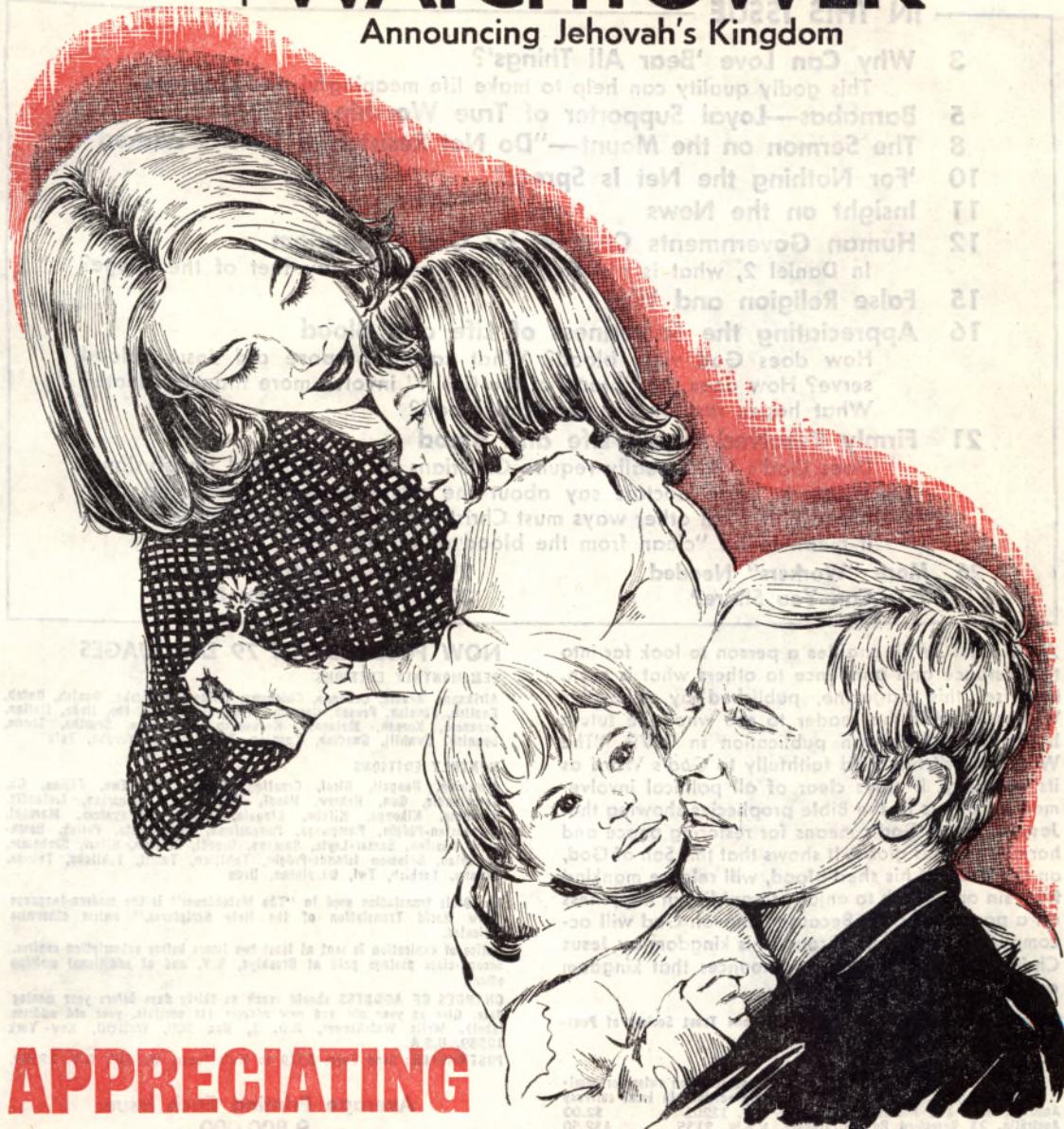


JUNE 15, 1978

THE WATCHTOWER

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom



APPRECIATING THE SACREDNESS OF LIFE AND BLOOD -page 16

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

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Why can love 'bear all things'?

THEY were happily married, and their business prospered. But most of all, they were fully dedicated Christians. For 25 years they shared a large variety of joyful experiences. Then, one day, the husband had a stroke. For 20 years he lived on, getting more and more helpless, until finally death intervened and relieved his devoted wife of her burden. What enabled her to care for him tenderly, uncomplainingly, even though it meant never having a good night's sleep? It was her love for him. "He was such a fine, loving husband," she will tell you when you ask about him. Yes, she proved the inspired words true, "Love . . . bears all things." —1 Cor. 13:4, 7.

Life at times does bring things hard to bear. Daily we read about or see persons who have concluded that their lot is too hard to bear. Feeling overburdened, youngsters become school dropouts, people quit jobs, married folks walk out on each other or get divorces, and some persons even go to the extreme of committing suicide. Why

did they find things too hard to bear? In view of the inspired words, we may well conclude that it was because of a lack of love. Had love been there, it would have 'borne all things.' Or, as other translations render those words of the apostle Paul: "Love . . . is always ready to excuse." "Love knows no limit to its endurance." "Love never gives up." "There is nothing love cannot face." "Love can stand any kind of treatment."

What sort of love can stand "any kind of treatment"? Can any kind of love, as long as it is "love"? What about love in the form of special affection for another? Perhaps at times, for the Bible tells us that the patriarch Jacob served many years for Rachel, the object of his affections, and it seemed to him to be but a few years. Moreover, the work he had to do, that of shepherding, was filled with all manner of hardships.—Gen. 29:18-20; 31:36-42.

Also, strong love among members of a family enables them to put up with severe treatment. The Greeks called this kind of

love *storgé*. Judah, for example, was willing to become a lifetime slave of Egypt's food administrator to spare his father the grief of losing his much-beloved son Benjamin. (Gen. 44:18-34) Love between friends who have much in common, a kind of love known as *philía* by the Greeks, also enables persons to put up with unpleasantness. Was not this the kind of love that Jonathan and David had for each other? It certainly was. Because of his love for David, Jonathan was willing to risk even his life.—1 Sam. 18:1; 20:32-34.

Above all, love based on principle, called *agápe* by the writers of the Christian Greek Scriptures, enables one to bear all things. Such love has enabled the great Creator, Jehovah God, to be so patient, so long-suffering, with his imperfect wayward human children. (2 Pet. 3:9, 15) It also enabled Jesus to bear all the things he had to endure from his enemies, as well as to put up with the failings of his disciples. Finally, in expression of his love, Jesus gave his life for others.—John 15:13.

The apostle Paul was an outstanding example of an imperfect human who 'never gave up' and was able 'to stand any kind of treatment.' His love for his fellow Christians was comparable to that of a nursing mother who cherishes her children, and to that of a father who is concerned about his sons. (1 Thess. 2:7, 11) And look at all that he bore! Truly, his love 'knew no limits to its endurance.' He was beaten time and again, found himself in all kinds of dangers, went without food, experienced sleepless nights and often suffered many other things—all out of love for his God Jehovah and his fellow humans.—2 Cor. 11:23-33.

Why is *agápe* love able to stand any kind of treatment? One reason is that it is *unselfishly concerned* with the welfare of others. The love that a nursing mother

has for her child well illustrates this. How trying an infant can be!

And do not Christian overseers today show love by putting up with the shortcomings of others? Love enables these overseers to instruct with mildness even those not favorably disposed.—2 Tim. 2:24, 25.

Love also helps us 'never to give up.' Because it has empathy, love enables us to put ourselves in the place of others. Love gives us understanding so that we are "always ready to excuse" and to make allowances for others' shortcomings. Love enables us to bear with the irritating mannerisms of others—such as a grating tone of voice, certain gestures or simply talkativeness. Yes, we will lovingly cover over even a multitude of such idiosyncrasies.—1 Pet. 4:8.

Among other reasons why "there is nothing love cannot face" is the fact that love is not proud. "It does not brag." (1 Cor. 13:4) Pride makes one critical of others, makes one resent having to put up with the weaknesses and shortcomings of others. But the humble person is not unduly sensitive, not overly concerned with his own well-being and interests. The one who is humble is ready to be of service to others and is only too ready to put up lovingly with persons having a weak conscience.—Rom. 15:1, 2.

Today, many dedicated Christians have gone forth into foreign lands as missionaries, and others have gone to serve where the need for proclaimers of the "good news" is great. These persons have put up with inferior living conditions, with less income, with indifference and opposition—all because of the love that they have for their neighbors. They also demonstrate that love "bears all things." What about you?

Do you have that kind of love? Are you working hard to express it?

Barnabas— Loyal supporter of true worship



"THE kingdom of the heavens is like a traveling merchant seeking fine pearls. Upon finding one pearl of high value, away he went and promptly sold all the things he had and bought it." (Matt. 13:45, 46)

These words of Jesus Christ well illustrate the keen appreciation for spiritual things that was required of his disciples. A person who recognized the true value of gaining the kingdom of the heavens would be willing to give up anything else to acquire that most precious of all inheritances. Such a man was Joseph, who bore the surname Barnabas. This native of Cyprus was an Israelite of the tribe of Levi and became one of the early members of the Christian congregation.

Barnabas very much desired that fellow believers benefit from the teaching of the apostles. Many of the Jews and proselytes who were converted had come to Jerusalem from distant places for the festival of Pentecost in 33 C.E. Upon hearing Peter's thorough witness identifying Jesus as the promised Messiah or Christ, they repented and became baptized disciples. However, they still had much to learn. To enable them to prolong their stay in Jerusalem, believers pooled their financial resources. Barnabas, for example, voluntarily sold a piece of land, giving the proceeds to the apostles for distribution to those in need.

—Acts 4:34-37

What a fine spirit Barnabas displayed! Not only did he value the privilege of coming in line for the heavenly kingdom, but he was also willing to part with material possessions so that others could be strengthened spiritually.

Moreover, Barnabas must have been exemplary in giving encouragement and personal aid. It was doubtless because of his unselfish interest in others that the apostles gave him the surname Barnabas, meaning "Son of Comfort." (Acts 4:36) In view of his loyal support of true worship, that surname was most fitting.

When the former persecutor Saul (Paul) returned to Jerusalem as a baptized disciple

of Jesus Christ, the brothers there were afraid to associate with him. They could not believe that he actually had become a disciple. To be thus prevented from meeting the elders of the Christian congregation may well have been discouraging to Paul. Happily, the "Son of Comfort," Barnabas, came to his aid. He introduced him to Peter and James, the half brother of Jesus, making it possible for Paul to be accepted fully by the congregation.—Acts 9:26, 27; Gal. 1:18, 19.

LABORS IN ANTIOCH

Later, Barnabas was sent out by the Jerusalem congregation to develop spiritual interests in Antioch. Some brothers from his native Cyprus as well as from Cyrene had proclaimed the "good news" among the Greek-speaking people there. As a result of this activity, many became believers. It brought great joy to Barnabas to see that so many had benefited from Jehovah's undeserved kindness, becoming disciples of Jesus Christ. Then he encouraged them to "continue in the Lord with hearty purpose." Now that they were Christians, it was a matter of their maintaining faithfulness. Their 'continuing in the Lord with hearty purpose' would mean

that they would remain attached to him with all their heart, their affection. From the heart, their whole purpose in life would be to continue to be devoted fully to their Lord.—Acts 11:19-23.

The encouragement given by Barnabas must have had a wholesome effect, especially since "he was a good man and full of holy spirit and of faith." He was blameless and upright, giving of himself unselfishly. His conduct could not be faulted. Barnabas allowed himself to come fully under the operation of God's holy spirit. He also had firm faith, backed up by the fruitage of fine works. With such a sterling example in their midst, the congregation at Antioch kept on growing.—Acts 11:24.

Barnabas evidently desired that the best of spiritual help be available to the brothers. Recognizing that he needed assistance in caring for the expanding congregation, he left for Tarsus to search for Paul. Thereafter, in association with Paul, Barnabas furthered spiritual interests in Antioch for about a year. During this time both men went to Jerusalem with contributed relief funds for the brothers in Judea.—Acts 11:25-30.

THE FIRST EVANGELIZING TRIP WITH PAUL

Accompanied by Mark the cousin of Barnabas, the two men returned to Antioch. During a meeting of the local congregation, God's spirit, doubtless operating through one of the prophets in the congregation, indicated that Barnabas and Paul were to be set apart for special service. With Mark as their attendant, Barnabas and Paul set out on their first evangelizing journey, which took in Cyprus and certain cities in Asia Minor. At their first stop in Asia Minor, the city of Perga, Mark decided to leave them and to return to Jerusalem. Paul felt that Mark was unjustified in doing this, but Barnabas was

In Coming Issues

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- A Growing Paradise in Sweden

less severe in the view he took of his cousin's departure. It appears that during the trip Paul was the one who took the lead in speaking. Both men, however, experienced persecutions from angry mobs. At Lystra, Paul was even stoned and left for dead. Courageously, both men went back to the cities where trouble had broken out and they strengthened the believers. They also appointed elders in the newly formed congregations.—Acts 13:1-14:26.

THE CIRCUMCISION ISSUE

Returning to Antioch, from where they had been sent out by holy spirit, Barnabas and Paul reported on their activities to the congregation. But then a problem arose in the Antioch congregation. Certain men who had come from Judea insisted that Gentile believers could not be saved unless they got circumcised and began conducting themselves according to the Mosaic law. To settle this issue, Paul and Barnabas headed for Jerusalem to present the matter to the apostles and other elders of the congregation there.—Acts 15:1, 2.

At that time both men gave testimony regarding the way in which Jehovah had used them to declare the "good news" to uncircumcised Gentiles. Based on all the testimony given and the evidence of the Holy Scriptures, the apostles and other elders of the Jerusalem congregation formulated a letter showing that circumcision and adherence to the Mosaic law were not required of Gentile believers. The letter stated: "For the holy spirit and we ourselves have favored adding no further burden to you, except these necessary things, to keep abstaining from things sacrificed to idols and from blood and from things strangled and from fornication. If you carefully keep yourselves from these things, you will prosper. Good health to you!" When Barnabas and Paul brought this letter back to Antioch, there was great

rejoicing in the congregation.—Acts 15:3-31.

It may have been after this that Peter visited the Antioch congregation and freely associated with uncircumcised Gentile believers. But, then, when certain Jewish brothers came down from Jerusalem, Peter withdrew from associating with Gentile converts and spent time exclusively with Jewish brothers. Even Barnabas got unbalanced and did the same thing. But all responded properly when Paul reproved Peter, making clear how wrong such a course was.—Gal. 2:11-14.

FAITHFUL SERVICE WITH MARK

Another problem that arose concerned Paul and Barnabas personally. Paul thought of returning to visit the brothers whom they had met on their first evangelizing trip. However, because Barnabas insisted on taking Mark along, the two men clashed sharply. Since Mark had left them the first time, Paul doubted his dependability and did not want him as a traveling companion. Therefore, Barnabas and Paul went separate ways. Accompanied by Mark, Barnabas returned to Cyprus. (Acts 15:36-39) Evidently Mark labored faithfully with Barnabas, for later even Paul acknowledged that Mark was a good companion. In his second letter to Timothy, Paul wrote: "Take Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministering." (2 Tim. 4:11) So, Barnabas, with Mark, must have done much fine work in building up the brothers on the island of Cyprus and in making new disciples.

While Barnabas, like any other human, had weaknesses, he lived up to his surname "Son of Comfort." He played an important role in building up and encouraging the brothers. By his loyal support of true worship, he set the example in 'continuing in the Lord with hearty purpose.'—Acts 11:23.



THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT

"Do Not Resist Him That Is Wicked"

AFTER discussing oaths and vows in his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus spoke about how to deal with persons who may cause injury and offense to others. He began by pointing to something his audience had learned from the Mosaic law: "You heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye and tooth for tooth.'"—Matt. 5:38; compare Exodus 21:23-25; Leviticus 24:19-21.

Some have criticized this law as being harsh. However, it did not legalize personal vengeance such as the infamous "vendetta" of more recent times, for the very same Hebrew Scriptures also state: "Do not say: 'Just as he did to me, so I am

going to do to him. I shall repay to each one according to his acting.' " (Prov. 24:29) The law of "eye for eye and tooth for tooth" was to be administered after individuals had stood trial "before Jehovah, before the priests and the judges who will be acting in those days."—Deut. 19:15-21.

"However, I say to you," Jesus continued, "Do not resist him that is wicked." (Matt. 5:39a) How is this to be understood? Jesus aided his hearers by giving four illustrations that would help them properly to deal with "him that is wicked," that is, a person who would harm them in some way.

1—PERSONAL INSULT OR INJURY

Jesus first explained what to do when his listeners would suffer insult or injury: "Whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other also to him."—Matt. 5:39b.

This does not mean that a person being slapped or pummeled should 'ask for more' by refusing to defend himself. When slapped on the face during his unjust trial before the high priest, Jesus objected to such mistreatment, saying: "If I spoke wrongly, bear witness concerning the wrong; but if rightly, why do you hit me?"—John 18:22, 23; compare Acts 23:3.

Jesus' reference to a slap "on your right cheek" would remind his audience, not so much of a blow

causing pain, as of one bringing insult and shame. The commentary on Matthew by W. F. Albright and C. S. Mann states: "Jesus here speaks of what is still true in the Near East—the most insulting of all physical blows being that of striking the right cheek with the back of the hand." Jewish tradition set the fine for such an insulting backhanded slap at 400 *zuz* (equal to 400 denarii), which amounted to more than a year's wages for an agricultural worker.

Luke's Gospel account, written mainly for non-Jews, puts Jesus' words more generally: "*To him that strikes you on the one cheek, offer the other also.*" (Luke 6:29a) This applies to, not merely an insulting slap, but rather blows struck in violence. In either case, Jesus' counsel was to 'turn the other cheek.' He desired that his followers be willing to endure personal insult and injury without resorting to retaliation. In this way they could imitate Jesus himself, of whom the apostle Peter writes: "When he was being reviled, he did not go reviling in return. When he was suffering, he did not go threatening, but kept on committing himself to the one who judges righteously."—1 Pet. 2:23; compare Isaiah 50:6.

2—WHEN SOMEONE "WANTS TO GO TO COURT"

Next, Jesus discussed how a person should respond when someone tries to deprive him of something through legal procedure: "*And if a person wants to go to court with you and get possession of your inner garment, let your outer garment also go to him.*"—Matt. 5:40.

Anciently, it was customary for people to give a garment in pledge to guarantee payment of a debt. (Job 22:6) If a debtor was unable to pay, a court could award that garment to the creditor. (Prov. 13:13; 27:13) However, God's law stated that a

"mantle" (outer garment) given in pledge could not be retained overnight, since the debtor might need it as a covering for sleeping.—Ex. 22:26, 27; Deut. 24:12, 13.

Jesus counseled his followers to give up freely the "inner garment" that an adversary at law might seek; and they should do this simply "if a person *wants to go to court,*" before court proceedings actually began. Moreover, they could go twice as far by letting the "outer garment also go to him," though the law of God did not demand such a thing.

In agreement with this counsel, the apostle Paul wrote to Christians at Corinth: "Really, then, it means altogether a defeat for you that you are having lawsuits with one another. Why do you not rather let yourselves be wronged? Why do you not rather let yourselves be defrauded?" (1 Cor. 6:7) Yes, they should have been willing to suffer personal loss rather than to see the congregation's reputation hurt publicly by some controversy at court.

Luke's account of Jesus' words allow for application even outside court proceedings: "*From him that takes away your outer garment, do not withhold even the undergarment.*" (Luke 6:29b) Luke may have had in mind persons accosted on the road by highwaymen who would rob them of their outer garments. Rather than fighting against such confiscation of perhaps expensive clothing, Jesus' disciples would do better to go beyond what was demanded and give up "even the undergarment." This might save their lives when confronted by dangerous criminals, or have other beneficial effects.—Prov. 15:1; Matt. 5:16.

However, the Son of God did not mean that people should refuse ever to engage in litigation or that they should otherwise allow wicked persons to reduce them to a state of poverty. We note that the apostle Paul did not understand Jesus to mean

that, for Paul appeared before Roman officials in his efforts to 'defend and legally establish the good news.' (Phil. 1:7; compare Acts 25:8-12.) Christians may take legal action against worldly men or authorities to claim what rightfully belongs to them. However, in doing so they would not act belligerently, but, rather, peaceably. In everyday life, though, Christians must develop a yielding disposition.—Rom. 12:17-19.

3—COMPULSORY SERVICE TO AGENT OF SECULAR GOVERNMENT

Next, Jesus declared: "And if someone under authority impresses you into service for a mile, go with him two miles."—Matt. 5:41.

The expression 'presses into service' translates the Greek word *angareuo*, which was adopted from the Persian language. Originally, this term related to the activity of public couriers, or messengers, authorized by the king of Persia. The couriers had authority to press into their service men, horses, ships and anything else that might expedite official business. (Compare Esther 3:13, 15; 8:10, 14.) This system was adopted by the Romans. During Jesus' earthly ministry, government officials could compel Jews to bear loads or do other types of forced labor. (Matt. 27:32; Mark 15:21) The Jews viewed such compulsory service to Gentiles as highly distasteful. Yet Jesus admonished his lis-

teners to perform it cheerfully. In fact, if compelled to go for a Roman mile (about 5,000 feet, or 1.5 kilometers), they should volunteer to go twice as far.

4—A REQUEST FOR MATERIAL AID

Jesus next advised generosity in giving material assistance: "*Give to the one asking you, and do not turn away from one that wants to borrow from you without interest.*"—Matt. 5:42.

Jesus' hearers would recall that God's law forbade the Israelites to charge interest on loans to fellow Jews. (Ex. 22:25; Lev. 25:37; Deut. 23:20) Furthermore, that law also decreed: "You must not harden your heart or be closefisted toward your poor brother. For you should generously open your hand to him and by all means lend him on pledge as much as he needs, which he is in want of." (Deut. 15:7, 8) As the Messiah and "fulfiller" of God's law, Jesus went even further in recommending the spirit of generous giving.—Matt. 5:17; Acts 20:35.

Jesus' counsel here is certainly of great value. Persons who choose parting with personal pride and even valuables rather than fighting to retain them, who perform disagreeable assignments without complaining and who cheerfully give of their belongings to help others in immediate need are both pleasing to their fellowman and beloved of God.—2 Cor. 9:7.

For Nothing the Net Is Spread'

AS PART of a warning against involvement with lawless men, Proverbs 1:17 states: "It is for nothing that the net is spread before the eyes of anything owning wings." Birds are naturally cautious and possess a keen sense of vision. Hence, were a person to spread a net in full view of a bird, he could not hope to trap it. His efforts would be in vain. Similarly, those who live by theft and robbery are not actually getting by with anything. They are merely laying a snare for themselves, and all their scheming will eventually come to nothing.—Prov. 1:19.

INSIGHT ON THE NEWS

- Until recently, when a patient refused prescribed medical treatment in cases where life might be involved, the trend was to request court intervention, forcing a particular treatment on the patient.

Whose Body Is It? newer thinking casts doubt on this trend, according to "Medical World News." The journal observed that two recent U.S. court cases involving controversial cancer treatment indicated that "a patient's right to make decisions about his own body was so basic that the state has to have an overwhelmingly good reason to interfere with it."

The judge in one of the cases ("Rutherford" vs. "US"), noting the dilemma that a patient's freedom of choice may put upon conscientious doctors, said: "It is never easy for one who is concerned and feels himself particularly knowledgeable to observe others exercise their freedoms in ways that to him appear unenlightened."

However, the judge wrote that "to be insensitive to the very fundamental nature of the civil liberties at issue . . . and the fact that making the choice, regardless of its correctness, is the sole prerogative of the person whose body is being ravaged, is to display slight understanding of the essence of our free society."

- Darwin's theory of evolution was based on the assumption of gradual change from one life-form to the next.

Grasping for Straws But "the fossil record still proclaims [gradualism] false, after more than a century of diligent search for gradual change," writes prominent evolutionist Stephen Jay Gould, professor of geology at Harvard University. "Paleontologists have documented virtually no cases of slow and steady transformation, foot by foot up the strata of a hillslope—not for horses, not for humans."

"Instead," admits Gould, "most fossil species share two features: First, they do not change in any marked way during the entire course of their existence; second, they enter the record abruptly, either replacing or co-existing with their ancestors. In short, stasis

[stability] and sudden replacement mark the history of most species."

To counter this seemingly insurmountable evidence, evolutionist Gould speculates that in each case, the evolving must have occurred relatively rapidly "in a small, isolated peripheral area," which geologists have not as yet found in their diggings. Of course, such speculation affords an escape for evolutionists when confronted with this overwhelming evidence against their theory. However, does such probing in the dark have the ring of objective, unbiased scientific thought? Or does it, rather, reflect the frantic gropings of the dogmatist who has been exposed?

- What about people who have come near death and returned, claiming to have had spiritual or out-of-body experiences? Many consider

"Afterlife" Experiences —Reliable? this proof that there is an afterlife, or evidence of an immortal soul that lives on at death. However, Psychiatrist Nathan Schnaper of the Maryland Institute for Emergency Medicine disagrees. He "sees hundreds of revived trauma patients each year in his work," reports "Medical World News," and "discount[s] the tales as psychological fantasies."

Dr. Schnaper says that the hundreds of patients he has talked to "say it was very unpleasant and they don't want to talk about it, when they remember anything at all." He believes that those who claim to remember out-of-body events "are experiencing a vacuum, and psychologically we can't abide a vacuum. It's a void that must be filled, so they invent these experiences. . . . I don't believe there is any proof these people have visited an afterlife."

"Medical World News" notes that even a doctor who favors further investigation of such "afterlife" experiences admits that "there may be a biochemical, electrical, or hypoxic [oxygen starvation] explanation."—See "The Watchtower" of September 1, 1977, p. 519.

Hence, the recent flurry of claims of immortality is no reason to doubt the Bible's clear teaching that "as for the dead, they are conscious of nothing at all," and "in that day [of death] his thoughts do perish."—Eccl. 9:5; Ps. 146:4.

Human Governments Crushed

UNDER mighty King Nebuchadnezzar, Babylon reached the position of Third World Power of Bible history. All opposing governments in the ancient Middle East fell before its crushing military might. Even Jehovah's own typical theocracy at that time was allowed by God to be destroyed because of the unfaithfulness of the Israelites. But in Nebuchadnezzar's mind, the overthrow of Jerusalem and the destruction of the temple for true worship made him and his god Marduk greater than Jehovah the God of the Hebrews and their kings in the line of David.

In coming up to bring the capital city of Jerusalem to ruin, Nebuchadnezzar revealed the attitude that was attributed prophetically to the king of Babylon. We read: "To the heavens I shall go up. Above the stars of God I shall lift up my throne, and I shall sit down upon the mountain of meeting [where the Israelites worshiped at the temple on Mount Zion] . . . I shall go up above the high places of the clouds; I shall make myself resemble the Most High."—Isa. 14:13, 14.

The prophecy continued, foretelling that the Babylonian royal dynasty would be 'brought down to Sheol, to the remotest parts of the pit.' (Isa. 14:15) Decades be-

By God's Kingdom



fore the overthrow of Nebuchadnezzar's dynasty Jehovah humbled this haughty ruler by letting a mental sickness come on him. For seven years Nebuchadnezzar imagined that he was a bull, going about eating grass.

It was this Nebuchadnezzar who had an earlier prophetic dream of an immense and "dreadful" image. The various metals in this image represented a series of world governments that would develop on the earthly scene down through the centuries, to be followed by the reestablishment of God's sovereignty in the earth by the Kingdom rule of his Son, Christ Jesus.

Forgetting the details of the dream on awakening, Nebuchadnezzar summoned his magic-practicing priests and astrologers to tell him, not only what he had dreamed, but also the interpretation. They failed

utterly. However, Daniel said to him: "There exists a God in the heavens who is a Revealer of secrets, and he has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what is to occur in the final part of the days." —Dan. 2:28.

Before giving the interpretation, Daniel recalled the dream to Nebuchadnezzar's mind: "Its head was of good gold, its breasts and its arms were of silver, its belly and its thighs were of copper, its legs were of iron, its feet were partly of iron and partly of molded clay." (Dan. 2:32, 33) What was the meaning of the dream? Daniel explained that Nebuchadnezzar and his dynasty would start off the series of world powers, saying, "You yourself are the head of gold." Then he added: "After you there will rise another kingdom inferior to you; and another kingdom, a third one, of copper, that will rule over the whole earth. And as for the fourth kingdom, it will prove to be strong like iron. Forasmuch as iron is crushing and grinding everything else, so, like iron that shatters, it will crush and shatter even all these." —Dan. 2:38-40.

But what of the feet made up of iron and clay? "Whereas you beheld the feet and the toes to be partly of molded clay of a potter and partly of iron, the kingdom itself will prove to be divided . . . the kingdom will partly prove to be strong and will partly prove to be fragile." What will bring about this partial fragility within the iron-like "kingdom" or world government represented in the feet and toes? "Whereas you beheld iron mixed with moist clay, they [those making up the "fourth kingdom"] will come to be mixed with the offspring of mankind; but they [those represented by the iron and the clay] will not prove to be sticking together, this one to that one, just as iron is not mixing with molded clay." —Dan. 2:41-43.

Tracing the development of the world powers through the image, from head to

foot in the stream of time, we see that it begins with Babylon, and progressively goes through Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. The "fourth kingdom," represented in the legs and feet, began with the Roman Empire. As time progressed, the power of this empire waned and the British Empire ascended, it being really an outgrowth from the old Roman Empire. This was so even though there was a vying with certain remnants of the Roman Empire for the position of world power. (Dan. 7:19, 20) There does not appear to be any prophetic significance to the image's having ten toes. This is a natural human feature, just as the image has two arms, two legs, and so forth.

The British Empire developed as a monarchy and continued to manifest many of the ironlike traits of the old Roman Empire. And while the 13 American colonies rebelled against the British Empire, the government of the United States of America has really come to be an extension of the conservative or iron-type rule, and this power has been closely allied with the British government in world affairs. Hence, as we trace the development of *world power* through the image and down into the feet and toes, we can see how the Anglo-American World Power must be included in the "iron." Well along into the time of the end, it is still the world power, even though strong competitors have emerged.

In connection with the dream image, there is no mention of a 'fifth kingdom' developing, although a later vision of Daniel contained a fearsome "fourth beast," representing the Roman Empire, out from which a 'little horn' grew very large to represent the British Empire. (Dan. 7:7, 8, 19-26; 8:9-11, 23-25) To reach the ascendancy, the Roman and Anglo-American World Powers have indeed been like iron in 'crushing and shattering' other kingdoms and peoples.

Of course, during the 19th and 20th centuries, a number of developments have taken place on the world scene to weaken the ironlike rule of the Anglo-American World Power. Revolutionary socialistic groups have developed to weaken the structure, influence and force of this Seventh World Power. It is said that "the kingdom itself will prove to be divided . . . forasmuch as you beheld the iron mixed with moist clay." It would come "to be mixed with the offspring of mankind." So the "clay" of the image would represent the proletarian elements that develop as a result of the people's rising up against established authority. Through labor unions, demonstrations, strikes and other protest activity, the common people have sought to undermine the traditional, capitalistic style of government manifested in the Anglo-American World Power, along with its sphere of influence.

While outside Communistic governments in other nations often provide the means and incentive for developing this "clay" within the Anglo-American World Power's realm and sphere of influence, they are not represented in the image. It must be remembered that the image is a general representation of the development of world power on the earth, particularly as this relates to Jehovah's people, and down until the time that the image is destroyed and God's kingdom by Christ replaces all earthly governments. There have been many powerful governments and kingdoms that have developed on the earth since the time of Babylon, such as ancient empires in the Orient, parts of Europe and Africa and even in the Americas. But these are not represented in the image, since they were never predominating world powers down to the end of the Gentile Times in 1914 in relation to Jehovah's people. In contrast, in Revelation 13:1 all political governments are included in the 'wild beast with ten horns and seven

heads.' It, not only has the seven heads representing the seven world powers stretching from Egypt down to the Anglo-American World Power, but also has a body that includes all the other political entities, the beast as a whole representing the world system of political rule all the way back to its start in Nimrod's day.

Thus the "clay" does not represent the Communistic governments outside the realm of the Anglo-American sphere of influence any more so than other parts of the image represented other nonworld governments and empires down through the ages. But the fact that this image has reached its time of the end with no place therein for the development of another world power, and the fact that the "wild beast" has only seven heads, not eight, shows that there will be no new world power that will clearly dominate before the entire political system is removed. The "clay" does not represent a world power developing, only a weakening factor.

Revelation chapter 17 does describe the "scarlet-colored wild beast" as being, as a whole, "itself an eighth king," but it is said that it "springs from the seven" world powers. It does not have any real dominating power, except as the "seven" give it control in the earth. Actually, the Seventh World Power took the lead in bringing this "image" of the wild beast into existence. (Compare Revelation 13:11-18.) This "scarlet-colored wild beast," as an "image" of the wild beast "with ten horns and seven heads" that comes up out of the "sea" of mankind, clearly pictures first the League of Nations and then the United Nations. It is an "eighth king" in that it is a worldwide organization but does not replace or displace the Seventh World Power. It is not the Communistic bloc of nations, just as the clay of the image does not represent a new world power developing within the image that represents the successive world powers.

Of course, when the "stone" cut out of the mountain hits the image on its feet and topples it to destruction, that stone will pulverize, not only the Anglo-American World Power and the relics of the former world powers still in the earth today, but also such rulerships that are allied with those world governments represented in the image and those who are the backers and supporters of the "clay" in the feet and toes of the image. All these man-made governments and radical groups must be cleared from the earth to make way for the Kingdom government administered by God's appointed king, Jesus Christ.

The Bible shows this will not be done without a fight, inasmuch as all the nations want to hold on to their sovereignty. The parallel prophecy at Revelation 17:12-14 shows that the prominent world rulers in the time of the end (pictured by the "ten horns" on the wild beast) would "receive authority as kings one hour [or a short time] with the wild beast. These have one thought, and so they give their power and authority to the wild beast [the League of Nations and its successor, the United Nations]. These will battle with the Lamb [Christ Jesus], but, because he is Lord of lords and King of kings, the Lamb will conquer them."

False Religion and War

TRUE worshipers of Jehovah God strive to maintain peace with their fellowmen. This is what we should expect of them, since peace is a fruit of God's spirit. (Gal. 5:22) It has been far different with false religion, which has become deeply involved with the world's conflicts, even encouraging them. Religious leaders have given their full support and blessing to the spilling of other people's blood on the battlefields. This is nothing new. Back in the time of the ancient Egyptians, the pagan priests were advocates of war.

Writing about the priests of the false god Amon-Ra (Amen-Ra), E. A. Wallis Budge states: "There is reason to think that many of the great Egyptian raids in Syria and Nubia were made as much for the purpose of supplying funds for the maintenance of the temples, and services, and priests of Amen-Ra as for the glory and prestige of Egypt. The slavish homage which the Thothmes kings, and the Amen-heteps, and the Ramessids paid to Amen-Ra, and their lavish gifts to his sanctuaries suggest that it was his priests who were, in reality, the makers of war and peace."—*The Gods of the Egyptians*, Vol. II, p. 12.

What an inglorious end to the march of world powers! Their cruel and oppressive rule will be removed, never to be felt again by humans on earth. God's kingdom will bring in a worldwide government that will rule in righteousness and peace. It will bring health and everlasting life to obedient mankind, the subjects of that kingdom. This is vividly portrayed in the conclusion of the dream-image prophecy given to Nebuchadnezzar: "At that time the iron, the molded clay, the copper, the silver and the gold were, all together, crushed and became like the chaff from the summer threshing floor, and the wind carried them away so that no trace at all was found of them. And as for the stone [representing God's kingdom in the hands of Christ Jesus] that struck the image, it became a large mountain and filled the whole earth."—Dan. 2:35.

Bible prophecy shows that this happy time is near at hand. Today people of all nations are being invited to put themselves on the side of Jehovah's sovereignty rather than trust in the governments of men. (Ps. 146:3) Jehovah's Witnesses will be happy to help you to learn more about this Kingdom government.

APPRECIATING THE SACREDNESS OF LIFE AND BLOOD

WHAT is more precious than your life? Without it, you could not enjoy anything. Yet, there is evidence all around us that many today have little real appreciation for the value of life—either their own or that of others.

² Can we not see such evidence in the reckless driving habits of many? Or, what about those who drive under the influence of alcohol or another drug, bringing death to thousands annually? Then there are those who seek thrills in dangerous sports that admittedly take many lives each year. And how about the millions of persons who know that they may be impairing their health and shortening their lives by using tobacco or by gluttonous eating?

³ But in the face of such attitudes, we each can ask, 'Do I really have an appreciative outlook on life?' A key to having real appreciation for life that even affects one's thinking and actions is to recognize that life is a gift from Jehovah. He is "the living God" and the "source of [our] life." (Jer. 10:10; Ps. 36:9) When speaking to some Greek philosophers, the apostle Paul testified about the Supreme One: "He himself gives to all persons life and breath and all things. . . . For by him we

have life and move and exist." (Acts 17:25, 28) Logically, our view of life should conform to God's. Does it? To answer that, we need to know how he views life. We can then compare our view with his.

⁴ Jehovah considers life sacred, not something to be squandered. We can tell that from his repeated condemnations of murder and the emotions that often lead to it. (Ex. 20:13; 1 John 3:11-15; Rev. 21:8) Moreover, in ancient Israel, Jehovah arranged for cities of refuge to which a person could flee for sanctuary if he unintentionally caused another's death. Why did an accidental manslayer have to take the major step of leaving his home and remaining, for perhaps years, in the city of refuge? Because he had caused loss of life, sacred life. You can see that the divine provision of these cities would promote further respect for the sanctity of life.—Num. 35:9-29.

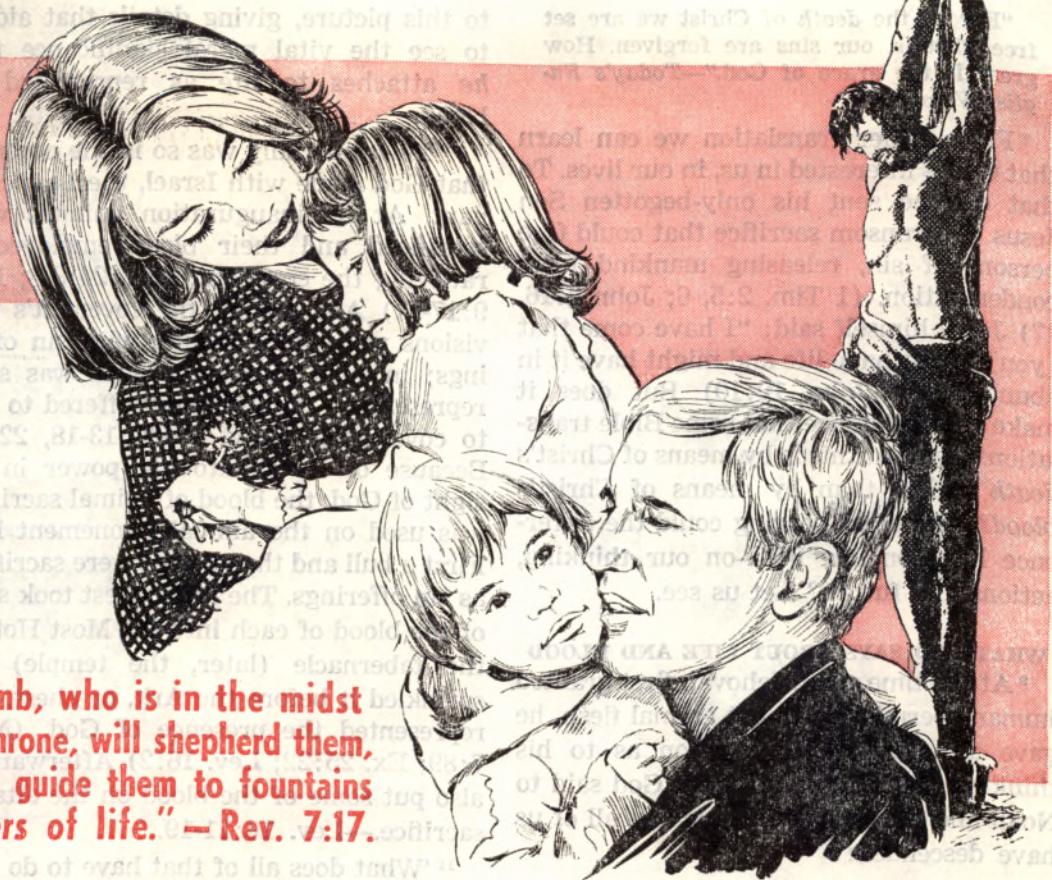
⁵ After outlining that provision, God told the Israelites: "You must not pollute the land in which you are; because it is blood that pollutes the land." (Num. 35:33) Why was that? The "blood" here mentioned stood for the life of the victim. God thus called to the fore the vital link between our life and our blood.

1, 2. How do many persons show lack of appreciation for the value of life? (Ps. 115:17)

3. Why should we seek God's view of life? (Ps. 25:4, 5)

4. What evidence shows that Jehovah considers life to be sacred?

5, 6. Why is blood appropriately linked with life?



**"The Lamb, who is in the midst
the throne, will shepherd them,
I will guide them to fountains
waters of life." — Rev. 7:17.**

⁶ Even though blood may not be a common subject of conversation, who of us does not know that we need blood to keep alive? It plays a role in every one of our major body activities. Blood carries life-sustaining oxygen to our cells, removes wastes from these cells, helps us to adapt to varying temperatures and is a key part of our defense against disease. But most persons view blood as a mere necessary fluid. To others, it is business. It is bought from derelicts or the poor and sold to blood banks or hospitals. And much animal blood is processed for food, fertilizer and other commercial products. Clearly there are many persons who do not view blood as sacred.

⁷ God's Word, however, helps us to appreciate that blood is much more than a necessary natural fluid. What our Creator says about life and blood should influence our present outlook and our actions. And it can have an effect even on our eternal destiny. How so? As an aid in seeing the answer, compare these quotations of Ephesians 1:7 from two modern Bible translations, noting particularly what we have italicized:

"By means of him we have the release by ransom through the blood of that one [Christ], yes, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his undeserved kindness." —*New World Translation.*

7, 8. (a) Why should we look into what God's Word says about life and blood? (b) What questions arise as to Ephesians 1:7 and the ransom?

"For by the death of Christ we are set free, that is, our sins are forgiven. How great is the grace of God."—*Today's English Version.**

* From either translation we can learn that God is interested in us, in our lives. To that end he sent his only-begotten Son Jesus as a ransom sacrifice that could free persons of sin, releasing mankind from condemnation. (1 Tim. 2:5, 6; John 3:16, 17) Jesus himself said: "I have come that [you] might have life and might have it in abundance." (John 10:10) But does it make any difference that some Bible translations say that this is by means of Christ's *death* rather than by means of Christ's *blood*? And what bearing could the difference have on our life—on our thinking, actions and future? Let us see.

WHAT GOD SAYS ABOUT LIFE AND BLOOD

* At the time when Jehovah first granted humans permission to eat animal flesh, he gave a noteworthy indication as to his thinking about life and blood. God said to Noah and his family, from whom all of us have descended:

"Every moving animal that is alive may serve as food for you. As in the case of green vegetation, I do give it all to you. Only flesh with its soul—its blood—you must not eat. And, besides that, your blood of your souls shall I ask back. . . . Anyone shedding man's blood, by man will his own blood be shed, for in God's image he made man."—Gen. 9:3-6.

All humanity then alive was thus put on notice that, from God's standpoint, blood represents life. Man's blood would stand for his "soul," or, as many Bible versions render it, his "life." (TEV; Catholic *Jerusalem Bible*; translation by Rabbi Isaac Leeser) The divine Life-Giver later added

* A like rendering is found in the equivalent versions in Spanish (*Versión Popular*, 1966) and German (*Das Neue Testament in heutigem Deutsch*, 1987).

9. How do we know that Jehovah views blood as representing life?

to this picture, giving details that aid us to see the vital moral significance that he attaches to life as represented by blood.

* This especially was so in the covenant that God made with Israel, the Law covenant. At its inauguration animals were sacrificed and their blood employed in ratifying the covenant. (Ex. 24:3-8; Heb. 9:17-21) And among the covenant's provisions were laws dealing with sin offerings; in such sacrifices, blood was shed, representing the life being offered to God to cover sins. (Lev. 4:4-7, 13-18, 22-30) Because of its sin-atoning power in the sight of God, the blood of animal sacrifices was used on the annual Atonement Day. First a bull and then a goat were sacrificed as sin offerings. The high priest took some of the blood of each into the Most Holy of the tabernacle (later, the temple) and sprinkled it before the Ark, or chest, that represented the presence of God. (Num. 7:89; Ex. 25:22; Lev. 16:2) Afterward he also put some of the blood on the altar of sacrifice.—Lev. 16:11-19.

* 'What does all of that have to do with me?' some persons may wonder. It might seem to describe merely an ancient ritual that even the Jews no longer follow. How does it relate to our hope for the future and our appreciation of life and blood?

* In Leviticus chapter 17, Jehovah God himself explained the underlying principles of those sacrificial requirements; what he there stated has important meaning for us. God said: "The soul [or, life] of the flesh is in the blood, and I myself have put it upon the altar for you to make atonement for your souls, because it is the blood that makes atonement by the soul in it. That is why I have said to the sons of

10, 11. What was done with the blood of animals sacrificed by Israelite priests, leading to what question?

12. Jehovah stipulated what exclusive use of blood? Why? (Deut. 12:20-27)

Israel: 'No soul of you must eat blood.' " (Lev. 17:11, 12) Yes, our Creator and Life-Giver plainly stated his decision: Blood (representing life from him) was to be put to one use only—in sacrifice. God thus put a value on blood, setting it aside as sacred. Under the Law, it was not to be eaten or drunk, or put to any other use that men might devise. When an animal was killed just for food and not for sacrifice, the blood was to be poured on the ground; the animal's life was thus in a sense given back to God, the Israelite hunter keeping only its flesh. (Lev. 17:13, 14) But how does this involve us since neither Jews nor Christians now have a divinely approved temple where animals could be sacrificed?

OUR PROBLEM

—GOD'S SOLUTION—LIFE AND BLOOD

¹³ All of us must admit that we are imperfect and sinful. The apostle Paul confirmed this and explained how it came about. "Through one man [Adam] sin entered into the world and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men [including us] because they had all sinned." (Rom. 5:12) This fact has a direct bearing on our appreciation of life and blood.

¹⁴ As the apostle Paul was inspired to explain in the book of Hebrews, the animal sacrifices of the Law covenant could not completely cover sin, or else they would not have had to be offered year after year. Those sacrifices, especially the ones on the Day of Atonement, were but a "shadow of the good things to come." (Heb. 10:1-4; 8:5, 6; 9:9, 10) The reality that was foreshadowed was the ransom sacrifice of Christ that could fully atone for all our sins. In commenting on this, Paul wrote:

"When Christ came as a high priest of the good things that have come to pass, . . . he entered, no, not with the blood of

goats and of young bulls, but with his own blood, once for all time into the holy place [heaven itself] and obtained an everlasting deliverance for us. For if the blood of goats and of bulls . . . sanctifies to the extent of cleanness of the flesh, how much more will the *blood of the Christ*, who through an everlasting spirit offered himself without blemish to God, cleanse our consciences from dead works that we may render sacred service to the living God? So that is why he is a mediator of a new covenant, in order that, because a death has occurred for their release by ransom from the transgressions under the former covenant, the ones who have been called might receive the promise of the everlasting inheritance. . . . Unless blood is poured out no forgiveness takes place."—Heb. 9:11-15, 22.

¹⁵ Does this not help us to understand more fully why it is so vital to have God's view of blood, representing life? One of the central themes of the Bible is that Jesus came to earth to give his life as a ransom sacrifice. Only by that ransom can we have the prospect of forgiveness of sin and the hope of "everlasting life." (Matt. 20:28; Rom. 3:23, 24; 6:22, 23; 1 Tim. 1:15, 16) To receive those blessings, we must exercise faith in Jesus' ransom, which involves having accurate knowledge of and appreciation for his giving up his life represented by his blood.—1 Tim. 2:3, 4; Gal. 3:22.

¹⁶ With a background of these points concerning sacrifices, atonement, blood and Jesus' ransom, let us turn our attention again to Ephesians 1:7. Most English translations of this verse show that it says, "we have the release by ransom through the *blood of* Christ. Yet some modern versions substitute "*death of* Christ." Does it make much difference?

¹⁷ In the original Greek, Ephesians 1:7 uses the word *haima*, which means "blood."

13. How do we know that we are burdened with sin?

14. The sacrifices on Atonement Day foreshadowed what?

15. How is God's view of blood involved in our hope of everlasting life?

16, 17. In what way have some Bible translators changed verses that mention blood? (Rom. 5:9; Col. 1:20)

Why, then, do some translations render it here and elsewhere as "death"? The translators understood that in certain texts mentioning "blood," the death or the responsibility for the murder of someone is implied. (Luke 11:50, 51; Acts 5:28; Rev. 6:10) For example, in front of Jews clamoring for Jesus' execution, Pilate went through the gesture of washing his hands, and then declared: "I am innocent of the blood of this man." The Jews replied: "His blood come upon us and upon our children." (Matt. 27:24, 25; compare Revelation 7:14.) But some versions have taken the liberty of rendering these verses: "I am not responsible for the death of this man," and, "Let the punishment for his death fall on us and on our children." (TEV) What, though, is the effect when "death" is substituted for "blood" in verses where Jesus' sacrifice is involved? Could something possibly be missed that God wanted to convey to us?

¹⁸ There is no denying the emphasis that the Bible places on the death of Jesus. Paul wrote: "God recommends his own love to us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Also: "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." (Rom. 5:8; 1 Cor. 15:3) His dying, willingly giving his perfect human life, paid back or balanced what Adam had lost for us and which led to our sinful state.

¹⁹ However, the Bible's references to the "blood of the Christ" should convey to us important things that might not be appreciated in speaking of just his death. (Eph. 2:13) Christ did not, and could not, simply die and remain dead.* In fulfillment of the

Atonement Day pattern that *Jehovah* originated, Jesus then had to enter heaven, into the very presence of God. There Christ could present the value or merit of his lifeblood, just as on Atonement Day the high priest took the sacrificial blood into the Most Holy. Paul clearly sets out this parallel: "Christ entered, not into a holy place made with hands, which is a copy of the reality, but into heaven itself, now to appear before the person of God for us." —Heb. 9:24, 11, 12; 13:11.

²⁰ Furthermore, in heaven Jesus Christ is alive and able to plead for all who exercise faith in his ransom and assist them toward salvation. Accordingly, Paul wrote: "For if, when we were enemies, we became reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more, now that we have become reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." —Rom. 5:10.

²¹ With good reason, then, the work "Religion in History and in the Present" states that in most instances "one cannot substitute Blood of Christ with death. The Blood of Christ means more than this. It stresses the close links between the death of Jesus and both his life and his triumph in his resurrection and exaltation." The book adds that the expression "Blood of Christ"

"adopts the Old Testament Jewish concept of the atoning power of blood, which is the basis for the way sacrifices are viewed and for the idea that the death of the righteous one has atoning power. . . . On one hand this term reminds us of the fact that we have been bought with a high price, of the one who paid the ransom and of what it consisted. On the other hand, we are freed from sin and death forever by faith in the covenant concluded over his blood. The Blood of Christ encompasses the effect of his death and resurrection."*

* See *The Harp of God* (1921), pp. 138-142.

18. Why is Christ's death important? (1 Cor. 11:26; Heb. 2:14)

19, 20. What features, beyond just the death of Jesus, are included in references to Christ's blood? (Heb. 4:14-16)

* *Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, 3rd ed., Vol. 1, pp. 1329-1331.

21, 22. How are our lives involved in the expression "blood of the Christ"?

²² How meaningful, then, how full of blessed implications for us, are many of the Bible passages mentioning Jesus' blood! By means of it our sins can be forgiven. (Rev. 1:5; Heb. 10:29) It is possible to be delivered from fruitless conduct. (1 Pet. 1:18, 19) We can be among a congregation of people whom God approves of and guides. (Acts 20:28) And there is the hope of perfection and everlasting life under the rule of a kingdom incorporating persons bought with that blood.—Rev. 5:9, 10; 12:10, 11; Col. 1:20.

²³ All who have an appreciation of the value of their own life thus need to appreciate what God says about blood. He views it as sacred. He determined its exclusive usefulness and acceptability for sacrifice on the altar. And he clearly showed in his Word that all our hopes for a lasting future rest on the sacrificial blood of his Son. But how can we personally manifest our appreciation for and recognition of the sacredness of blood? These are important matters to be taken up in the following article.

23. What should be our view of blood?

FIRMLY RESOLVED ABOUT LIFE AND BLOOD

'JUDGE Authorizes Transfusions of Blood,' declared a recent newspaper headline in Virginia, U.S.A. The article began:

"A federal judge Thursday morning authorized the Portsmouth Naval Hospital to administer blood transfusions to a critically ill woman who had refused them for four days, allegedly at the risk of her life, . . ."

² Reports of this sort occasionally appear and focus much attention on the value of both life and blood. Before we find out what resulted in the above case, we might think about some fundamental questions: What profound beliefs lead persons such as this one to refuse blood transfusions? Does God's Word really require this of all Christians? If so, how firm would our religious convictions be if a doctor said that we needed a transfusion? Also, might there be aspects aside from medical use of blood

in which our view of life and blood is important and could even affect our future?

LIFE FROM BLOOD

³ The book of Revelation illustrates an appreciation for blood that is held today by hundreds of thousands of persons. After seeing in vision the 144,000 prospective heirs of the Messianic kingdom, the apostle John saw "a great crowd, . . . out of all nations," who have the prospect of living forever on a restored earthly paradise. But how can humans live forever, and that free of sin and imperfection? Appreciatively the "great crowd" cry: "Salvation we owe to our God, . . . and to the Lamb," Jesus Christ. They recognize that this salvation is possible only because they "have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb," Jesus.—Rev. 7:9, 10, 14.

3. Based on Revelation 7:14, what reason do we have to regard blood highly?

1, 2. Questions about blood occasionally come to the fore in what way?

⁴ As noted in the previous article, from the very first book in the Bible, God pointed toward the sacrificial shedding of Jesus' blood so humans could gain everlasting life. (Gen. 3:15; 22:2-10; Isa. 53:10-12) While that sacrifice was yet in the future, Jehovah made it clear that his worshipers should consider life and blood to be sacred. But he also required that their actions harmonize with that divine view. Was not conduct implied in what God told Noah and his family when first permitting them to eat animal flesh? God said: "Every moving animal that is alive may serve as food for you. As in the case of green vegetation, I do give it all to you. Only flesh with its soul—its blood—you must not eat." (Gen. 9:3, 4) So, if they killed an animal for food, they would have to take deliberate steps to drain the blood from the animal so that blood would not be eaten.

⁵ This was not a mere dietary regulation nor a pointless religious ritual. Such conduct involved a highly important moral principle: Blood represented life that was from God. And it is noteworthy that he went on to say that, though an animal could be killed for food, man could not be. Hence, if animal blood representing life was to be viewed as sacred and not to be taken in to sustain life, obviously human life and blood were to be viewed and treated as even more sacred.—Compare Matthew 6:26.

⁶ Since Noah was the forefather of all humans, conduct consistent with the sanctity of life and blood was expected of *all humans*. Many Bible scholars have realized this connection. For example:

"Blood was recognized to be the seat of life, and therefore something sacred. . . .

The prohibition of blood became one of

4, 5. (a) Why does the proper attitude about life and blood involve more than belief? (b) How does the Bible bear this out?

6, 7. (a) Genesis 9:3, 4 applies to whom? (b) How did the Law covenant back up the requirement in Genesis 9?

the dietary laws of the Mosaic code, but because of its inclusion within the provisions of this covenant with Noah the later Jews considered it to be binding on all mankind."—*A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture*, p. 187.

⁷ As this commentary noted, when God later provided a law code for Israel, he also forbade them to consume blood. He commanded: "Simply be firmly resolved not to eat the blood, because the blood is the soul and you must not eat the soul with the flesh. . . . You should pour it out upon the ground." (Deut. 12:23, 24; Lev. 17:10, 13) God did not then enforce on the rest of mankind his law against taking in blood any more than he did his law against idolatry. (Acts 17:30, 31; 14:16) So a Gentile might buy and choose to eat meat with blood in it. (Deut. 14:21) But a worshiper of the Creator could not do so. In fact, if an Israelite, evidently unaware at the time that the blood had not been drained, did eat flesh containing blood, he had to take steps to cleanse himself of his unintentional error.—Lev. 17:15, 16.

⁸ If animal blood, representing life, was not to be taken in for sustenance, that would be even more so of human blood. We can easily see this from what occurred when Jesus once spoke figuratively about eating his flesh and drinking his blood. Some Jewish disciples who did not discern that he was using only symbols were shocked and left him. (John 6:60-66) Yes, the thought of taking in blood, whether animal or human, was abhorrent to those concerned with God's view.

A CHRISTIAN REQUIREMENT

⁹ Perhaps, though, you have heard the claim that the Bible's prohibition on blood does not apply to Christians. What are the facts? This matter was ruled on in 49 C.E.,

8. Is it animal blood that is prohibited, or is it human? (2 Sam. 23:14-17)

9. How could it be shown that this applies to Christians also?

during a conference of the apostles and other Christian elders at Jerusalem. With the assured guidance of God's holy spirit that council concluded that Christians did not have to keep the Mosaic law. But what of things that were shown to be wrong even before the Law code was given to Israel? The council wrote to the Christian congregations:

"The holy spirit and we ourselves have favored adding no further burden to you, except these necessary things, to keep abstaining from things sacrificed to idols and from blood and from things strangled [so as to leave the blood in them] and from fornication."—Acts 15:19, 20, 28, 29.

¹⁰ In "Origin and Beginnings of Christianity,"* Professor Eduard Meyer commented that the meaning of "blood" in Acts 15:29 was "the partaking of blood that was forbidden through the law (Gen. 9:4) imposed on Noah and so also on mankind as a whole." And, even though many clergymen say that the requirement in Acts 15:28, 29 was just a temporary step to avoid offending Jews, Professor Meyer reports that more than a century and a quarter later the 'prohibition on partaking of blood was being observed generally' by Christians. As a proof he cites what happened in 177 C.E., when religious enemies accused Christians in Europe of eating infants. One young woman responded: "How can we eat infants—we, to whom it is not lawful to eat the blood of beasts?"

¹¹ Numerous writings from the second and third centuries prove that Christians in that period realized that the prohibition was not a thing of the past; it applied to them. In fact, *The Works of the Rev. Joseph Bingham* makes this point:

* Ursprung und Anfänge des Christentums (1962), pp. 186, 187.

10-12. What evidence shows that Acts 15:28, 29 was not just for temporary observance?

"It was the custom of the Catholic Church, almost till the time of St. Augustine], to abstain from eating of blood, in compliance with the rule given by the Apostles to the Gentile converts: therefore by the most ancient laws of the Church all clergymen were obliged to abstain from it under pain of degradation [removal from office]."

Why, then, are not Christendom's churches today holding to this "rule"? Comments by Martin Luther point to the answer. Though personally inclined to reject all councils, Luther said about Acts 15:

"Now if we want to have a church that conforms to this council (as is right, since it is the first and foremost council, and was held by the apostles themselves), we must teach and insist that henceforth no prince, lord, burgher, or peasant eat geese, doe, stag, or pork cooked in blood, . . . [and] must abstain especially from red sausage and blood sausage, . . . Well, then, begin, anyone who wants to or can, to bring Christendom into conformity with this council; I shall then be glad to follow."

He felt that, because obeying the decision in Acts 15:28, 29 was difficult and ignoring it was so common, it would be impossible to require all churchgoers to follow it. So he himself would not either.

¹² Martin Luther and many in his day may have been unwilling to obey God's law, and most people in Christendom today may be unwilling to do so. But not Jehovah's Christian witnesses!

BLOOD IN THE MEDICAL FIELD

¹³ As we saw at the outset, the field of medicine is one area in which obedience to God's law on blood sometimes becomes an issue. The millions of blood transfusions given annually are considered by many to be a necessary and lifesaving part of modern medicine. However, rather than guiding their thinking and conduct by the re-

13, 14. (a) How could you help someone to see that the Bible's prohibition covers human blood transfusions? (b) Why would rejecting a transfusion be in harmony with examples recorded in the Bible?

cently prevailing view of men in medicine, true Christians need to keep first in mind what God commands: 'Abstain from blood.'

¹⁴ True, when the Bible was written, blood was not being transfused. However, what God's Word says certainly covers the practice of transfusing blood. A doctor who forbids a certain antibiotic to a patient allergic to it would thus not only rule out his taking it orally but also forbid his taking it by injection. Similarly, God's command to 'abstain from blood' rules out ingesting it by the mouth as well as through injections into the veins. Furthermore, the Bible makes it clear that the divine law was not to be ignored even during an emergency that could threaten life. (1 Sam. 14:31-35) Many of God's approved servants have been willing to face dangers and even death rather than violate Scriptural principles and their integrity to Jehovah. (Dan. 3:8-18; Heb. 11:35-38) They have had full confidence in God's power to restore life, and believe the words of Jesus Christ: "I am the resurrection and the life. He that exercises faith in me, even though he dies, will come to life."—John 11:25; 5:28, 29.

¹⁵ It might surprise many persons to learn that refusing blood and requesting alternative therapies may have medical advantages. This is so because there is increasing evidence of many and varied risks associated with transfusions.* Note, for example, a doctor's reply to a letter from a woman who, after open-heart surgery, developed hepatitis, a disease from which thousands die annually. Dr. Robert Mendelsohn, a newspaper medical columnist, said that he was not surprised, and added:

"In some major medical centers, [a] rather significant number of open-heart operations using blood substitutes have been performed with good results on Je-

* For details, see *Jehovah's Witnesses and the Question of Blood* (1977), pp. 41-49.

15. Why is one's declining transfusions not medically unreasonable?

hovah's Witness patients who reject human blood transfusions. . . . Perhaps all of us who need surgery that appears to require blood transfusions should ask our surgeons if they are familiar with these scientific reports. Perhaps this can give all of us the same lower incidence of post-transfusion hepatitis and other advantages now enjoyed exclusively by the Witnesses."—*The Idaho Statesman*, Feb. 15, 1978, p. 8C.

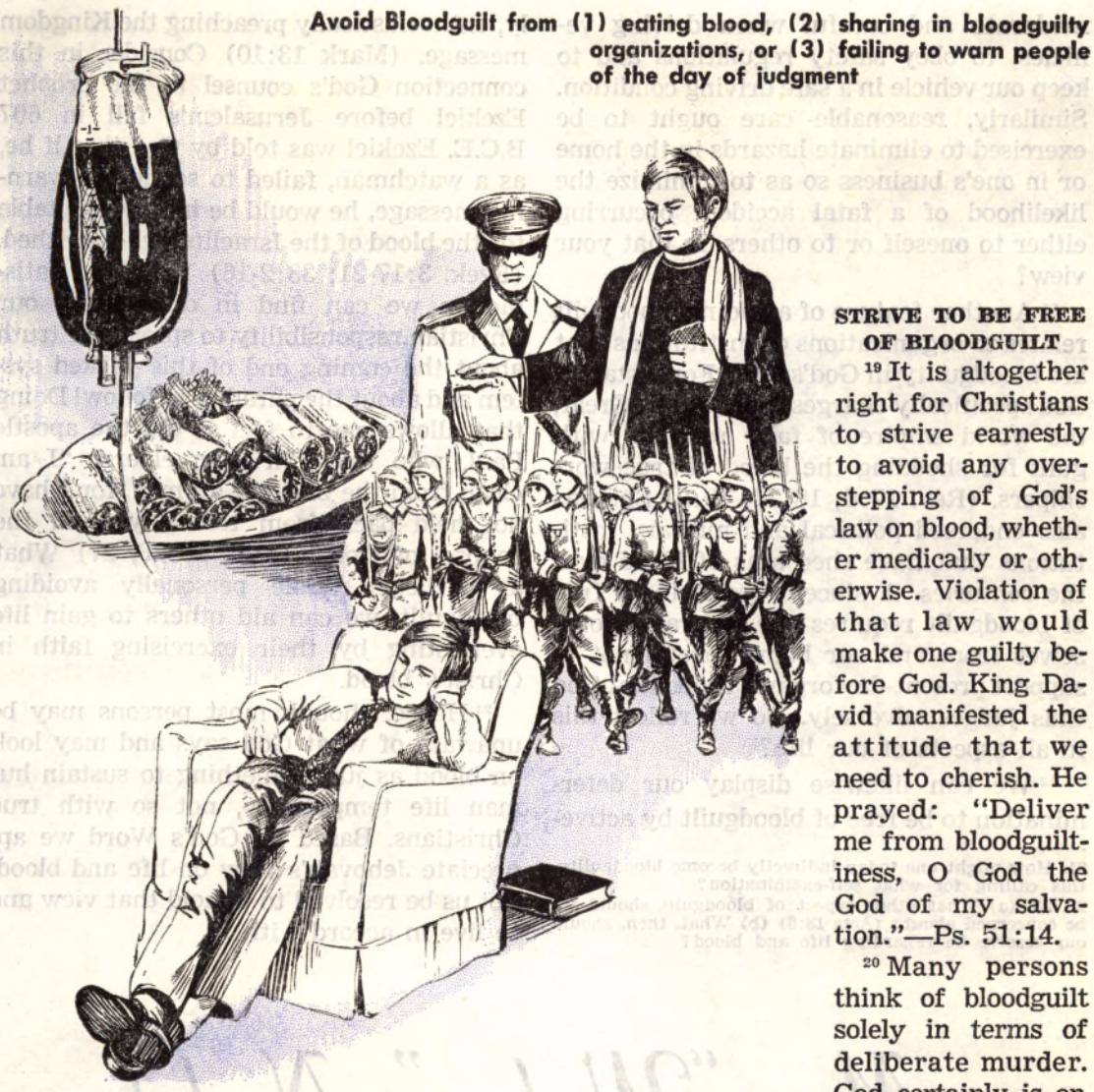
¹⁶ Open-heart surgery is just one of many operations that courageous doctors have found to be possible without blood. For example, recall the case brought up at the outset, the 52-year-old Witness needing abdominal surgery because of a bleeding ulcer. When her blood count fell to the critical low of 4, a federal judge authorized a transfusion. But her husband transferred her to another hospital whose policy was to respect the patient's wishes. What was the outcome? Newspaper headlines later announced: "Faith Triumphs for Couple Who Rejected Blood Transfusion." She recovered!

¹⁷ Many thoughtful doctors are also coming to appreciate the moral aspects of the matter, concluding that patients have the right to decide whether to accept a certain treatment. Dr. D. Goldstein wrote: "No matter how certain he is that the therapy he recommends is the only one that will preserve life, no physician has the moral right to over-ride a patient's religious scruple." Some doctors who had treated Witness children having cancer explained:

"Our decision to abide by their requests to limit our therapy by withholding the use of transfusions was based on two factors. First, each of these children had a potentially fatal disease, and we could not predict a successful outcome without significant doubt. Second, we acknowledged that at the time of life-threatening illness, the parents' need for an unshaken faith is magnified."—*Pediatrics*, Dec. 1977, p. 919.

16. What does experience show as to the performing of surgery without using blood?

17. What moral aspects of blood transfusions should be considered?



¹⁸ The faith that true Christians have, and in harmony with which they are firmly resolved to live, involves faith in the saving power of Christ's blood. (Rom. 3:25; Heb. 13:12; 1 John 5:5, 6) No other blood will ever be available from which they can gain everlasting life. (Heb. 10:29-31) So their everlasting destiny is tied up in their faithfulness to Jehovah. This includes their being obedient to what he says about blood.

¹⁸. How does faith come into the picture in connection with transfusions?

Avoid Bloodguilt from (1) eating blood, (2) sharing in bloodguilty organizations, or (3) failing to warn people of the day of judgment

STRIVE TO BE FREE OF BLOODGUILT

¹⁹ It is altogether right for Christians to strive earnestly to avoid any overstepping of God's law on blood, whether medically or otherwise. Violation of that law would make one guilty before God. King David manifested the attitude that we need to cherish. He prayed: "Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God the God of my salvation."—Ps. 51:14.

²⁰ Many persons think of bloodguilt solely in terms of deliberate murder. God certainly is on

record as hating such bloodshed. (Ps. 5:6; Prov. 6:16, 17) But the Scriptures show that because life is sacred a measure of bloodguilt could result even from causing someone's death unintentionally. (Deut. 22:8; Num. 35:15-33; Ex. 21:29) Do we personally evidence high regard for life and blood in our daily affairs? Such regard should, for example, move us to be

19. Christians should have what attitude toward bloodguilt? (Ps. 26:9; 55:23)

20. What are some ways in which bloodguilt could be incurred?

moderate and careful when driving vehicles, to obey safety regulations and to keep our vehicle in a safe driving condition. Similarly, reasonable care ought to be exercised to eliminate hazards in the home or in one's business so as to minimize the likelihood of a fatal accident occurring either to oneself or to others. Is that your view?

²¹ Another feature of avoiding bloodguilt relates to organizations or institutions that are bloodguilty in God's eyes. For instance, God specifically charges Babylon the Great, the world empire of false religion, with guilt for shedding the blood of true worshipers. (Rev. 17:6; 18:24; 19:2) She has also endorsed political and military institutions that have shed seas of blood over the centuries. A sincere desire to be free of bloodguilt requires our separating ourselves from and our being careful not to support present-day organizations that God thus judges adversely. Do we reflect this in all aspects of our life?

²² We can likewise display our determination to be free of bloodguilt by active-

21. How might one today indirectly become bloodguilty, this calling for what self-examination?

22, 23. (a) What other aspect of bloodguilt should we be concerned about? (Acts 18:6) (b) What, then, should our resolve be regarding life and blood?

ly, enthusiastically preaching the Kingdom message. (Mark 13:10) Consider in this connection God's counsel to the prophet Ezekiel before Jerusalem's fall in 607 B.C.E. Ezekiel was told by God that if he, as a watchman, failed to sound the warning message, he would be held accountable for the blood of the Israelites who perished. (Ezek. 3:17-21; 33:2-16) Yet, what satisfaction we can find in discharging our Christian responsibility to spread the truth about the coming end of this wicked system and about the paradise to follow! Doing that allows one to feel as did the apostle Paul, who told Christian elders: "I am clean from the blood of all men, for I have not held back from telling you all the counsel of God." (Acts 20:26, 27) What a privilege! While personally avoiding bloodguilt, we can aid others to gain life everlasting by their exercising faith in Christ's blood.

²³ Hence, though most persons may be unaware of what God says and may look on blood as just something to sustain human life temporarily, not so with true Christians. Based on God's Word we appreciate Jehovah's view on life and blood. Let us be resolved to uphold that view and to live in accord with it.

More "Workers" Needed —Can You Share?

JESUS initiated a work that has come to be so important that the future of mankind depends on its outcome. He likened himself to a 'sower of fine seed.' In contrast, he depicted the Devil as a sower of worthless "weeds." Both would continue to grow together till the "harvest"

at "the conclusion of the system of things," when the angelic "reapers" would joyfully gather the fruitage of the fine seed and burn the valueless "weeds."—Matt. 13:36-43.

Jesus instituted the preaching and disciple-making work. For three and a

half years, his time and energies were devoted exclusively to it. He trained disciples and sent them out to train still others. Starting from a small beginning, this work would ultimately reach "the most distant part of the earth." (Acts 1:8) Its climax would come just before "the end"—when the Kingdom message would have been "preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations." (Matt. 24:14) Everything confirms that we have reached the "conclusion of the system of things," thus putting us in the antitype of the time of "ingathering" that was climaxed by the feast of booths among the Jews. (Ex. 23:16) Accordingly, good and bad people, whom Jesus likened to "sheep" and "goats," are being separated for life or death.—Matt. 24:3-8; 25:31-46.

As far as the future of mankind is concerned, no work compares with this in urgency or importance. It will never be repeated. The time left to finish it is short. The fields are already "white for harvesting." (John 4:35) There is much to be done and unnecessary delay can be costly. There is a potential for a bountiful harvest but "the workers are few," prompting an urgent request to 'send out more workers' to assist.—Matt. 9:37, 38.

The auxiliary pioneer arrangement has proved to be a fine opportunity for many to give added assistance in getting this urgent work done. Is it possible for you to share?

EXERTING OURSELVES—A CAUSE FOR JOY

Anyone acquainted with life in a farming community knows that harvesttime is a time for hard work. When the crop is ripe, the harvest must begin. Any delay can result in serious loss. Everyone, including women and children, is asked to help. Other chores of less importance are temporarily set aside. Each day's work starts before the sun comes up and often extends late into the evening. To be sure,

the harvest is a time for work! Even so, it is also a time for great rejoicing when the fruitage is bountiful.—Isa. 9:3.

Similarly, the present "ingathering" calls for much extra work. The disciple-making activity cannot be postponed until a time more convenient. With lives at stake, unnecessary delay can have far-reaching consequences. A desire to make the best use of time prompts many to curtail or temporarily set aside less important pursuits. A wholehearted worker often finds that his day begins early and there is much to do before he is finally able to go to bed at night. Even the women and children are invited to help in some way. Indeed, the assignment given to the Christian congregation during this harvesttime involves work, lots of it! Yet, those working whole-souled are "filled with joy" in reaping a bountiful harvest of new disciples.—Acts 13:48, 52.

A GRATIFYING RESPONSE

Many of Jehovah's Witnesses are genuinely concerned about the need for "workers" and have continued to search for ways in which they could do more. It has not been easy. They have had to contend with ever-increasing demands caused by pressures on the family, economic instabilities and the unwholesome influences that surround them. Those who have increased their share in the work despite these obstacles are to be warmly commended. By doing that, they have proved their desire to remain "steadfast . . . always having plenty to do in the work of the Lord." (1 Cor. 15:58) It is now two years since adjustments were made so that individuals could enroll as auxiliary pioneers with a reduced requirement of only 60 hours a month in Kingdom service. The response has been most gratifying.

Many who previously were unable to enroll now find that they can do so. One housewife Witness writes: "I find . . . that

putting forth just a little more effort . . . I can give proper attention to the family, home and our Christian meetings." A congregation where several were enrolled reported: "Only two were not holding down full-time jobs. Some worked nights and pioneered days, some pioneered after work and on weekends . . . at least a few made special arrangements with their employers to get extra time off so as to accomplish their goal." A Witness with a family related that "my older daughter who is a junior in high school wanted to share . . . we found that a child could take four days off a month for religious service . . . she served with the auxiliary pioneers." One congregation was enthusiastic: "Seventy out of 133 in the congregation signed up as auxiliary pioneers!" So, it is obvious that many have been quick to take advantage of this field of opportunity.

DILIGENT EFFORT BRINGS FAR-REACHING BENEFITS

Those enrolling as pioneers have been rewarded with blessings that extend beyond simply an increase in their activity. One Witness described her enrollment as "the greatest spiritual joy I have had in years." Another wrote: "I have been able to find two more persons who want a Bible study." A group working together said that it "helped us to get acquainted with our new brothers and sisters." A housewife expressed her feelings this way: "It gives me joyful satisfaction, knowing that my service to Jehovah has increased and improved . . . I feel much closer to Jehovah." Another experience related how a Witness with health problems was not able to be a regular pioneer but "when the [auxiliary pioneer] hours were lowered to 60, I found I could continue month after month." A young Witness commented: "I found many fresh return visits. I was helped spiritually. The more you talk about and use the Bible, the more

you appreciate it." These heartfelt expressions confirm that many have experienced a personal joy that has been spiritually rewarding.

Moreover, the congregation has enjoyed similar benefits. One elder reported that it has been "very encouraging to the congregation and it has helped the spirituality as well as the meeting attendance." An elder who himself enrolled was very pleased: "Many have joined us . . . while others, not enrolled, still have raised their level of service remarkably." Another added: "Spirituality in the congregation is up." In one locality, the elders felt that there "was a sharpening of everyone's ability to use the Bible and find joy in it." One Witness said that "the spirit in and around the Kingdom Hall has changed for the better, which is greatly appreciated by all." Following his visit with a congregation, a traveling overseer reported that "nine auxiliary pioneers made the week very enjoyable and encouraging for all." Many similar expressions show that this arrangement has contributed greatly to the joy and spirituality of the congregation, in addition to stimulating more zealous and effective service.

CAN YOU SHARE?

Some may have been hesitant, feeling that they are not equal to the task. Or, they may have been doubtful about enjoying it. Some may have felt that they simply could not find the time for it. After reflecting on what others have done and the joys they have experienced, even these may feel inclined to take another look at their daily schedule. Perhaps it is not so difficult after all. Some minor adjustments here and there might allow for occasional enrollment.

It only takes an average of about two hours per day in Kingdom service to meet the requirements of the auxiliary pioneer. Some in secular jobs have occasionally

been able to reduce working hours or take advantage of periodic layoffs. Students in school have scheduled classes in order to be dismissed early in the day. Others have made good use of holidays and summer vacation. Many housewives have found that simply reorganizing their schedule and requesting the cooperation of the family have made it quite easy to share in auxiliary pioneer service from time to time.

Before making definite plans, it is well to talk with others who have pioneered, to get the benefit of their experience. Remember that the elders want to help. Many of these have a fine background of experience and would be glad to share this with others. At times, elders have arranged to take a day or two off from work just to make an opportunity for working personally with a group of auxiliary pioneers. Such wholesome association can result in mutual blessings for all.

In everything we do, it is always proper to go to Jehovah in prayer, asking for his help. We need physical strength and this he imparts to all who offer themselves willingly. (Isa. 40:29-31) We can ask him for wisdom to say and do the right thing, and for his spirit to sustain us.—Jas. 1:5; Luke 11:13.

We are privileged to be living in the spiritual harvesttime of this old system, and to take part in a work that is never to be repeated after this system ends. The requirements of the harvest may draw heavily on our time and energy, yet it rewards us with a surpassing joy. Genuine love for God and neighbor makes its finest expression through our sharing in the disciple-making work. (Matt. 22:37-39; 28:19) An effort to increase or improve that share through auxiliary pioneer service surely includes us among those who are "working hard and exerting ourselves," helping "all sorts of men" to be saved.—1 Tim. 4:10.

QUESTIONS from READERS

- A doctor said that prior to surgery a patient could have some blood withdrawn and stored, in the event that a transfusion is needed during surgery. How should a Christian view such use of his own blood?

From the standpoint of those in the medical field, this procedure may seem quite practical. There are grave dangers in accepting a transfusion of someone else's blood. *Seemingly* fewer risks are involved if a person is given a transfusion of his own blood. So there is a trend among doctors to use the procedure called "autologous transfusion." This involves drawing off the patient's own blood and "banking" or storing it for transfusion purposes when necessary. If not needed by the donor, the blood may be used for other patients.

As the information on pages 22-25 of this magazine shows, the transfusing of blood conflicts with the Bible.* The Scriptures reveal that God considers blood to be sacred, and his servants should treat it accordingly. In line with this, Jehovah God told the Israelites that they could do only two things with blood. First, God said: "I myself have put it upon the altar [of sacrifice] for you to make atonement for your souls." Secondly, if an animal's blood was not used on the altar, the Israelite was to pour it out on the ground; he thus acknowledged that life is from God and that the blood representing life was not being diverted for some personal use. (Lev. 17:11-14) But was this way of treating blood just for God's servants under the Mosaic law? On the contrary, logically, true worshipers, prior to the giving of the Law, already had been dealing with blood in this way.

God had earlier told Noah and his family that humans should not eat flesh with blood in it. (Gen. 9:3, 4) So what would have been done? When an animal was killed for food, its blood would normally have been drained off and disposed of on the ground. The life-

* For details see *Jehovah's Witnesses and the Question of Blood* (1977).

representing blood did not belong to Noah and his family but belonged to the Life-Giver. Accordingly, it would be appropriate to pour out the blood on the earth, which is God's symbolic "footstool."—Isa. 66:1.

The command to Noah also applies to Christians. In the first century C.E., the Christian governing body published the decision, backed by the holy spirit, that Christians must 'abstain from things strangled and from blood.' (Acts 15:19, 28, 29) What would that mean in practice? The expression "things strangled" designates the flesh of animals that were killed in a manner that left their blood in the meat. Christians could not eat such flesh. How about the phrase 'abstain from blood'? This would prohibit the using of blood drained from such a creature, as in the case of some pagans, who made and ate blood sausage or other blood-containing foods or who drank blood that came from animals or warriors killed in the arena. Christians would not do any of these things. When they drained blood from a creature, they would do what God's servants in the past had done, abstain from it. They could thus underscore their appreciation for the sacredness of blood and life and also demonstrate their dependence on the merit of Christ's blood.

So, if medical personnel suggest that a Christian permit some of his blood to be withdrawn and deposited in a blood bank for later transfusion purposes, the Christian is not without guidance from the Bible as to the proper course. He can mention that ancient Israelites were told that removed blood was to be 'poured out on the ground as water,' to show that it was for God and not to sustain the life of some earthly creature. (Deut. 12:24) And he can refer to the pointed command that Christians 'abstain from blood.' In view of this, how could he allow his blood to be collected in a blood bank for later transfusion into himself or another person?

● What about a device such as a heart-lung pump or a dialysis (artificial kidney) machine? Might a Christian use such?

There are Christian witnesses of Jehovah who, with a good conscience, have allowed these devices to be used, provided that the machines were primed with a nonblood fluid, such as Ringer's lactate solution.

When this sort of device is operating, the patient's blood flows from a blood vessel through tubing and the machine (where it is

pumped, oxygenated and/or filtered) and then flows back into his circulatory system. The machine temporarily performs some of the functions normally handled by the patient's own organs.

Some Christians have conscientiously reasoned that the blood is flowing continuously and that the external circuit might be viewed as an extension of the circulatory system. They have considered it comparable to a piece of tubing that might be implanted in the body to shunt blood around a blockage in a vessel.

Of course, each Christian should weigh what is involved in the use of these and similar devices. He could consider whether he views the blood involved to be blood that clearly has left his body and so should be disposed of or as blood that, basically, is still part of his circulatory system. (Deut. 12:16) Then he can make a decision that will leave him with a clear conscience before God.—1 Pet. 3:16.

● Would it be wrong to submit to a blood test?

Based on their knowledge of the Scriptures, most of Jehovah's Witnesses, if not all, do not object to such tests. The small quantity of blood removed from the body is not eaten or injected into someone else. It is merely examined or tested before being disposed of.—Deut. 15:23.

● Are serum injections compatible with Christian belief?

In our issue of June 1, 1974, we presented in this column a detailed consideration of the use of vaccines (which do not contain blood) and of serums that are made from blood. For such details, please see that presentation on pages 351, 352.

It acknowledged that the medical profession is increasingly turning from the use of whole blood transfusions. Instead, human blood is being separated into primary components that can be transfused—red cells, white cells, platelets and plasma. On this we said: "We believe that the use of blood as a [life-sustaining] transfusion, or the use of a blood component to accomplish a similar purpose, is obviously in conflict with the Scriptural command to 'abstain . . . from blood.' (Acts 15:20)"

What, however, about accepting serum injections to fight against disease, such as are employed for diphtheria, tetanus, viral hepatitis, rabies, hemophilia and Rh incompatibility?

This seems to fall into a 'gray area.' Some Christians believe that accepting a small amount of a blood derivative for such a purpose would not be a manifestation of disrespect for God's law; their conscience would permit such. (Compare Luke 6:1-5.) Others, though, feel conscientiously obliged to refuse serums because these contain blood, though only a tiny amount. Hence, we have taken the position that this question must be resolved by each individual on a personal basis. We urge each one to strive to have a clear conscience and to be responsive to God's guidance found in His Word.—Ps. 119:105.

● How concerned should a Christian be about blood in food products?

God said to Noah, and thus to the whole human family: "Every moving animal that is alive may serve as food for you.... Only flesh with its soul—its blood—you must not eat." (Gen. 9:3, 4) Thus, true worshipers should want to avoid eating meat with blood left in it or other foods to which blood has been added.

This may call for a degree of care. For example, in some lands animals usually are strangled, or killed in some other way that leaves the blood in them. Where this is the local practice, Christians usually buy only from merchants, butchers or farmers who are known to sell meat from animals that have been bled properly.

However, federal regulations on the slaughtering of animals in many countries, as for example, in the United States, require that animals be properly bled. Hence, Christians in these areas have little need for concern. They may freely eat meat that is sold in markets or that which is served in restaurants. (Compare 1 Corinthians 10:25, 26, where the reference is to meat that had been offered to idols: "Everything that is sold in a meat market keep eating, making no inquiry on account of your conscience; for 'to Jehovah belong the earth and that which fills it.'") However, there may be a need to make inquiry about meat from animals killed locally, such as meat from "wild" animals, whether obtained from a hunter, a butcher shop or a restaurant.

But what about food products that may contain blood or some blood component, such as plasma protein?

Some governments require that producers list the ingredients on the label of processed food. Christians who have checked labels over a period of time may have noted that in their area blood is practically never used in foods. Hence, they may rightly have limited their reading of labels only to such times when there is some reason to believe that blood might have been added to an item.

However, recently the Federal Republic of Germany passed a law allowing meat companies to use, without listing it on a label, up to 2 percent (or, in some cases, 10 percent) dried blood plasma in "wieners, frankfurters and similar products including pâté and roulade . . . meatballs, meat stuffings, fricassee, ragout, meat in lard, . . ." What is the conscientious Christian to do in such cases?

He could make inquiry of the butcher or the producer. It is reported that in response to such inquiries, some producers in one Scandinavian land readily gave assurance that blood is not an ingredient in their processed meats; they do not want to lose business. But, in some places, Witnesses who inquired of butchers or meat producers were given vague or questionable replies. It may be noted that, even if the law permits companies to add some blood without stating it, this does not necessarily mean that all or even most of them do so.

Therefore, Christians, individually, must decide what to do. The consciences of some may move them to avoid anything about which they have serious questions or to make such inquiry as is needed to settle their consciences. (Rom. 14:23) In instances where it does not seem possible to get absolute information through reasonable inquiry, other Christians may conclude: 'Where there is no substantial reason for me to think that blood is present or there is no definite way that I can determine it, I can with a clear conscience "keep eating."' They should, however, consider the conscientious feelings of others, even as Paul counseled.—1 Cor. 10:28-30; Rom. 14:13-21.

True Christians ought not to be indifferent about blood. They should do what they can to avoid a clear violation of God's law. A deep respect for that law is of central importance. By doing all that they reasonably can to "keep themselves . . . from blood," God's people manifest appreciation for the sanctity of life and of the blood representing it.—Acts 21:25.

An Appreciative Doctor

WHEN we called on Dr. M., we explained that we were Jehovah's Witnesses and that we had something we wanted to give him. He was very good-natured and invited us in immediately, all the while joking with us, saying: "It's a \$15.00 office visit once you come in!" We gave him the booklet *Jehovah's Witnesses and the Question of Blood* and explained that a copy was being given to every doctor, nurse and lawyer so that they would be more familiar with the feelings of the Witnesses and why we do not accept blood.

The doctor said that, even though he had served in the M.A.S.H. unit in Korea and had given blood to many people, he believed that each person should be able to make his own decision about what is done to his body. He also agreed with the point of treating the "whole man," since forcing blood on someone could lead to psychological problems.

After discussing John 17:3, I offered the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* subscriptions to him, to which he responded more than ready to move it to the next page. He said, "I will subscribe to both of these magazines."

He said, "I am with a local congregation, however, consider the consequences of giving blood to others, even as I first con-

sidered—1 Cor. 10:28-30; Rom. 14:13-15." Dr. M. concluded our visit by saying, "A good doctor is one who can help his patients without causing them pain."

explaining that they would help him to learn more about the Bible and how God would relieve mankind of these problems. He obtained both subscriptions, saying: "I feel these are a good investment."

He related why he had fond feelings for Jehovah's Witnesses. Once he was stranded on the Pennsylvania Turnpike and another car came to his assistance. The people, not only helped him get his car to a gas station, but remained there with him until his car was repaired and they were sure he could get on his way. Before leaving, they left him copies of the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines. Thus he learned that they were Jehovah's Witnesses. He remarked several times how extremely kind they had been to him in going well out of their way to help.—Contributed.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

- July 23: Appreciating the Sacredness of Life and Blood. Page 16. Songs to Be Used: 82, 18.
July 30: Firmly Resolved About Life and Blood. Page 21. Songs to Be Used: 24, 95.