James became increasingly uncooperative when his mother tried to get him ready to attend congregation meetings, choosing to remain at home with his father instead. Then one Sunday morning, James again refused to cooperate as his mother tried to get him ready for the meeting. To her great surprise, James' father turned to him and said, "James, if I go to the meeting today, will you go too?" James' face lit up. He threw his arms around his father and said "Yes!" and all three went off to the Kingdom Hall.

From that day, James' father continued to attend all the Sunday meetings and soon announced that if he was to make progress, he would have to attend the other meetings too. (Hebrews 10:24, 25) This he did, and two months later he began to study the Bible regularly. He made rapid progress, quickly making the necessary changes in his life, and before long he began sharing in the Kingdom preaching work. One year after he began to study the Bible, he dedicated his life to Jehovah and symbolized this by water immersion. He presently serves as a ministerial servant in his congregation. Now all in the family serve Jehovah unitedly.



# MEETING DIVINE REQUIREMENTS MAGNIFIES JEHOVAH

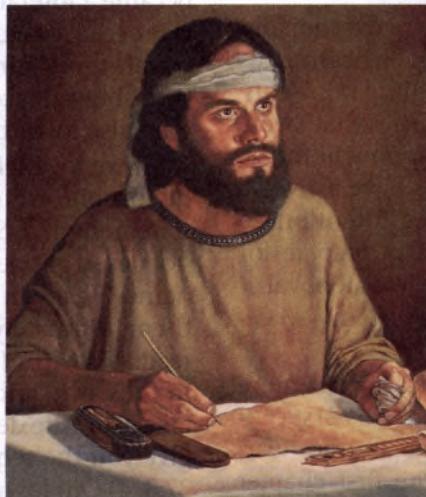
*"I will magnify him with thanksgiving."*—PSALM 69:30.

JEHOVAH is the almighty God, the Universal Sovereign, the Creator. As such, his name and purposes deserve to be magnified. To magnify Jehovah means to hold him in the highest esteem, to laud and extol him by word and deed. To do so “with thanksgiving” requires that we always be thankful for what he is doing for us now and for what he will do in the future. The attitude we need to have is shown at Revelation 4:11, where faithful spirit creatures in heaven declare: “You are worthy, Jehovah, even our God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power, because you created all things, and because of your will they existed and were created.” How do we magnify Jehovah?

By learning about him and then doing what he requires of us. We should feel as the psalmist did when he said: “Teach me to do your will, for you are my God.”—Psalm 143:10.

<sup>2</sup> Jehovah appreciates those who magnify him. That is why he is “the rewarder of those earnestly seeking him.” (Hebrews 11:6)

1. (a) Why does Jehovah deserve to be magnified?  
(b) How do we magnify him with thanksgiving?
2. How does Jehovah deal with those who magnify him and with those who do not?



*Malachi's prophecy pointed forward to our day*

What is the reward? Jesus said in prayer to his heavenly Father: “This means everlasting life, their taking in knowledge of you, the only true God, and of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ.” (John 17:3) Yes, those who “magnify [Jehovah] with thanksgiving” will “possess the earth, and they will reside forever upon it.” (Psalm 37:29) On the other hand, “there will prove to be no future for anyone bad.” (Proverbs 24:20) And in these last days, the need for magnifying Jehovah is urgent because soon he will destroy the wicked and preserve the righteous. “The world is passing away and so is its desire, but he that does the will of God remains forever.”—1 John 2:17; Proverbs 2:21, 22.

<sup>3</sup> Jehovah’s will is found in the Bible, for “all Scripture is inspired of God.” (2 Timothy 3:16) That Word of God contains many accounts of how Jehovah blesses those who magnify him and of what happens to those who do not. One of those accounts has to do with what took place in Israel during the time of the prophet Malachi. About the year

3. Why should we pay attention to the book of Malachi?

443 B.C.E., during Nehemiah's governorship of Judah, Malachi wrote the book bearing his name. This powerful and thrilling book contains information and prophecies that "were written for a warning to us upon whom the ends of the systems of things have arrived." (1 Corinthians 10:11) Paying attention to Malachi's words can help us to prepare for "the great and fear-inspiring day of Jehovah," when He destroys this wicked system.—Malachi 4:5.

<sup>4</sup> How does Malachi's book, written more than 2,400 years ago, help us in this 21st century to prepare for that great and fear-inspiring day of Jehovah? The first chapter draws our attention to at least six points crucial to our magnifying Jehovah with thanksgiving so as to gain his favor and everlasting life: (1) Jehovah loves his people. (2) We must show appreciation for sacred things. (3) Jehovah expects us to give him our best. (4) True worship is motivated by unselfish love, not by greed. (5) Acceptable service to God is not a burdensome formality. (6) Each of us must render an account to God. So, then, in this first of three articles on the book of Malachi, let us consider each of those points as we take a closer look at Malachi chapter 1.

4. What six points are drawn to our attention in Malachi chapter 1?

### Jehovah Loves His People

<sup>5</sup> Jehovah's love is made clear in the early verses of Malachi. The book opens with the words: "A pronouncement: The word of Jehovah concerning Israel." Further, God says: "I have loved you people." Citing an example, in the same verse, Jehovah states: "I loved Jacob." Jacob was a man who had faith in Jehovah. In time, Jehovah changed Jacob's name to Israel, and he became a forefather of the nation of Israel. It was because Jacob was a man of faith that Jehovah loved him. Those among the people who showed Jacob's attitude toward Jehovah were also loved by Him.—Malachi 1:1, 2.

<sup>6</sup> If we love Jehovah and loyally stick with his people, we can draw comfort from the statement at 1 Samuel 12:22: "Jehovah will not desert his people for the sake of his great name." Jehovah loves his people and rewards them, ultimately with everlasting life. So we read: "Trust in Jehovah and do good; reside in the earth, and deal with faithfulness. Also take exquisite delight in Jehovah, and he will give you the requests of your heart." (Psalm 37:3, 4) Our loving Jehovah involves a second point that is brought to our attention in Malachi chapter 1.

### Show Appreciation for Sacred Things

<sup>7</sup> As we read at Malachi 1:2, 3, after Jehovah says, "I loved Jacob," he states, "Esau I have hated." Why the difference? Jacob magnified Jehovah, but his twin brother, Esau, did not. Esau was also called Edom. At Malachi 1:4, the land of Edom is called the territory of wickedness, and its inhabitants are denounced. The name Edom (meaning "Red") was given to

- 5, 6. (a) Why did Jehovah love Jacob? (b) If we imitate Jacob's faithfulness, what can we expect?  
7. Why did Jehovah hate Esau?

Esau after he sold his precious birthright to Jacob for some red stew. "Esau despised the birthright," says Genesis 25:34. The apostle Paul urged fellow believers to be careful that "there may be no fornicator nor anyone not appreciating sacred things, like Esau, who in exchange for one meal gave away his rights as firstborn."—Hebrews 12:14-16.

<sup>8</sup> Why did Paul link Esau's actions to fornication? Because having the mentality of Esau can lead a person to fail to appreciate sacred things. In turn, this can result in serious sins, such as fornication. Hence, each of us might ask: 'Am I sometimes tempted to barter my Christian inheritance—everlasting life—for something as transient as a bowl of lentil stew? Perhaps without realizing it, do I despise sacred things?' Esau had an impatient desire to satisfy a physical craving. He said to Jacob: "Quick, please, give me a swallow of the red." (Genesis 25:30) Sadly, some of God's servants have, in effect, said: "Quick! Why wait for honorable marriage?" A desire for sexual satisfaction at any price has become their bowl of lentil stew.

<sup>9</sup> May we never despise sacred things by disdaining chastity, integrity, and our spiritual inheritance. Instead of being like Esau, let us be like faithful Jacob and maintain reverential fear of God by showing deep appreciation for sacred things. How can we do this? By being careful to meet Jehovah's requirements. This logically leads us to a third point that is brought out in Malachi chapter 1. What is that?

### Giving Jehovah Our Best

<sup>10</sup> Judah's priests serving at the temple in Jerusalem during Malachi's time were not offering Jehovah the best sacrifices. Malachi 1:

8. What caused Paul to liken Esau to a fornicator?
9. How can we maintain reverential fear of Jehovah?
10. In what way were the priests despising Jehovah's table?

6-8 says: "'A son, for his part, honors a father; and a servant, his grand master. So if I am a father, where is the honor to me? And if I am a grand master, where is the fear of me?' Jehovah of armies has said to you, O priests who are despising my name." "In what way have we despised your name?" asked the priests. "By presenting upon my altar polluted bread," Jehovah replied. "In what way have we polluted you?" the priests asked. So Jehovah told them: "By your saying: 'The table of Jehovah is something to be despised.'" Those priests showed that they despised Jehovah's table each time they presented a defective sacrifice, saying: "It is nothing bad."

<sup>11</sup> Jehovah then reasoned regarding such unacceptable sacrifices: "Bring it near, please, to your governor. Will he find pleasure in you, or will he receive you kindly?" No, their governor would not take pleasure in such a gift. How much less will the Universal

11. (a) What did Jehovah say about unacceptable sacrifices? (b) In what way were the people in general guilty?

### *The priests and the people offered unacceptable sacrifices*



Sovereign accept defective offerings! And it was not just the priests who were at fault. True, they were showing contempt for Jehovah by performing the actual sacrifices. But were the people in general without guilt? No, indeed! They were the ones who had selected those blind, lame, and sick animals and who had brought them to the priests to have them sacrificed. What sinfulness!

<sup>12</sup> Giving Jehovah the best we can is the way to show that we really love him. (Matthew 22:37, 38) Unlike the wayward priests of Malachi's time, Jehovah's organization today imparts much fine Scriptural instruction that helps us to magnify Jehovah with thanksgiving by meeting divine requirements. Related to this is a fourth important point that can be drawn from Malachi chapter 1.

### True Worship Is Motivated by Love, Not Greed

<sup>13</sup> The priests of Malachi's day were selfish, unloving, and money hungry. How do we know that? Malachi 1:10 says: "'Who also is there among you that will shut the doors? And you men will not light my altar—for nothing. No delight do I have in you,' Jehovah of armies has said, 'and in the gift offering from your hand I take no pleasure.'" Yes, those greedy priests even demanded a fee for the simplest of temple services, requiring payment for shutting doors and lighting altar fires! It is no wonder that Jehovah took no pleasure in offerings from their hands!

<sup>14</sup> The greed and selfishness of the sinful priests in ancient Jerusalem may well remind us that, according to God's Word, greedy individuals will not inherit God's Kingdom. (1 Corinthians 6:9, 10) Reflecting upon the self-serving ways of those priests heightens

12. How are we helped to give Jehovah our best?
13. What were the priests doing that showed that they were motivated by greed?
14. Why can we say that Jehovah's Witnesses are motivated by love?

our appreciation for the worldwide preaching work being done by Jehovah's Witnesses. It is voluntary; we never charge for any part of our ministry. No, "we are not peddlers of the word of God." (2 Corinthians 2:17) Like Paul, each of us can truthfully say: "Without cost I gladly declared the good news of God to you." (2 Corinthians 11:7) Notice that Paul "gladly declared the good news." That suggests a fifth point brought to our attention in Malachi chapter 1.

### Service to God Not a Burdensome Formality

<sup>15</sup> The faithless priests in ancient Jerusalem viewed the offering of sacrifices as a tiresome formality. It was a burden to them. As noted at Malachi 1:13, God told them: "You have said, 'Look! What a weariness!' and you have caused a sniffing at it." Those priests sniffed at, or scorned, God's sacred things. Let us pray that we personally never become like

- 15, 16. (a) What attitude did the priests have toward offering sacrifices? (b) How do Jehovah's Witnesses offer their sacrifices?

### Worldwide, Jehovah's Witnesses freely offer sacrifices of praise



them. Instead, may we always manifest the spirit evident in the words of 1 John 5:3: "This is what the love of God means, that we observe his commandments; and yet his commandments are not burdensome."

<sup>16</sup> Let us delight in offering spiritual sacrifices to God, never considering this a tiresome burden. May we heed the prophetic words: "Say to [Jehovah], all you people, 'May you pardon error; and accept what is good, and we will offer in return the young bulls of our lips.'" (Hosea 14:2) The expression "young bulls of our lips" denotes spiritual sacrifices, the words we speak in praise of Jehovah and his purposes. Hebrews 13:15 states: "Through [Jesus Christ] let us always offer to God a sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of lips which make public declaration to his name." How glad we are that our spiritual sacrifices are, not mere formalities, but wholehearted manifestations of our love for God! This leads to a sixth point that can be gleaned from Malachi chapter 1.

### Each Must Render an Account

<sup>17</sup> Individuals living in Malachi's day bore personal responsibility for their deeds, and so do we. (Romans 14:12; Galatians 6:5) Accordingly, Malachi 1:14 states: "Cursed is the one acting cunningly when there exists in his drove [an unblemished] male animal, and he is making a vow and sacrificing a ruined one to Jehovah." A man who had a drove did not own just a single animal—say, just one sheep—so that he had no choice. In selecting an animal for sacrifice, he did not have to choose one that was blind, lame, or sick. If he did choose such a defective creature, it would show that he despised Jehovah's sacrificial arrangement, for a man who had a drove of animals could surely find one that did not have such defects!

17, 18. (a) Why did Jehovah curse "the one acting cunningly"? (b) What had those who acted cunningly not taken into account?

<sup>18</sup> With good reason, then, Jehovah cursed the one acting cunningly, the one who had a suitable male animal but who brought—perhaps had to drag—a blind, lame, or sick creature to the priest for sacrifice. Yet, there is not even a hint that any of the priests quoted God's law that defective animals were not acceptable. (Leviticus 22:17-20) Reasonable individuals knew that they would have fared badly if they had tried to foist such a gift on their governor. But in reality they were dealing with the Universal Sovereign, Jehovah, who is far, far greater than any human governor. Malachi 1:14 states matters this way: "'I am a great King,' Jehovah of armies has said, 'and my name will be fear-inspiring among the nations.'

<sup>19</sup> As loyal servants of God, we yearn for the day when the Great King, Jehovah, is revered by all mankind. At that time, "the earth will certainly be filled with the knowledge of Jehovah as the waters are covering the very sea." (Isaiah 11:9) Meanwhile, let us endeavor to meet Jehovah's requirements by imitating the psalmist who said: "I will magnify him with thanksgiving." (Psalm 69:30) To that end, Malachi has further counsel that can be of great benefit. In the next two articles, let us therefore give careful consideration to other portions of the book of Malachi.

19. What do we yearn for, and what should we be doing?

### Do You Remember?

- Why should we magnify Jehovah?
- Why were priestly sacrifices in Malachi's day unacceptable to Jehovah?
- How do we offer Jehovah a sacrifice of praise?
- What should be the motivation for true worship?

# JEHOVAH HATES THE COURSE OF TREACHERY

*'Do not deal treacherously with one another.'*—MALACHI 2:10.

**D**O YOU want everlasting life? If you believe in that hope as promised in the Bible, you will probably say, 'Of course.' But if you wish God to favor you with endless life in his new world, you will need to meet his requirements. (Ecclesiastes 12:13; John 17:3) Is it unreasonable to expect imperfect humans to do that? No, for Jehovah makes this encouraging statement: "In loving-kindness I have taken delight, and not in sacrifice; and in the knowledge of God rather than in whole burnt offerings." (Hosea 6:6) So even mistake-prone humans can meet God's requirements.

<sup>2</sup> However, not everybody wants to do Jehovah's will. Hosea reveals that even many Israelites did not want to. As a nation, they had agreed to come into a covenant, an agreement, to obey God's laws. (Exodus 24:1-8) Yet, before long they were 'overstepping the covenant' by breaking his laws. Thus, Jehovah said that those Israelites "dealt treacherously" with him. (Hosea 6:7) And so have many people since then. But Jehovah hates the course of treachery, whether it is directed toward him or toward those who love and serve him.

<sup>3</sup> Hosea was not the only prophet to highlight God's view of treachery, a view we need to adopt if we hope to enjoy a happy life. In the preceding article, we began an analysis of

1. What does God require of us if we are to receive everlasting life?
2. How did many Israelites deal treacherously with Jehovah?
3. What analysis will be made in this study?

much of Malachi's prophetic message, starting with the first chapter of his book. Now let us turn to the second chapter of that book and see how God's view of treachery receives additional attention. Even though Malachi was dealing with the situation that prevailed among God's people decades after their return from captivity in Babylon, that second chapter has real meaning for us today.

## Reprehensible Priests

<sup>4</sup> Chapter 2 opens with Jehovah's censure of the Jewish priests for departing from his righteous ways. If they did not take to heart his counsel and correct their ways, grave consequences were sure to follow. Note the first two verses: "'This commandment is to you, O priests. If you will not listen, and if you will not lay it to heart to give glory to my name,' Jehovah of armies has said, 'I shall also certainly send upon you the curse, and I will curse your blessings.'" Had the priests taught the people God's laws and kept them, they would have been blessed. But because of ignoring God's will, a curse, a malediction, would come instead. Even the blessings the priests uttered would turn out to be a curse.

<sup>5</sup> Why were the priests especially reprehensible? Verse 7 gives a clear indication: "The lips of a priest are the ones that should keep knowledge, and the law is what people should seek from his mouth; for he is the

4. What warning did Jehovah give the priests?
5. 6. (a) Why were the priests especially reprehensible? (b) How did Jehovah voice contempt for the priests?

messenger of Jehovah of armies." More than a thousand years earlier, God's laws that were given to Israel through Moses said that the priests had the duty "to teach the sons of Israel all the regulations that Jehovah [had] spoken." (Leviticus 10:11) Sadly, at a later point, the writer of 2 Chronicles 15:3 reported: "Many were the days that Israel had been without a true God and without a priest teaching and without Law."

<sup>6</sup> In the time of Malachi, in the fifth century B.C.E., the situation with the priesthood was the same. They were failing to teach God's Law to the people. So those priests deserved to be called to account. Note the strong words that Jehovah directs against them. Malachi 2:3 declares: "I will scatter dung upon your faces, the dung of your festivals." What a rebuke! The dung of sacrificial animals was supposed to be carried outside the camp and burned. (Leviticus 16:27) But when Jehovah tells them that the dung would instead be scattered on their faces, it clearly shows that he held in contempt and rejected their sacrifices and those offering them.

<sup>7</sup> Centuries before Malachi's time, Jehovah had assigned the Levites to care for the tabernacle and later the temple and the sacred ministry. They were the teachers in the nation of Israel. Fulfilling their assignment would have meant life and peace for them and the nation. (Numbers 3:5-8) Yet, the Levites lost the fear of God that they initially had. Thus, Jehovah told them: "You have turned aside from the way. You have caused many to stumble in the law. You have ruined

7. Why was Jehovah angry with the teachers of the Law?



*In Malachi's time the priests were censured for not keeping Jehovah's ways*

the covenant of Levi . . . You were not keeping my ways." (Malachi 2:8, 9) By their failure to teach the truth and by their poor example, the priests misled many Israelites, so Jehovah was rightly angry with them.

#### **Keeping God's Standards**

<sup>8</sup> Let us not think that those priests merited sympathy and should have been pardoned because they were mere imperfect humans and could not have been expected to keep God's standards. The fact is that humans *can* keep God's commands, for Jehovah does not expect of them what they cannot produce. Likely, some individual priests back then did keep God's standards, and there is no doubt about one who later did—Jesus, the great "high priest." (Hebrews 3:1) Of him it could truly be said: "The very law of truth proved to be in his mouth, and there was no unrighteousness to be found on his lips. In peace and in uprightness he walked with me, and many were those whom he turned back from error."—Malachi 2:6.

8. Is it too much to expect humans to keep God's standards? Explain.

<sup>9</sup> Comparably, for more than a century now, the anointed brothers of Christ, those with the heavenly hope, have served as “a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God.” (1 Peter 2:5) They have taken the lead in dispensing Bible truths to others. As you have learned truths that they teach, have you not found from experience that the very law of truth has proved to be in their mouths? They have helped to turn many back from religious error, so that now there are millions throughout the world who have learned Bible truths and who have the hope of everlasting life. These, in turn, have the privilege of teaching the law of truth to yet other millions.—John 10:16; Revelation 7:9.

### Reason for Caution

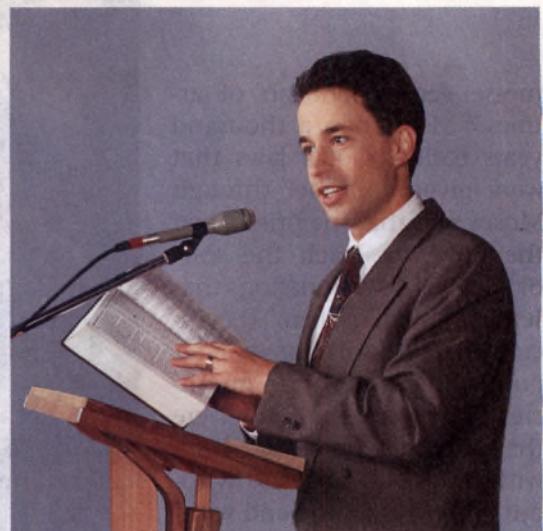
<sup>10</sup> However, we have reason for caution. We could miss the lessons that are implicit in Malachi 2:1-9. Are we personally alert, so that no unrighteousness is found on our lips? For example, can our family members really trust what we say? Can our spiritual brothers and sisters in the congregation do the same? It would be easy to develop the habit of couching one’s words in terms that are technically accurate but misleading. Or one might exaggerate or hide details in a business matter. Would Jehovah not see that? And if we followed such practices, would he accept sacrifices of praise from our lips?

<sup>11</sup> As to those who have the privilege of teaching God’s Word in the congregations today, Malachi 2:7 should serve as a caution. It says that their lips “should keep knowledge, and the law is what people should seek” from their mouths. Heavy responsibility comes upon such teachers, for James

9. Who have faithfully dispensed the truth in our time?

10. Why do we have reason to be cautious?

11. Who especially need to be cautious?



*We must be careful to teach Jehovah’s ways, not promoting personal preferences*

3:1 indicates that they “shall receive heavier judgment.” While they should teach with vigor and enthusiasm, their teaching must be soundly based on God’s written Word and the instruction that comes through Jehovah’s organization. In that way they will be “adequately qualified to teach others.” Thus, they are counseled: “Do your utmost to present yourself approved to God, a workman with nothing to be ashamed of, handling the word of the truth aright.”—2 Timothy 2:2, 15.

<sup>12</sup> If we are not careful, we could be tempted to weave personal preferences or opinions in with our teaching. That would especially be a risk for a person tending to be confident in his own conclusions even when these contradict what Jehovah’s organization is teaching. But Malachi chapter 2 shows that we should expect congregation teachers to hold to knowledge from God and not to personal ideas, which could stumble the sheep. Jesus said: “Whoever stumbles one of these little ones who put faith in me, it is more beneficial for him to have hung around his neck a millstone such as is turned by an ass

12. Those who teach need to exercise what care?

and to be sunk in the wide, open sea."—Matthew 18:6.

### Marrying an Unbeliever

<sup>13</sup> From verse 10 onward, Malachi chapter 2 highlights treachery even more directly. Malachi focuses on two related courses about which he repeatedly uses the word "treacherously." First, observe that Malachi prefacing his counsel with these questions: "Is it not one father that all of us have? Is it not one God that has created us? Why is it that we deal treacherously with one another, in profaning the covenant of our forefathers?" Then verse 11 adds that Israel's treacherous course amounts to profaning "the holiness of Jehovah." What were they doing that was so serious? That verse identifies one of the wrong practices: They had "taken possession of the daughter of a foreign god as a bride."

<sup>14</sup> In other words, some Israelites, who were part of a nation dedicated to Jehovah, had married those who did not worship him. The context helps us to see why that was so serious. Verse 10 says that they had one common father. This did not mean Jacob (renamed Israel) or Abraham or even Adam. Malachi 1:6 shows that Jehovah was the "one father." The nation of Israel was in a relationship with him, party to the covenant made with their forefathers. One of the laws in that covenant was: "You must form no marriage alliance with them. Your daughter you must not give to his son, and his daughter you must not take for your son."—Deuteronomy 7:3.

<sup>15</sup> Some today might reason: 'The person I'm attracted to is very nice. In time, he (or she) will likely accept true worship.' Such thinking confirms the inspired warning:

13, 14. What was one treacherous course that Malachi highlighted?

15. (a) How might some try to justify marrying an unbeliever? (b) How does Jehovah express himself on the matter of marriage?

"The heart is more treacherous than anything else and is desperate." (Jeremiah 17:9) God's view of marrying an unbeliever is expressed at Malachi 2:12: "Jehovah will cut off each one that does it." Thus, Christians are urged to marry "only in the Lord." (1 Corinthians 7:39) Under the Christian system of things, a believer is not "cut off" for marrying an unbeliever. Still, if the unbeliever stays in his or her unbelief, what will happen to that one when God shortly brings this system to an end?—Psalm 37:37, 38.

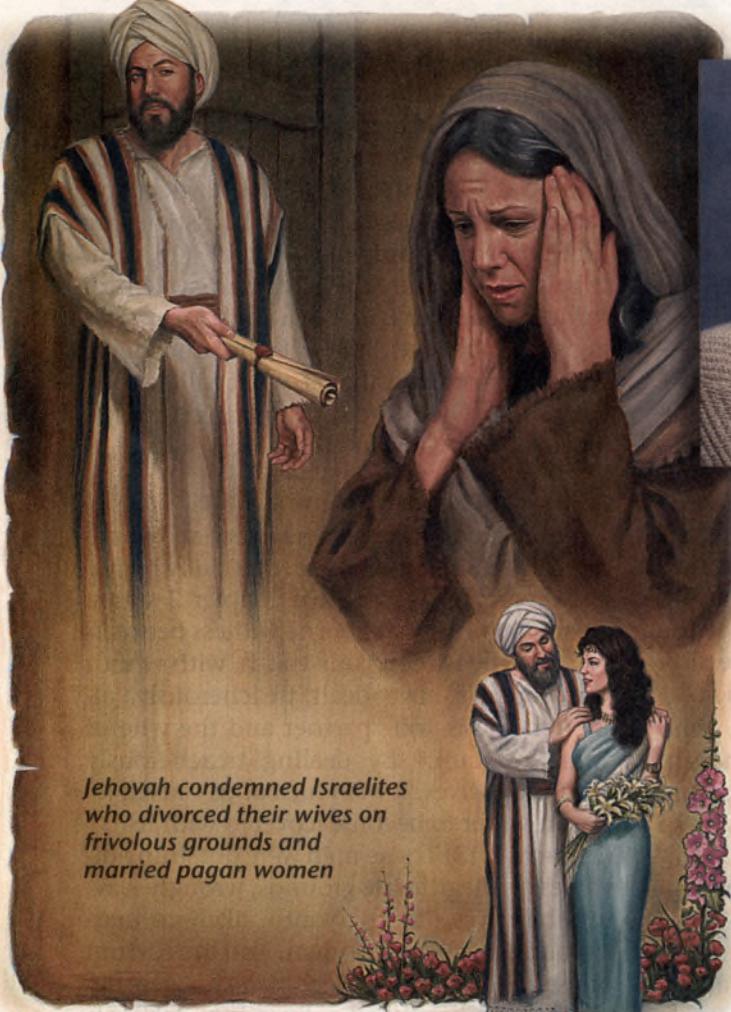
### Mistreating One's Mate

<sup>16</sup> Malachi then considers a second treachery: mistreating one's mate, especially by unjust divorcing. Verse 14 of chapter 2 states: "Jehovah himself has borne witness between you and the wife of your youth, with whom you yourself have dealt treacherously, although she is your partner and the wife of your covenant." By dealing treacherously with their wives, Jewish husbands caused Jehovah's altar to become 'covered with tears.' (Malachi 2:13) Those men were obtaining divorces on illegitimate grounds, wrongly leaving the wives of their youth, likely to marry younger or pagan women. And the corrupt priests allowed that! Yet, Malachi 2:16 declares: "'He has hated a divorcing,' Jehovah

16, 17. What was a treacherous course that some took?

### Can You Explain?

- For what basic reason did Jehovah censure the priests in Israel?
- Why are God's standards not too high for humans to keep?
- Why should we exercise care in our teaching today?
- What two practices did Jehovah especially condemn?



*Jehovah condemned Israelites who divorced their wives on frivolous grounds and married pagan women*

the God of Israel has said.” Later, Jesus showed that immorality is the only ground for a divorce that would free the innocent mate to remarry.—Matthew 19:9.

<sup>17</sup> Reflect on Malachi’s words, and see how they appeal to hearts and to feelings of basic kindness. He refers to “your partner and the wife of your covenant.” Each man involved had married a fellow worshiper, an Israelite woman, choosing her as a dear companion, a life partner. While that marriage probably took place when he and she were young, the passing of time and the onset of older age did



#### *Christians today honor their marriage covenant*

not invalidate the covenant they had entered into, that is, the marriage contract.

<sup>18</sup> The counsel regarding those issues applies with equal force today. It is a shame that some disregard God’s direction on marrying only in the Lord. And it is also regrettable that some do not continue working at keeping their marriage strong. Instead, they make excuses and pursue a course that God hates by getting an unscriptural divorce so as to marry someone else. In doing such things, they “have made Jehovah weary.” Back in Malachi’s time, those who ignored divine counsel even had the audacity to feel that Jehovah was unjustified in his views. They, in effect, said: “Where is the God of justice?” What perverse thinking! Let us not fall into that trap.—Malachi 2:17.

<sup>19</sup> On the positive side, Malachi shows that some husbands were not dealing treacherously with their wives. They ‘had what was

18. In what ways does Malachi’s counsel regarding treachery apply today?

19. How can husbands and wives receive God’s spirit?

remaining of God's holy spirit.' (Verse 15) Happily, God's organization today abounds with such men who 'assign honor to their wives.' (1 Peter 3:7) They do not abuse their wives physically or verbally, do not insist on degrading sexual practices, and do not dishonor their wives by flirting with other women or by viewing pornography. Jehovah's organization is also blessed by having an abundance of faithful Christian wives who are loyal to God and his laws. All such men and women know what God hates, and they think and act accordingly. Continue to

be like them, 'obeying God as ruler' and being blessed by his holy spirit.—Acts 5:29.

<sup>20</sup> Soon, Jehovah will bring this entire world into judgment. Every individual will have to answer to him for his or her beliefs and actions. "Each of us will render an account for himself to God." (Romans 14:12) So an intriguing question at this point is: Who will survive the day of Jehovah? The third and final article in this series will take up that theme.

20. What time is nearing for all mankind?

## WHO WILL SURVIVE THE DAY OF JEHOVAH?

*"The day is coming that is burning like the furnace."*—MALACHI 4:1.

THE prophet Malachi was inspired by God to record prophecies of awesome events that will take place in the very near future. These events will affect every person on earth. Malachi 4:1 foretells: "Look! the day is coming that is burning like the furnace, and all the presumptuous ones and all those doing wickedness must become as stubble. And the day that is coming will certainly devour them," Jehovah of armies has said, 'so that it will not leave to them either root or bough.'" How complete will be the destruction of this wicked system of things? It will be like a tree the roots of which have been destroyed so that it can never grow again.

<sup>2</sup> You may ask, 'What "day" is the prophet Malachi foretelling?' It is the same day spo-

ken of at Isaiah 13:9, which declares: "Look! The day of Jehovah itself is coming, cruel both with fury and with burning anger, in order to make the land an object of astonishment, and that it may annihilate the land's sinners out of it." Zephaniah 1:15 provides this description: "That day is a day of fury, a day of distress and of anguish, a day of storm and of desolation, a day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick gloom."

### The Great Tribulation

<sup>3</sup> In the major fulfillment of Malachi's prophecy, "the day of Jehovah" is a period of time characterized by "great tribulation." Jesus foretold: "Then there will be great tribulation such as has not occurred since the world's beginning until now, no, nor will occur again." (Matthew 24:21) Think of the

3. What is "the day of Jehovah"?

1. How does Malachi describe the end of this wicked system?

2. How do certain scriptures describe Jehovah's day?

distress the world has already seen, especially since 1914. (Matthew 24:7-12) Why, World War II alone took over 50 million lives! Yet, "the great tribulation" will see calamities that will dwarf such troubles. That event, the same as the day of Jehovah, ends with Armageddon, bringing to a close the last days of this wicked system.—2 Timothy 3:1-5, 13; Revelation 7:14; 16:14, 16.

<sup>4</sup> By the end of that day of Jehovah, Satan's world and its supporters will have been annihilated. First to go will be all false religion. Then Jehovah's judgment will be expressed against Satan's economic and political systems. (Revelation 17:12-14; 19:17, 18) Ezekiel prophesies: "Into the streets they will throw their very silver, and an abhorrent thing their own gold will become. Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to deliver them in the day of Jehovah's fury." (Ezekiel 7:19) Regarding that day Zephaniah 1:14 says: "The great day of Jehovah is near. It is near, and there is a hurrying of it very much." In view of what the Bible says about Jehovah's day, we should be determined to act in harmony with God's righteous requirements.

<sup>5</sup> After foretelling what the day of Jehovah will do to Satan's world, Malachi 4:2 records Jehovah as saying: "To you who are in fear of my name the sun of righteousness will certainly shine forth, with healing in its wings; and you will actually go forth and paw the ground like fattened calves." "The sun of righteousness" is Jesus Christ. He is the spiritual "light of the world." (John 8:12) Jesus shines forth with healing, first spiritual healing, which we experience today, and then complete physical healing in the new world. As Jehovah says, the healed ones will "go forth and paw the ground like fattened

4. When the day of Jehovah concludes, what will have happened? (ES-15 worldism) "things you
5. What is experienced by those who fear Jehovah's name?"

"calves" that are excited and delighted to be released from confinement.

<sup>6</sup> What of those who ignore Jehovah's requirements? Malachi 4:3 states: "You people [God's servants] will certainly tread down the wicked ones, for they will become as powder under the soles of your feet in the day on which I am acting,' Jehovah of armies has said." Human worshipers of God will not take part in destroying Satan's world. Rather, they figuratively "tread down the wicked ones" by sharing in the victory celebration that follows the day of Jehovah. A great celebration followed the destruction of Pharaoh's armies in the Red Sea. (Exodus 15:1-21) The removal of Satan and his world at the great tribulation will likewise be followed by a victory celebration. Faithful survivors of Jehovah's day will cry out: "Let us be joyful and rejoice in the salvation by him." (Isaiah 25:9) What exultation there will be when Jehovah's sovereignty is vindicated and the earth is cleansed for peaceful habitation!

### Christendom Imitates Israel

<sup>7</sup> Those who come into a favored position with Jehovah are those who serve him, as contrasted with those who do not. It was the same when Malachi wrote his book. In 537 B.C.E., a remnant of Israel was restored after 70 years of Babylonian captivity. However, over the next century, the restored nation began drifting into apostasy and wickedness. Most of the people were dishonoring Jehovah's name; ignoring his righteous laws; polluting his temple by bringing blind, lame, and sick animals for sacrifice; and divorcing the wives of their youth.

<sup>8</sup> Consequently, Jehovah told them: "I will come near to you people for the judgment, and I will become a speedy witness against

6. What victory celebration will Jehovah's servants enjoy?
- 7, 8. Describe the spiritual condition of Israel in Malachi's time.



*First-century Jerusalem 'burned like the furnace'*

the sorcerers, and against the adulterers, and against those swearing falsely, and against those acting fraudulently with the wages of a wage worker, with the widow and with the fatherless boy, and those turning away the alien resident, while they have not feared me, . . . for I am Jehovah; I have not changed." (Malachi 3:5, 6) Yet, Jehovah extended an invitation to any who would turn from their bad ways: "Return to me, and I will return to you."—Malachi 3:7.

<sup>9</sup> Those words also had a fulfillment in the first century C.E. A remnant of Jews served Jehovah and became part of a new "nation" of spirit-anointed Christians, which came to include Gentiles. But the vast majority of natural Israel rejected Jesus. Jesus therefore told that nation of Israel: "Look! Your house is abandoned to you." (Matthew 23:38; 1 Corinthians 16:22) In 70 C.E., as foretold at Malachi 4:1, a "day . . . burning like the furnace" came upon fleshly Israel. Jerusalem and her temple were destroyed, and it is reported that over one million people died as a result of famine, power struggles, and attacks by the Roman armies. However, those

<sup>9</sup>. How did Malachi's prophecies have a preliminary fulfillment?

who served Jehovah escaped that tribulation.  
—Mark 13:14-20.

<sup>10</sup> Mankind, and particularly Christendom, has imitated the first-century nation of Israel. Leaders and people in general in Christendom prefer their own religious creeds over the truths of God that Jesus taught. The clergy are especially at fault. They refuse to use Jehovah's name, even taking it out of their Bible versions. They dishonor Jehovah with unscriptural teachings, such as the pagan doctrines of eternal torment in hellfire, the Trinity, immortality of the soul, and evolution. They thus rob Jehovah of his deserved praise, as the priests did in Malachi's day.

<sup>11</sup> In 1914, when the last days began, this world's religions, led by those claiming to be Christian, showed whom they really served. During both world wars, they encouraged their members to go to war over national differences, even if it meant killing people of their own religion. God's Word clearly identifies those who obey Jehovah and those

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10. In what way do people in general and the clergy imitate first-century Israel?
  11. How do the world's religions show whom they really serve?

who do not: "The children of God and the children of the Devil are evident by this fact: Everyone who does not carry on righteousness does not originate with God, neither does he who does not love his brother. For this is the message which you have heard from the beginning, that we should have love for one another; not like Cain, who originated with the wicked one and slaughtered his brother."—1 John 3:10-12.

### Fulfilling Prophecy

<sup>12</sup> By the end of World War I in 1918, Jehovah's servants could see that God had condemned Christendom and all the rest of false religion. From then on, the call went out to righthearted ones: "Get out of her, my people, if you do not want to share with her in her sins, and if you do not want to receive part of her plagues. For her sins have massed together clear up to heaven, and God has called her acts of injustice to mind." (Revelation 18:4, 5) Those who desired to serve Jehovah began to be cleansed of vestiges of false religion and commenced preaching the good news of the established Kingdom worldwide, a work to be completed before the end of this wicked system of things.—Matthew 24:14.

<sup>13</sup> This was in order to fulfill the prophecy at Malachi 4:5, where Jehovah stated: "Look! I am sending to you people Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and fear-inspiring day of Jehovah." That prophecy had a first fulfillment in the work of John the Baptizer, who was foreshadowed by Elijah. John did an Elijahlike work when he baptized Jews who had repented of their sins against the Law covenant. More important, John was the Messiah's forerunner. However, John's work was only an initial fulfillment of Malachi's prophecy. Jesus, while identifying

12, 13. What prophecies have God's servants fulfilled in our time?

John as a second Elijah, indicated that there would be a future "Elijah" work.—Matthew 17:11, 12.

<sup>14</sup> Malachi's prophecy showed that this great Elijah work would be done before "the great and fear-inspiring day of Jehovah." That day concludes with the rapidly approaching war of the great day of God the Almighty, at Armageddon. This means that the end of this wicked system of things and the beginning of the Millennial Reign of God's heavenly Kingdom under the enthroned Jesus Christ would be preceded by a work corresponding to the activity of Elijah. True to that prophecy, before Jehovah destroys this wicked system, the modern-day Elijah class, supported by millions of fellow Christians with an earthly hope, enthusiastically carry on the work of restoring pure worship, exalting the name of Jehovah, and teaching Bible truths to sheeplike ones.

### Jehovah Blesses His Servants

<sup>15</sup> Jehovah blesses those who serve him. Malachi 3:16 says: "At that time those in fear of Jehovah spoke with one another, each one with his companion, and Jehovah kept paying attention and listening. And a book of remembrance began to be written up before him for those in fear of Jehovah and for those thinking upon his name." From Abel onward, God has been writing in a book, as it were, the names of those who will be remembered with everlasting life in view. To these Jehovah says: "Bring all the tenth parts into the storehouse, that there may come to be food in my house; and test me out, please, in this respect . . . whether I shall not open to you people the floodgates of the heavens and actually empty out upon you a blessing until there is no more want."—Malachi 3:10.

14. What vital work must be done before this system ends?  
15. How does Jehovah remember his servants?

<sup>16</sup> Jehovah has indeed blessed those who serve him. How? One way is with increased understanding of his purposes. (Proverbs 4: 18; Daniel 12:10) Another is by giving them amazing fruitage in their preaching work. Many honesthearted people have joined them in true worship, and these all make up “a great crowd . . . out of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues, . . . and they keep on crying with a loud voice, saying: ‘Salvation we owe to our God, who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb.’” (Revelation 7: 9, 10) This great crowd has been manifested in a marvelous way, and those actively serving Jehovah now number over six million in more than 93,000 congregations throughout the earth!

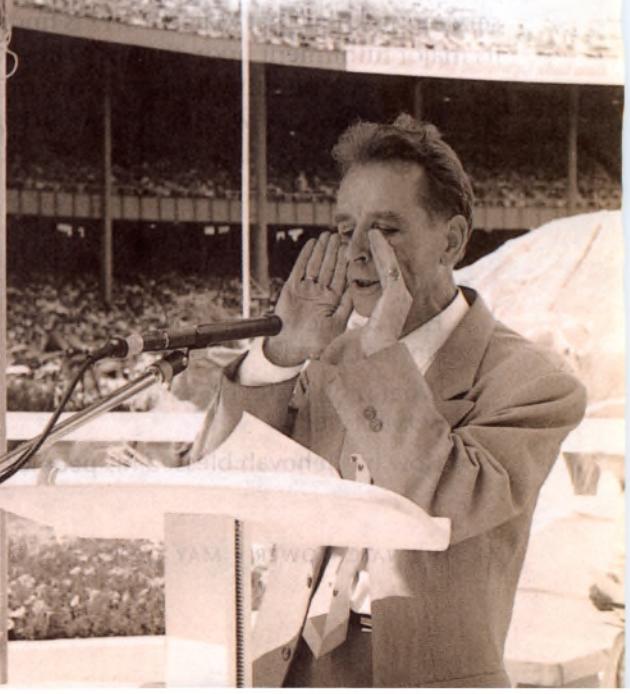
<sup>16, 17.</sup> How has Jehovah blessed his people and their work?

<sup>17</sup> Jehovah’s blessing is also seen in that Jehovah’s Witnesses publish the most widely distributed Bible-based publications in all history. At the present time, 90 million copies of the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines are produced every month, *The Watchtower* in 144 languages, *Awake!* in 87. The Bible study book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life*, published in 1968, reached a distribution of over 107 million in 117 languages. *You Can Live Forever in Paradise on Earth*, released in 1982, reached more than 81 million in 131 languages. The book *Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life*, released in 1995, has so far seen a printing of over 85 million in 154 languages. The brochure *What Does God Require of Us?*, published in 1996, has a distribution of 150 million copies in 244 languages as of now.

<sup>18</sup> This spiritual prosperity has been enjoyed despite the most severe and prolonged opposition from Satan’s world. This shows

<sup>18.</sup> Why do we enjoy spiritual prosperity despite opposition?

**Jehovah provides for those  
who serve him**





*Because of their marvelous hope, Jehovah's servants are truly joyful*

the truth of Isaiah 54:17: “Any weapon whatever that will be formed against you will have no success, and any tongue at all that will rise up against you in the judgment you will condemn. This is the hereditary possession of the servants of Jehovah, and their righteousness is from me,’ is the utterance of Jehovah.” How comforting it is for Jehovah’s servants to know that Malachi 3:17 is finding its major fulfillment upon them: “They will certainly become mine,’ Jehovah of armies has said, ‘at the day when I am producing a special property.’”

#### How Do You Answer?

- What is “the day of Jehovah”?
- How do the world’s religions imitate ancient Israel?
- What prophecies do Jehovah’s servants fulfill?
- How has Jehovah blessed his people?

#### Joyfully Serving Jehovah

<sup>19</sup> The contrast between faithful servants of Jehovah and those in Satan’s world is becoming more pronounced with the passage of time. Malachi 3:18 foretold: “You people will again certainly see the distinction between a righteous one and a wicked one, between one serving God and one who has not served him.” One of many distinctions is that those who serve Jehovah do so with great joy. Among the reasons for this is the marvelous hope that they have. They have absolute confidence in Jehovah when he says: “Here I am creating new heavens and a new earth; and the former things will not be called to mind, neither will they come up into the heart. But exult, you people, and be joyful forever in what I am creating.”—Isaiah 65:17, 18; Psalm 37:10, 11, 29; Revelation 21:4, 5.

<sup>20</sup> We believe Jehovah’s promise that his loyal people will survive his great day and be brought into the new world. (Zephaniah 2:3; Revelation 7:13, 14) And while some because of old age, illness, or an accident may die before then, Jehovah gives his word that he will resurrect them with everlasting life in view. (John 5:28, 29; Titus 1:2) So while we all have our problems and challenges, as we face this day of Jehovah, we have every reason for being the most joyful people on the face of the earth.

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19. How are those who serve Jehovah distinct from those who do not?
  20. Why are we a joyful people?



## IMPLANTING LOVE FOR JEHOVAH IN OUR CHILDREN'S HEARTS

AS TOLD BY  
**WERNER MATZEN**

Some years ago my eldest son, Hans Werner, gave me a Bible.

He wrote inside the cover: "Dear Father, May Jehovah's Word continue to lead us as a family on the way of life. With gratitude, your eldest son."

Parents will understand how those words filled my heart with thankfulness and joy. Little did I know at the time what sort of challenges we as a family would still have to face.

I WAS born in 1924 in Halstenbek, some 13 miles from the German port of Hamburg, and I was raised by my mother and grandfather. Having served an apprenticeship as a toolmaker, I was drafted in 1942 into the *Wehrmacht*, the armed forces. What I experienced during World War II while fighting on the Russian front is too dreadful to put into words. I came down with typhoid fever but was sent back to the front after treatment. In January 1945, I was in

Lodz, Poland, where I was badly injured and put into a military hospital. I was still there when the war ended. In the hospital and later in the detention camp in Neuengamme, I had time to think things over. I was troubled by these questions, Is there really a God? If so, why does he permit so much cruelty?

Shortly after being released from the detention camp, in September 1947, I married Karla. We had grown up in the same town, but whereas Karla was a Catholic, religion

*Our family, walking alongside the  
Elbe River, Hamburg, 1965*



had played no part in my upbringing. The priest who married us suggested that we at least say the Lord's Prayer together each evening. We did as he said, without really knowing what we were praying for.

One year later Hans Werner was born. At about the same time, Wilhelm Ahrens, a colleague at work, introduced me to Jehovah's Witnesses. He showed me from the Bible that wars would one day cease. (Psalm 46:9) In autumn 1950, I dedicated my life to Jehovah and was baptized. What joy I felt when one year later my dear wife also got baptized!

#### **Bringing Up Children in the Ways of Jehovah**

I read in the Bible that marriage was originated by Jehovah. (Genesis 1:26-28; 2:22-24) Being present at the birth of our children—Hans Werner, Karl-Heinz, Michael, Gabriele, and Thomas—strengthened my commitment to be a good husband and father. Karla and I were thrilled at the birth of each of our children.

The 1953 convention of Jehovah's Witnesses in Nuremberg was a momentous occasion for our family. On Friday afternoon, during the talk "Rearing Children in the New World Society," the speaker said something that we have never forgotten: "The greatest inheritance that we can give our children is the desire to be servants of God." With Jehovah's help, Karla and I wanted to do just that. But how?

To start with, we made it a practice to pray together as a family every day. That impressed on the children the importance of prayer. Each child learned early on that we always prayed before a meal. Even when they were babies, as soon as they saw their bottle, they bowed their little heads and folded their tiny hands. On one occasion, we were invited to the wedding of one of my wife's relatives, who were not Witnesses. Following the ceremony, the bride's parents invited the guests home for some light refreshments. Everyone wanted to start eating straight away. But our five-year-old Karl-Heinz did not feel that this was proper. "Please say a prayer first," he said. The guests looked at him, then at us, and lastly at the host. To avoid any embarrassment, I offered to say a prayer of thanks for the meal, to which the host agreed.

The episode reminded me of Jesus' words: "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings you have furnished praise." (Matthew 21:16)

We feel sure that our regular and heartfelt prayers helped the children to view Jehovah as their loving heavenly Father.

### Our Responsibility Toward Jehovah

Teaching children to love God also requires regular reading and study of his Word. With this in mind, we had a family study each week, mostly on Monday evenings. Since the oldest and the youngest were born nine years apart, the children had very different needs, so we could not always cover the same material with all of them.

For example, for the children of preschool age, we kept the instruction fairly basic. Karla considered just a single Bible text with them, or she used the pictures in Bible-based publications. I still have fond memories of being awakened early in the morning by the younger children climbing into our bed to show us their favorite pictures in the book *The New World*.\*

Karla developed a knack for patiently teaching the children the many reasons we all have to love Jehovah. That may sound simple and straightforward, but, in fact, physically and emotionally it was almost a full-time job for both Karla and me. Still, we did not give up. We wanted to write upon their tender hearts before other people who did not know Jehovah started to influence them. For this reason we insisted that our children be present for the family study as soon as they could sit.

As parents, Karla and I recognized the importance of setting the right example for our children in the matter of worship. And whether we were eating, gardening, or going for a walk, we tried to strengthen each child's relationship with Jehovah. (Deuteronomy 6:6, 7) We made sure that each

\* Published by Jehovah's Witnesses, but now unavailable.

child had his or her own Bible from an early age. Furthermore, upon receiving magazines, I wrote the name of each family member on his or her personal copy. Thus the children learned to identify their own literature. We came up with the idea of assigning the children certain *Awake!* articles to read. Following our Sunday lunch, they explained to us how they understood the material.

### Giving the Children the Attention They Needed

Of course, things did not always go smoothly. As the children grew, we discovered that implanting love in their hearts required us to know what was in their hearts already. That meant listening to them. Our children sometimes felt that they had something to complain about, so Karla and I would sit down and talk things over with them. We introduced a special half hour at the end of the family study. Anyone was allowed to say quite openly whatever he or she felt.

For instance, Thomas and Gabriele, our two youngest, felt that we as parents were showing favoritism toward their eldest brother. At one session, they spoke up and said: "Dad, we think that Mom and you always let Hans Werner have his way." At first, I could hardly believe my ears. However, after considering the matter objectively, Karla and I had to admit that the children had a point. So we put more effort into treating all the children the same.

At times, I punished the children hastily or unfairly. On such occasions we as parents had to learn to apologize. After that, we approached Jehovah in prayer. It was important that the children recognize that their father was ready to say I'm sorry to Jehovah and to them, our children. As a result, we had a warm and friendly relationship with

them. They often said to us, "You are our best friends." That made us very happy.

Working together as a family promotes unity. To this end, everyone had regular chores. Hans Werner was assigned to go to the stores and buy provisions once a week, which normally meant that along with a list of items to purchase, he was given some money. One week, we did not give him a list or any money. He asked his mother about it, and she told him that we did not yet have any money. Well, the children started whispering among themselves, and then everyone got hold of his money box and emptied it onto the table. "Mom, we can go shopping now!" they all exclaimed. Yes, the children learned to come through in an emergency, and that drew the family even closer together.

With age, the boys began to take an interest in girls. Thomas, for instance, got very interested in a 16-year-old fellow Witness. I explained to him that if he was serious about the girl, he had to be prepared to marry her and to take responsibility for a wife and children. Thomas realized that he was not ready for marriage, since he was only 18 years of age.



### Making Progress as a Family

While they were still of tender age, one child after another joined the Theocratic Ministry School. We listened carefully to their assignments, and we were encouraged because we saw the children's own heartfelt love for God. Circuit and district overseers who occasionally stayed with us related experiences from their own lives or read to us from the Bible. These men and their wives helped to cultivate a love of full-time service in the hearts of our family.

We looked forward to the conventions. They were a key factor in our efforts to implant in our children the desire to be servants of God. For the children, it was a special moment when they put on their lapel cards before traveling to the convention grounds. We were touched when Hans Werner got baptized at the age of ten. Several considered him to be too young to dedicate himself to Jehovah, but at the age of 50, he told me how thankful he was to have been serving Jehovah for 40 years.

We showed our children that a personal relationship with Jehovah is important, but we did not press them into dedication. Still, we were pleased when the others also progressed to baptism in their own good time.

### Learning to Throw Our Burdens on Jehovah

Our joy knew no bounds when, in 1971, Hans Werner graduated as a member of the 51st class of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead and was assigned to serve as

*Some members of the family at the international convention in Berlin in 1998*

a missionary in Spain. One by one, the other children also spent some time as full-time ministers, which made us as parents very happy. At about this time, Hans Werner gave me the Bible mentioned at the start of this article. Our happiness as a family seemed complete.

Then we discovered that we needed to cling ever more closely to Jehovah. Why? Because we saw some of our grown children encounter problems that seriously tested their faith. For example, our dear daughter Gabriele was not spared tribulations. In 1976 she married Lothar. He became sick shortly after the wedding. As he got weaker and weaker, Gabriele nursed him until he died. Seeing a healthy member of the family get sick and die brought home to us how much we need the loving hand of Jehovah.—Isaiah 33:2.

### Privileges in Jehovah's Organization

When I was appointed congregation servant (today called presiding overseer) in 1955, I did not feel ready for the responsibility. There was much to do, and the only way to keep abreast of the work was to get up at four o'clock some mornings. My wife and children were a great support, making sure I was not disturbed in the evening whenever there were still things to care for.

Nevertheless, as a family, we spent as much free time together as possible. Sometimes my employer let me use his car so that I could take the family out for the day. The children enjoyed the occasions when we studied *The Watchtower* in the forest. We also went hiking together, sometimes singing songs to the accompaniment of my harmonica as we walked through the woods.



*With my wife, Karla*

In 1978, I was appointed substitute circuit overseer (traveling minister). Overwhelmed,

I prayed: "Jehovah, I do not feel that I am able to do it.

But if you want me to try, then I shall do my best."

Two years later, at 54 years of age, I transferred my small business to our youngest son, Thomas.

Our children were all grown, which gave Karla and me the opportunity to do more for Jehovah. That same year, I was appointed circuit overseer and assigned to a section of Hamburg and the whole of Schleswig-Holstein. Because of our experience with raising a family, we were able to show particular understanding to parents and their children. Many of the brothers called us their circuit parents.

After ten years of accompanying me in the circuit work, Karla had to undergo surgery. And in the same year, physicians discovered that I had a brain tumor. Hence, I relinquished my service as circuit overseer and underwent brain surgery. It was three years before I was again able to act as substitute circuit overseer. Karla and I are now in our 70's, and we are no longer in the traveling work. Jehovah helped us to see that there was no point in clinging to a privilege that I was no longer able to carry out.

Looking back, Karla and I are thankful to Jehovah for his help in implanting a love for the truth into the hearts of our children. (Proverbs 22:6) Throughout the years, Jehovah has guided and trained us, helping us to carry out our responsibilities. Though we may be old and infirm, our love for Jehovah is as young and as alive as ever.—Romans 12:10, 11.

## Questions From Readers

When John saw the "great crowd" rendering sacred service in Jehovah's temple, in which part of the temple were they doing this? —Revelation 7:9-15.

It is reasonable to say that the great crowd worships Jehovah in one of the earthly courtyards of his great spiritual temple, specifically the one that corresponds with the outer courtyard of Solomon's temple.

In times past, it has been said that the great crowd is in a spiritual equivalent, or an antitype, of the Court of the Gentiles that existed in Jesus' day. However, further research has revealed at least five reasons why that is not so. First, not all features of Herod's temple have an antitype in Jehovah's great spiritual temple. For example, Herod's temple had a Court of the Women and a Court of Israel. Both men and women could enter the Court of the Women, but only men were allowed into the Court of Israel. In the earthly courtyards of Jehovah's great spiritual temple, men and women are not separated in their worship. (Galatians 3:28, 29) Hence, there is no equivalent of the Court of the Women and the Court of Israel in the spiritual temple.

Second, there was no Court of the Gentiles in the divinely provided architectural plans of Solomon's temple or Ezekiel's visionary tem-

ple; nor was there one in the temple rebuilt by Zerubbabel. Hence, there is no reason to suggest that a Court of the Gentiles needs to play a part in Jehovah's great spiritual temple arrangement for worship, especially when the following point is considered.

Third, the Court of the Gentiles was built by the Edomite King Herod to glorify himself and to curry favor with Rome. Herod set about renovating Zerubbabel's temple perhaps in 18 or 17 B.C.E. *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* explains: "The classical tastes of the imperial power to the West [Rome] . . . mandated a temple larger than those of comparable eastern cities." However, the dimensions of the temple proper were already established. The dictionary explains: "While the Temple itself would have to have the same dimensions as its predecessors [Solomon's and Zerubbabel's], the Temple Mount was not restricted in its potential size." Hence, Herod expanded the temple area by adding on what in modern times has been called the Court of the Gentiles. Why would a construction with such a background have an antitype in Jehovah's spiritual temple arrangement?

Fourth, almost anyone—the blind, the lame, and uncircumcised Gentiles—could enter the Court of the Gentiles. (Matthew 21:14, 15) True, the court served a purpose for many uncircumcised Gentiles who wished to make offerings to God. And it was there that Jesus sometimes addressed the crowds and twice expelled the money changers and merchants, saying that they had dishonored the house of his Father. (Matthew 21:12, 13; John 2:14-16) Still, *The Jewish Encyclopedia* says: "This outer court was, strictly speaking, not a part of the Temple. Its soil was not sacred, and it might be entered by any one."

Fifth, the Greek word (*hi·e·ron'*) translated "temple" that is used with reference to the Court of the Gentiles "refers to the entire com-

### IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

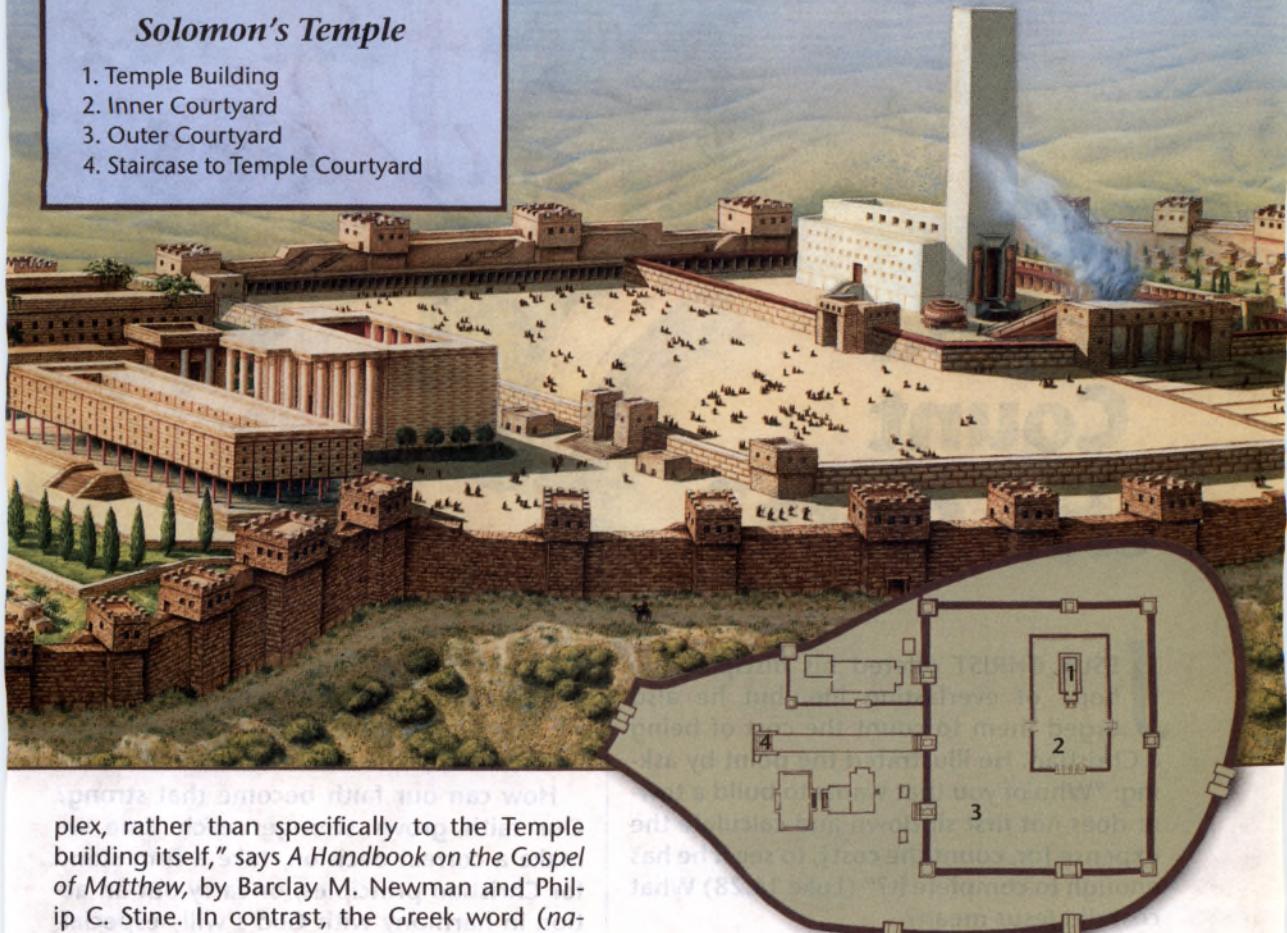
Who Is God?

Show Loving-Kindness to  
Those in Need

Integrity Leads the Upright Ones

## Solomon's Temple

1. Temple Building
2. Inner Courtyard
3. Outer Courtyard
4. Staircase to Temple Courtyard



plex, rather than specifically to the Temple building itself," says *A Handbook on the Gospel of Matthew*, by Barclay M. Newman and Philip C. Stine. In contrast, the Greek word (*naos*) translated "temple" in John's vision of the great crowd is more specific. In the context of the Jerusalem temple, it usually refers to the Holy of Holies, the temple building, or the temple precincts. It is sometimes rendered "sanctuary."—Matthew 27:5, 51; Luke 1:9, 21; John 2:20.

Members of the great crowd exercise faith in Jesus' ransom sacrifice. They are spiritually clean, having "washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Hence, they are declared righteous with a view to becoming friends of God and of surviving the great tribulation. (James 2:23, 25) In many ways, they are like proselytes in Israel who submitted to the Law covenant and worshiped along with the Israelites.

Of course, those proselytes did not serve in the inner courtyard, where the priests performed their duties. And members of the great crowd are not in the inner courtyard of Jehovah's great spiritual temple, which courtyard represents the condition of perfect, righteous human sonship of the members of Jehovah's "holy priesthood" while they are on earth. (1 Peter 2:5) But as the heavenly elder said to John, the great crowd really is in the temple, not outside the temple area in a kind of spiritual Court of the Gentiles. What a privilege that is! And how it highlights the need for each one to maintain spiritual and moral purity at all times!

# Do You Count the Cost?

JESUS CHRIST offered his disciples the hope of everlasting life, but he also urged them to count the cost of being a Christian. He illustrated the point by asking: "Who of you that wants to build a tower does not first sit down and calculate the expense [or, count the cost], to see if he has enough to complete it?" (Luke 14:28) What cost did Jesus mean?

All Christians encounter trials—some serious. (Psalm 34:19; Matthew 10:36) Therefore, we need to be mentally and spiritually prepared so that we are not surprised when opposition or other problems come our way. We must already have figured such challenges into the cost of being a disciple of Christ, knowing that the reward—salvation from sin and death—is worth far more than anything that the present system can

offer us. Yes, nothing that God permits—even death—can permanently harm us if we continue to serve him.—2 Corinthians 4:16-18; Philippians 3:8.

How can our faith become that strong? Our faith grows stronger each time we make a correct decision, take a firm stand for Christian principles, or carry out an action in harmony with God's will—especially when we are under pressure to do otherwise. When we personally experience Jehovah's blessing as a result of our faithful course, our faith is strengthened and deepened. In that way, we follow the example of Jesus, his first disciples, and all the men and women of faith who down through the ages correctly 'counted the cost' of serving God.—Mark 1:16-20; Hebrews 11:4, 7, 17, 24, 25, 32-38.