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THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



Why Care About Spiritual Things?



THE WATCHTOWER®

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

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

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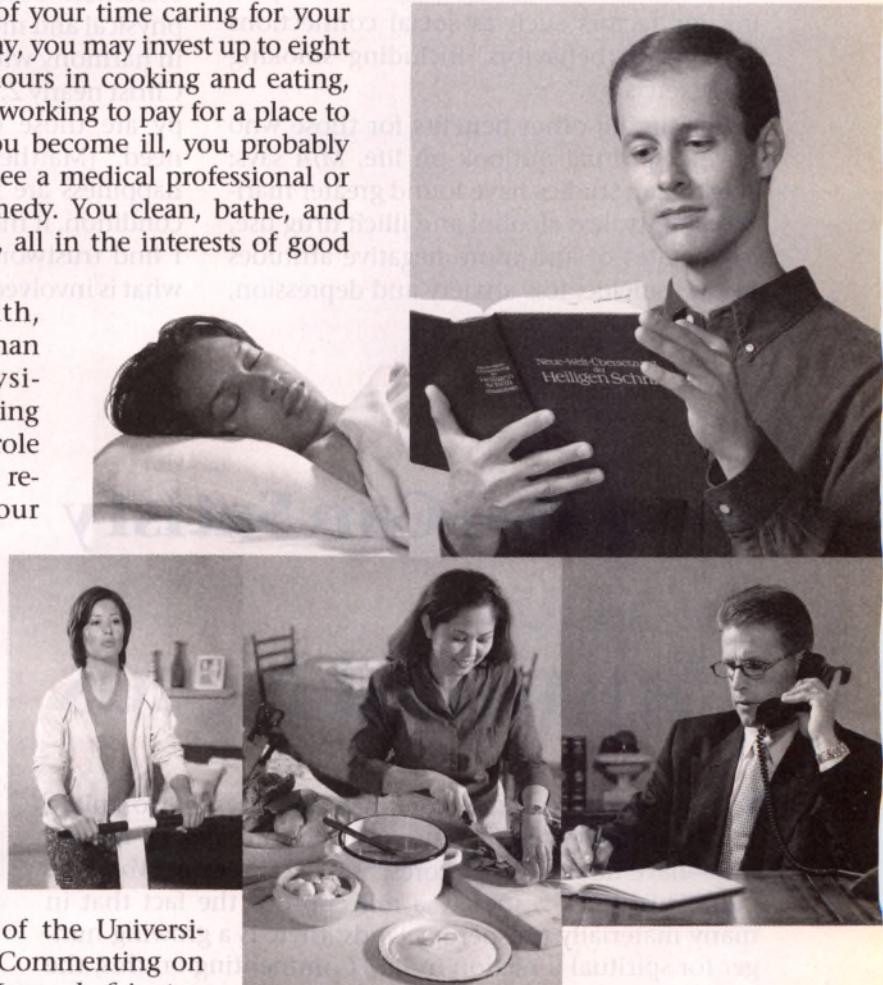
Spirituality and Your Well-Being

YOU likely spend much of your time caring for your physical health. Each day, you may invest up to eight hours in sleeping, several hours in cooking and eating, and eight hours or more in working to pay for a place to sleep and food to eat. If you become ill, you probably spend time and money to see a medical professional or to prepare a traditional remedy. You clean, bathe, and may even exercise regularly, all in the interests of good health.

Maintaining good health, however, involves more than just caring for your physical needs. There is something else that plays a powerful role in your well-being. Medical research has shown that your physical health is closely linked with your spiritual health—your spirituality or the lack of it.

A Positive Link

"Most original research articles on the topic have found positive associations between increased spirituality and better health outcomes," says Professor Hedley G. Peach of the University of Melbourne, Australia. Commenting on these findings, *The Medical Journal of Australia (MJA)* states: "Religiosity has also been associated with . . . lower blood pressure, lower cholesterol . . . and even lower risk for colon cancer."



Similarly, in the United States, a 2002 study of 6,545 people conducted by University of California (UC), Berkeley, found that "people who attended religious services once a week had significantly lower risks of death compared with those who attended less frequently or never." Doug Oman, lead author of the study and a lecturer at UC Berkeley's School of Public Health, said: "We found this difference even after adjusting for factors such as social connections and health behaviors, including smoking and exercising."

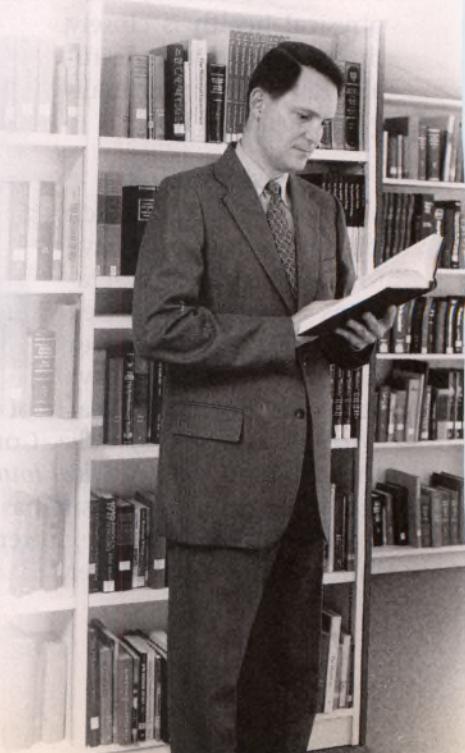
Identifying other benefits for those who have a spiritual outlook on life, MJA says: "Australian studies have found greater marital stability, less alcohol and illicit drug use, lower rates of and more negative attitudes toward suicide, less anxiety and depression,

and greater altruism among the religious." In addition, *BMJ (The British Medical Journal)* reports: "People who profess stronger spiritual beliefs seem to resolve their grief more rapidly and completely after the death of a close person than do people with no spiritual beliefs."

There are various thoughts about what genuine spirituality is. Yet, your spiritual condition does have an impact on your physical and mental health. This evidence is in harmony with a statement made by Jesus Christ nearly 2,000 years ago. He said: "Happy are those conscious of their spiritual need." (Matthew 5:3) Since your health and happiness are influenced by your spiritual condition, it makes sense to ask: 'Where can I find trustworthy spiritual guidance? And what is involved in being a spiritual person?'

How You Can Satisfy Your Spiritual Needs

"IN THE past decade, more than 300 titles on workplace spirituality—from *Jesus CEO* to *The Tao of Leadership*—have flooded bookstores," says *U.S. News & World Report*. This trend is merely a reflection of the fact that in many materially prosperous lands, there is a growing hunger for spiritual direction in life. Commenting on this, the business journal *Training & Development* observes: "At a time when technology will drive every other aspect of our lives, we are searching for deeper meaning, for purpose, and for greater personal satisfaction."



Where, though, can you find satisfying spiritual guidance? In the past, people looked to established religion to help them find "deeper meaning" and "purpose" in life. Today, many have turned their backs on organized religion. A survey of 90 high-level managers and executives found that "people differentiate strongly between religion and spirituality," states *Training & Development*. The survey respondents viewed religion as "intolerant and divisive," whereas spirituality was seen as "universal and broadly inclusive."

Many young people in the more secular societies, such as Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and Europe, likewise see a distinction between religion and spirituality. Professor Ruth Webber, writing in *Youth Studies Australia*, asserts: "A majority of young people believe in God, or some kind of supernatural force but do not see the church as important or helpful in expressing their spirituality."

True Religion Promotes Spirituality

This skeptical view of religion is understandable. Many religious organizations are mired in political intrigue and moral hypocrisy and are drenched in innocent blood from countless religious wars. However, while rejecting the religious organizations that are sullied by hypocrisy and deception, some have made the mistake of also rejecting the Bible, which they think condones such practices.

In reality, the Bible condemns hypocrisy and lawlessness. Jesus said to the religious leaders of his day: "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because you resemble whitewashed graves, which outwardly indeed appear beautiful but inside are full of dead men's bones and of every sort of uncleanness. In that way you also, outwardly indeed, appear righteous to men, but inside

you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness." —Matthew 23:27, 28.

Moreover, the Bible encourages Christians to be neutral in all political affairs. Rather than urging believers to kill one another, it directs that they should be willing to die for one another. (John 15:12, 13; 18:36; 1 John 3:10-12) Instead of being "intolerant and divisive," true religion, based on the Bible, is "broadly inclusive." The apostle Peter said: "God is not partial, but in every nation the man that fears him and works righteousness is acceptable to him."—Acts 10:34, 35.

The Bible

—A Reliable Guide to Spiritual Health

The Bible tells us that humans are created in God's image. (Genesis 1:26, 27) While this does not mean that humans resemble God in a physical way, it does mean that humans have the ability to reflect God's personality traits, including the capacity for spiritual things, or spirituality.

That being the case, it is logical to believe that God would also provide us with the means to satisfy our spiritual needs, as well as proper direction by which we can distinguish between what is beneficial and what is harmful to us spiritually. Just as God created our bodies with a superbly designed immune system, which fights disease and helps keep us healthy, he also equipped us with a conscience, or inner voice, which can help us make right decisions and avoid practices that are harmful physically and spiritually. (Romans 2:14, 15) As we know, for our immune system to work, it must be nourished properly. Similarly, for our conscience to work, we need to feed it with good spiritual food.

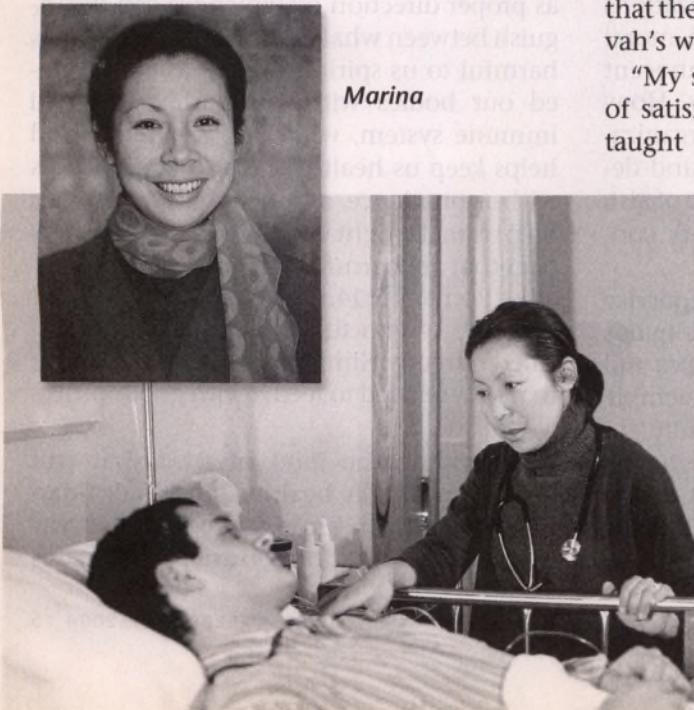
Identifying the kind of food that will keep us spiritually healthy, Jesus said: "Man must live, not on bread alone, but on every utterance coming forth through Jehovah's

mouth." (Matthew 4:4) Jehovah's utterances are recorded in his Word, the Bible, and they are "beneficial for teaching, for reproofing, for setting things straight." (2 Timothy 3:16) It is, therefore, up to us to put forth the effort to take in that spiritual nourishment. To the extent that we come to know the Bible and endeavor to apply its principles in our life, to that extent we will benefit spiritually and physically.—Isaiah 48:17, 18.

Is It Worth the Effort?

Granted, it takes time to improve our spiritual health by studying the Bible; and time, it seems, is an increasingly rare commodity. But the rewards are worth the effort! Listen to some busy professional people explain why taking time to care for their spiritual health is important to them.

Marina, a medical doctor, says: "I never really thought about my spirituality until I started working in a hospital and began to feel deeply the suffering of others. I then realized that I had to acknowledge and satisfy



Marina

my spiritual need if I was to gain contentment and tranquillity, since the pace of life and the demand of caring for people's concerns can become overwhelming for someone in my profession.

"I now study the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses. This study helps me examine my actions and motives in a constructive way and trains my thought processes to be more positive, so that I can keep my life in perspective. I do find great satisfaction in my secular career. But it is my Bible study that has improved my emotional health, helping me to control negative feelings, reduce tension, and be more patient and compassionate with people. Applying Bible principles has also benefited my marriage. Most important, I have come to know Jehovah and to experience, in a small measure, the free flow of his spirit, which has given my life greater meaning."

Nicholas, an architectural designer, says: "Before studying the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses, I had no spiritual interests. My sole aim in life was to succeed in my chosen profession. My Bible study has taught me that there is more to life and that doing Jehovah's will brings true and lasting happiness.

"My secular career does bring me a sense of satisfaction, but it is the Bible that has taught me the importance of keeping life simple by focusing on spiritual things. By doing so, my wife and I have avoided much of the stress that comes from a materialistic life-style. We have also made many real friends through our association with those who have a similar spiritual outlook on life."

Vincent, a lawyer, says: "A good secular career can provide a measure of satisfaction. However, I have found that much more is needed to gain happiness and

contentment. Before becoming aware of the Bible's teaching on the subject, I recall being struck by the sheer pointlessness of life—being born, growing up, getting married, working at a job to provide what is needed materially to raise one's children, training them to follow the exact same life cycle, and finally getting old and dying.

"It was only after studying the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses that I received satisfying answers to my questions about the purpose of life. My Bible study has enabled me to come to know Jehovah as a person and to develop a deep love for him. This provides the basis for me to maintain a healthy spiritual outlook as I endeavor to live my life in harmony with what I know to be his purpose. Now, both my wife and I have the satisfaction of knowing that we are using our life in the most meaningful way possible."

Some clarity is beginning to dawn on me, but like everyone else, I'm learning as I go along.

Nicholas



Vincent



You too can gain a sense of purpose and meaning in life by studying the Bible. Jehovah's Witnesses are happy to help you. Like Marina, Nicholas, and Vincent, you can gain the satisfaction that comes from learning about Jehovah and his purposes for mankind in general and for you as an individual. Not only will you have the joy of fulfilling your spiritual needs now but you will also gain the prospect of enjoying endless life in perfect physical health—a prospect open only to those "conscious of their spiritual need."—Matthew 5:3.

One way to develop our spirituality is through prayer. Jesus took the time to teach his disciples how to pray, giving them what is commonly called the Lord's Prayer. What meaning does that prayer have for you today? How can you benefit from it? You will find the answers in the next two articles.

"LORD, TEACH US HOW TO PRAY"

"A certain one of his disciples said to him: 'Lord, teach us how to pray.'"—LUKE 11:1.

ON ONE occasion in 32 C.E., a disciple of Jesus observed Him praying. He could not hear what Jesus was saying to his Father, for it was probably a silent prayer. Nevertheless, when Jesus finished, the disciple said to him: "Lord, teach us how to pray." (Luke 11:1) What prompted this request? Prayer was a regular part of Jewish life and worship. The Hebrew Scriptures contain numerous prayers in the book of Psalms and elsewhere. So the disciple was not asking to be taught something that he knew nothing about or that he had never done. Doubtless, he was familiar with the formalistic prayers of the religious leaders of Judaism. But now he had observed Jesus praying, and he likely sensed that there was a big difference between the sanctimonious prayers of the rabbis and the way Jesus prayed.—Matthew 6:5-8.

² Some 18 months earlier, in his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus had provided his disciples with a model upon which to base their prayers. (Matthew 6:9-13) Possibly this particular disciple was not present at that time, so Jesus kindly repeated the essential points of that model prayer. Noticeable is



the fact that he did not repeat it word for word, indicating that he was not giving a liturgical prayer to be recited by rote. (Luke 11:1-4) Like that unnamed disciple, we too want to be taught how to pray so that our prayers will draw us closer to Jehovah. Let us therefore examine the fuller version of the model prayer, as recorded by the apostle Matthew. It consists of seven requests, of which three concern God's purposes and four concern our material and spiritual needs. In this article, we will consider the first three petitions.

A Loving Father

³ From the outset, Jesus showed that our prayers should reflect an intimate yet respectful relationship with Jehovah. Speaking principally for the benefit of his disciples who had gathered close to him on that mountainside, Jesus told them to address Jehovah as "our Father in the heavens." (Matthew 6:9) According to one scholar, whether Jesus spoke in a popular form of Hebrew or in Aramaic, the term he used for "Father" is akin to the intimate expressions of an infant, 'a child's word.' Addressing Jehovah as "our Father" denotes a warm, trusting relationship.

3, 4. What is implied by our addressing Jehovah as "our Father"?

1. Why did one of Jesus' disciples ask Jesus to teach them how to pray?
2. (a) What indicates that Jesus did not mean for us to repeat the model prayer word for word?
(b) Why are we interested in knowing how to pray?

Jesus' prayers differed greatly from the sanctimonious prayers of the Pharisees

⁴ By saying “*our Father*,” we also acknowledge that we are part of a large family of men and women who recognize Jehovah as the Life-Giver. (Isaiah 64:8; Acts 17:24, 28) Spirit-begotten Christians are adopted as “God’s sons,” and to him they can “cry out: ‘*Abba, Father!*’” (Romans 8:14, 15) Millions have become their loyal companions. These have dedicated their lives to Jehovah and symbolized their dedication by water baptism. All these “other sheep” can also approach Jehovah in the name of Jesus and call Him “*our Father*.” (John 10:16; 14:6) We can regularly go to our heavenly Father in prayer to praise him, to thank him for all his expressions of goodness toward us, and to take our burdens to him, confident that he cares for us.—Philippians 4:6, 7; 1 Peter 5:6, 7.

Love for Jehovah’s Name

⁵ The opening petition immediately puts first things first. It states: “Let your name be sanctified.” (Matthew 6:9) Yes, the sanctification of Jehovah’s name should be of primary concern to us because we love him and hate to see all the reproach that has been heaped upon his name. Satan’s rebellion and his inducing the first human couple to disobey Jehovah God slandered His name by calling into question the way God was exercising his universal sovereignty. (Genesis 3:1-6) Furthermore, through the centuries, Jehovah’s name has been reproached by the shameful acts and teachings of those claiming to represent him.

⁶ Our prayer for the sanctification of Jehovah’s name shows where we stand on the issue of universal sovereignty—squarely be-

5. What is the opening petition of the model prayer, and why is this appropriate?

6. What will we not do if we pray for Jehovah’s name to be sanctified?



hind Jehovah’s right to govern the universe. Jehovah wants the universe to be inhabited by intelligent creatures who willingly and joyfully submit to his righteous sovereignty because they love him and love all that his name represents. (1 Chronicles 29:10-13; Psalm 8:1; 148:13) Our love for Jehovah’s name will help us to refrain from doing anything that might bring reproach upon that holy name. (Ezekiel 36:20, 21; Romans 2:21-24) Since the peace of the universe and its inhabitants depends on the sanctification of Jehovah’s name and loving submission to his sovereignty, our prayer “let your name be sanctified” is an expression of our confidence that Jehovah’s purpose will be fulfilled to his praise.—Ezekiel 38:23.

The Kingdom for Which We Pray

⁷ The second petition in the model prayer is: “Let your kingdom come.” (Matthew 6:10)

7, 8. (a) What is the Kingdom for which Jesus taught us to pray? (b) What do we learn about this Kingdom in the books of Daniel and Revelation?

Christians pray for God's Kingdom to come, his name to be sanctified, and his will to be done

This request is closely related to the preceding one. Jehovah's instrument for sanctifying his holy name is the Messianic Kingdom, his heavenly government, of which his Son, Jesus Christ, is the duly appointed King. (Psalm 2:1-9) The prophecy of Daniel depicts the Messianic Kingdom as "a stone" cut out of a "mountain." (Daniel 2:34, 35, 44, 45) The mountain represents Jehovah's universal sovereignty, so the Kingdom stone is a new expression of Jehovah's universal rulership. In the prophecy, the stone, in turn, 'becomes a large mountain and fills the whole earth,' indicating that the Messianic Kingdom will represent divine sovereignty in ruling the earth.

⁸ Associated with Christ in this Kingdom government are 144,000 others, "bought from among mankind" to rule with him as kings and priests. (Revelation 5:9, 10; 14:1-4; 20:6) Daniel refers to these as "the holy ones of the Supreme One," who, together with Christ their Head, receive "the kingdom and the rulership and the grandeur of the kingdoms under all the heavens . . . Their kingdom is an indefinitely lasting kingdom, and all the rulerships will serve and obey even them." (Daniel 7:13, 14, 18, 27) Such is the heavenly government for which Christ taught his followers to pray.

Why Still Pray for the Kingdom to Come?

⁹ In his model prayer, Christ taught us to pray for the coming of God's Kingdom. The fulfillment of Bible prophecy indicates that the Messianic Kingdom was established in heaven in 1914.* Is it, therefore, still appro-

* See chapter 6 of the book *Pay Attention to Daniel's Prophecy!*, published by Jehovah's Witnesses.

9. Why is it appropriate for us to pray for God's Kingdom to come?



priate for us to pray for that Kingdom to "come"? Certainly. For in Daniel's prophecy, the Messianic Kingdom, symbolized by a stone, is on a collision course with human political governments, symbolized by an immense image. The stone will yet come against that image, striking it a blow that will reduce it to powder. Daniel's prophecy says: "The kingdom itself will not be passed on to any other people. It will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, and it itself will stand to times indefinite."—Daniel 2:44.

¹⁰ We long to see God's Kingdom come against Satan's wicked system of things because this will mean the sanctification of Jehovah's holy name and the removal of all opposers of divine sovereignty. We fervently pray: "Let your kingdom come," and with the apostle John, we say: "Amen! Come, Lord Jesus." (Revelation 22:20) Yes, may Jesus come to sanctify Jehovah's name and vindicate His sovereignty, so that the psalmist's words may come true: "That people may know that you, whose name is Jehovah, you alone are the Most High over all the earth."—Psalm 83:18.

10. Why do we long for the coming of God's Kingdom?

"Let Your Will Take Place"

¹¹ Jesus next taught his disciples to pray: "Let your will take place, as in heaven, also upon earth." (Matthew 6:10) The universe came into existence because of Jehovah's will. Powerful heavenly creatures cry out: "You are worthy, Jehovah, even our God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power, because you created all things, and because of your will they existed and were created." (Revelation 4:11) Jehovah has a purpose for "the things in the heavens and the things on the earth." (Ephesians 1:8-10) By praying that God's will take place, we are, in fact, asking Jehovah to carry out his purpose. Furthermore, we thus show that we long to see the divine will done throughout the universe.

¹² By this prayer we also manifest our willingness to conform our lives to Jehovah's will. Jesus stated: "My food is for me to do the will of him that sent me and to finish his work." (John 4:34) Like Jesus, as dedicated Christians, we take delight in doing God's will. Our love for Jehovah and for his Son moves us to live our lives "no more for the desires of men, but for God's will." (1 Peter 4:1, 2; 2 Corinthians 5:14, 15) We strive to avoid doing things that we know are contrary to Jehovah's will. (1 Thessalonians 4:3-5) By buying out time for Bible reading and study, we "go on perceiving what the will of Jehovah is," which includes our having an active share in preaching "this good news of the kingdom."—Ephesians 5:15-17; Matthew 24:14.

Jehovah's Will in Heaven

¹³ Jehovah's will was being accomplished in the heavens long before one of his spirit

11, 12. (a) What are we asking for when we pray for God's will to "take place, as in heaven, also upon earth"? (b) What else is signified by our prayer for Jehovah's will to be done?

13. How was God's will being done long before Satan's rebellion took place?

sons rebelled and became Satan. The book of Proverbs portrays God's firstborn Son as wisdom personified. It shows that over untold aeons of time, God's only-begotten Son was "glad before him all the time," happy to do his Father's will. Eventually, he became Jehovah's "master worker" in the creation of all things "in the heavens and upon the earth, the things visible and the things invisible." (Proverbs 8:22-31; Colossians 1:15-17) Jehovah used Jesus as his Word, or Spokesman.—John 1:1-3.

¹⁴ The psalmist shows that Jehovah's sovereignty is above all and that the angelic hosts listen to his words of instruction and to his commands. We read: "Jehovah himself has firmly established his throne in the very heavens; and over everything his own kingship has held domination. Bless Jehovah, O you angels of his, mighty in power, carrying out his word, by listening to the voice of his word. Bless Jehovah, all you armies of his, you ministers of his, doing his will. Bless Jehovah, all you his works, in all places of his domination [or, "sovereignty," footnote]."—Psalm 103:19-22.

¹⁵ After his rebellion, Satan still had access to the heavenly courts, as indicated in the book of Job. (Job 1:6-12; 2:1-7) However, the book of Revelation prophesied that the time would come when Satan and his demons would be evicted from heaven. That time apparently came shortly after Jesus Christ received Kingdom power in 1914. Since then, no longer is there any place for those rebels in heaven. They are confined to the vicinity of the earth. (Revelation 12:7-12) No voice of dispute is to be heard anymore in heaven,

14. What can we learn from Psalm 103 about how the angels accomplish Jehovah's will in the heavens?

15. How did Jesus' receiving Kingdom power affect the doing of God's will in heaven?

only voices joined in acclaim to “the Lamb,” Christ Jesus, and in submissive praise to Jehovah. (Revelation 4:9-11) Jehovah’s will is indeed being accomplished in heaven.

Jehovah’s Will for the Earth

¹⁶ The churches of Christendom exclude the earth from God’s purposes, claiming that all good people go to heaven. But Jesus taught us to pray: “Let your kingdom come. Let your will take place, as in heaven, also upon earth.” (Matthew 6:10) Can it be said, by any stretch of the imagination, that overall Jehovah’s will is being accomplished today on an earth plagued by violence, injustice, sickness, and death? By no means! We should therefore earnestly pray for God’s will to be done on earth, in line with the promise recorded by the apostle Peter: “There are new heavens [the Messianic Kingdom government by Christ] and a new earth [a righteous human society] that we are awaiting according to his promise, and in these righteousness is to dwell.”—2 Peter 3:13.

¹⁷ Jehovah had a purpose in creating the earth. He inspired the prophet Isaiah to

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16. How does the model prayer disprove Christendom’s teaching concerning mankind’s hope?
 17. What is Jehovah’s purpose for the earth?

By Way of Review

- Why is it appropriate for us to address Jehovah as “our Father”?
- Why is it of primary importance for us to pray for the sanctification of Jehovah’s name?
- Why do we pray for God’s Kingdom to come?
- What is implied when we pray for God’s will to take place on earth as in heaven?

write: “This is what Jehovah has said, the Creator of the heavens, He the true God, the Former of the earth and the Maker of it, He the One who firmly established it, who did not create it simply for nothing, who formed it even to be inhabited: ‘I am Jehovah, and there is no one else.’” (Isaiah 45:18) God placed the first human couple in a paradise garden and instructed them: “Be fruitful and become many and fill the earth and subdue it.” (Genesis 1:27, 28; 2:15) Quite clearly, the Creator’s purpose is that the earth be inhabited by a perfect race of righteous humans who happily submit to Jehovah’s sovereignty and live forever in the Paradise promised by Christ.—Psalm 37:11, 29; Luke 23:43.

¹⁸ Jehovah’s will regarding the earth can never be fully accomplished while the earth is peopled with men and women who defy his sovereignty. Using mighty spirit forces under Christ’s leadership, God will “bring to ruin those ruining the earth.” Satan’s entire wicked system of things, with its false religion, corrupt politics, greedy and dishonest commerce, and destructive military, will be wiped out forever. (Revelation 11:18; 18:21; 19:1, 2, 11-18) Jehovah’s sovereignty will be vindicated and his name sanctified. All this we pray for when we say: “Our Father in the heavens, let your name be sanctified. Let your kingdom come. Let your will take place, as in heaven, also upon earth.”—Matthew 6:9, 10.

¹⁹ In his model prayer, however, Jesus showed that we can pray about personal matters too. These aspects of his instruction on prayer will be examined in the following article.

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- 18, 19. (a) What must be done before God’s will fully takes place on the earth? (b) What other aspects of Jesus’ model prayer will be examined in the following article?

JEHOVAH PROVIDES OUR DAILY NEEDS

"Quit being in anxious suspense; for . . . your Father knows you need these things." —LUKE 12:29, 30.

HAVE you ever watched a sparrow or some other bird peck around in what appears to be mere dirt? You probably wondered what it could find to eat by pecking at the ground. In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus showed that we can draw a lesson from the way Jehovah provides for the birds. He stated: "Observe intently the birds of heaven, because they do not sow seed or reap or gather into storehouses; still your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth more than they are?" (Matthew 6:26) In marvelous ways, Jehovah provides food for all his creatures. —Psalm 104:14, 21; 147:9.

² Why, then, did Jesus include in his model prayer the request: "Give us today our bread for this day"? (Matthew 6:11) Deep spiritual lessons can be drawn from this simple request. First, it reminds us that Jehovah is the Great Provider. (Psalm 145:15, 16) Humans can plant and cultivate, but only God can make things grow, spiritually and physically. (1 Corinthians 3:7) What we eat and drink is a gift from God. (Acts 14:17) Asking him to supply us with our daily needs shows him that we do not take such provisions for granted. Of course, such a request does not relieve us of the responsibility to work if we



are able to do so.—Ephesians 4:28; 2 Thessalonians 3:10.

³ Second, our asking for "bread for this day" indicates that we should not be excessively anxious about the future.

Jesus further stated: "Never be anxious and say, 'What are we to eat?'

or, 'What are we to drink?' or, 'What are we to put on?' For all these are the things the nations are eagerly pursuing. For your heavenly Father knows you need all these things. Keep on, then, seeking first the kingdom and his righteousness, and all these other things will be added to you. So, never be anxious about the next day, for the next day will have its own anxieties." (Matthew 6:31-34) The prayer for "bread for this day" sets the pattern for leading simple lives of "godly devotion along with contentment."—1 Timothy 6:6-8, footnote.

Spiritual Food Day by Day

⁴ Our prayer for daily bread should also remind us of our need for daily spiritual food. Although very hungry after a long fast, Jesus resisted Satan's temptation to turn stones into bread, saying: "It is written, 'Man must live, not on bread alone, but on every utterance coming forth through Jehovah's mouth.'" (Matthew 4:4) Jesus here quoted the prophet Moses, who told the Israelites:

1. How does Jehovah provide for the animal creation?

2, 3. What spiritual lessons can we draw from the fact that Jesus taught us to pray for our daily bread?

4. What incidents in the life of Jesus and of the Israelites emphasize the importance of taking in spiritual food?

"[Jehovah] humbled you and let you go hungry and fed you with the manna, which neither you had known nor your fathers had known; in order to make you know that not by bread alone does man live but by every expression of Jehovah's mouth does man live." (Deuteronomy 8:3) The way in which Jehovah supplied the manna provided the Israelites not only with physical food but also with spiritual lessons. For one thing, they were to "pick up each his amount day for day." If they gathered more than enough for the day, the remainder began to smell and breed worms. (Exodus 16:4, 20) Yet, this did not occur on the sixth day when they had to gather double the daily amount to cover their needs for the Sabbath. (Exodus 16:5, 23, 24) So the manna impressed upon their minds that they had to be obedient and that their lives depended not just on bread but on "every expression of Jehovah's mouth."

⁵ We likewise need to feed daily on spiritual food provided by Jehovah through his Son. To this end, Jesus has appointed a "faithful and discreet slave" to provide "food at the proper time" for the household of faith. (Matthew 24:45) That faithful slave class not only supplies an abundance of spiritual food in the form of Bible study aids but also encourages us to do daily Bible reading. (Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1:1-3) Like Jesus, we too can obtain spiritual sustenance by daily putting forth effort to learn about and to do Jehovah's will.—John 4:34.

Forgiveness of Sins

⁶ The next request in the model prayer is: "Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiv-

5. How does Jehovah provide us with daily spiritual food?

6. For what debts are we to ask forgiveness, and on what conditions is Jehovah willing to cancel them?

en our debtors." (Matthew 6:12) Jesus was not here speaking of debts of money. He had in mind the forgiveness of our sins. In Luke's record of the model prayer, this request reads: "Forgive us our sins, for we ourselves also forgive everyone that is in debt to us." (Luke 11:4) Thus, when we sin, it is as if we incur a debt to Jehovah. But our loving God is prepared to 'blot out,' or cancel, that debt if we sincerely repent, "turn around," and ask him for forgiveness on the basis of faith in Christ's ransom sacrifice.—Acts 3:19; 10:43; 1 Timothy 2:5, 6.

⁷ From another standpoint, we sin when we miss the mark of Jehovah's standards of righteousness. Through inherited sin, we all transgress in word, deed, and thought or we fail to do what we should do. (Ecclesiastes 7:20; Romans 3:23; James 3:2; 4:17) Therefore, whether we are conscious of having sinned during the day or not, we need to include in our daily prayers a request for forgiveness of our sins.—Psalm 19:12; 40:12.

⁸ Prayer for forgiveness should follow honest self-examination, repentance, and confession, based on faith in the redemptive power of Christ's shed blood. (1 John 1:7-9) To prove the sincerity of our prayer, we must back up our request for forgiveness by "works that befit repentance." (Acts 26:20) We can then have faith in Jehovah's readiness to forgive our sins. (Psalm 86:5; 103:8-14) The result is incomparable peace of mind, "the peace of God that excels all thought," which in turn "will guard [our] hearts and [our] mental powers by means of Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:7) But Jesus' model prayer teaches us even more about what we must do to obtain forgiveness of our sins.

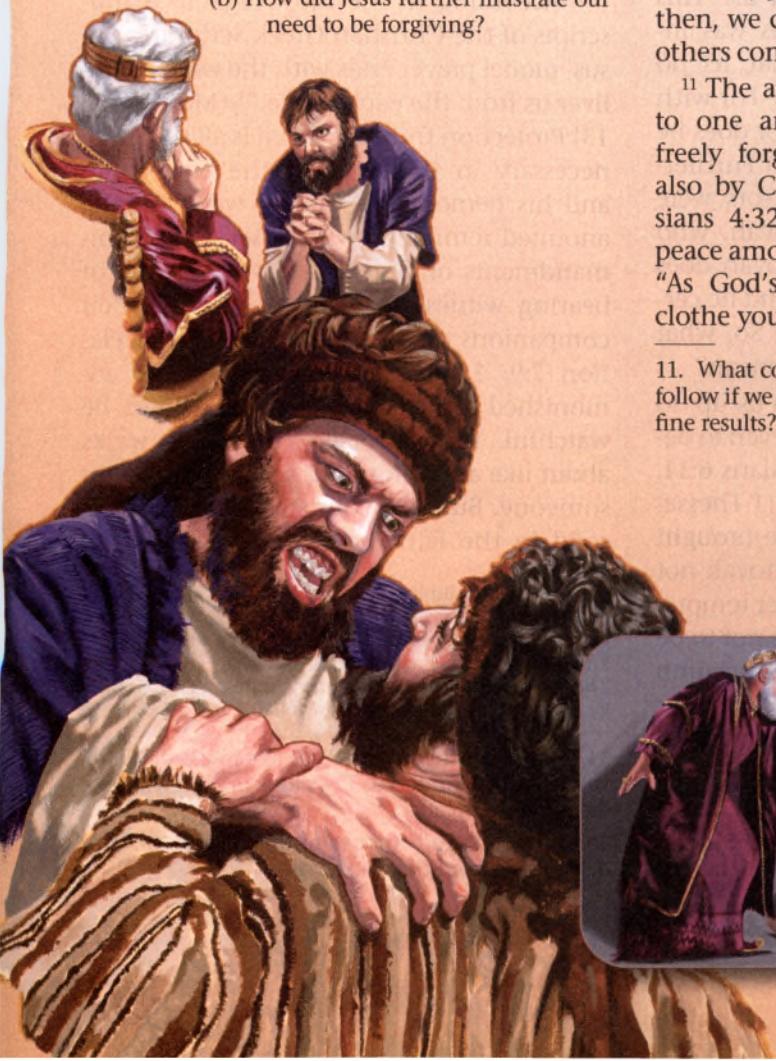
7. Why should we pray for forgiveness every day?
8. What should prayer for forgiveness cause us to do, with what beneficial result?

To Be Forgiven, We Must Forgive

⁹ Interestingly, the request “forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors,” is the only part of the model prayer that Jesus commented on. After concluding the prayer, he added: “For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; whereas if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” (Matthew 6: 14, 15) Thus, Jesus made it very clear that our being forgiven by Jehovah is contingent on our being willing to forgive others.—Mark 11:25.

9, 10. (a) What comment did Jesus add to the model prayer, and what did this underscore?

(b) How did Jesus further illustrate our need to be forgiving?



¹⁰ On another occasion, Jesus gave an illustration showing the need for us to be forgiving if we expect Jehovah to forgive us. He told of a king who generously canceled an enormous debt that a slave had incurred. The king later severely punished this same man when he refused to cancel the incomparably smaller debt of a fellow slave. Jesus concluded his illustration by saying: “In like manner my heavenly Father will also deal with you if you do not forgive each one his brother from your hearts.” (Matthew 18:23-35) The lesson is clear: The debt of sin that Jehovah has forgiven each of us is immeasurably greater than any transgression anyone may have committed against us. What is more, Jehovah forgives us daily. Surely, then, we can forgive the occasional offense others commit against us.

¹¹ The apostle Paul wrote: “Become kind to one another, tenderly compassionate, freely forgiving one another just as God also by Christ freely forgave you.” (Ephesians 4:32) Mutual forgiveness makes for peace among Christians. Paul further urged: “As God’s chosen ones, holy and loved, clothe yourselves with the tender affections

11. What counsel given by the apostle Paul will we follow if we expect Jehovah to forgive us, with what fine results?

*We must forgive others
if we are to be forgiven*



of compassion, kindness, lowliness of mind, mildness, and long-suffering. Continue putting up with one another and forgiving one another freely if anyone has a cause for complaint against another. Even as Jehovah freely forgave you, so do you also. But, besides all these things, clothe yourselves with love, for it is a perfect bond of union." (Colossians 3: 12-14) All of this is implied in the prayer Jesus taught us: "Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors."

Protection When Under Temptation

¹² The next-to-last request in Jesus' model prayer is: "Do not bring us into temptation." (Matthew 6:13) Did Jesus mean that we should ask Jehovah not to tempt us? This cannot be, for the disciple James was inspired to write: "When under trial, let no one say: 'I am being tried by God.' For with evil things God cannot be tried nor does he himself try anyone." (James 1:13) Furthermore, the psalmist wrote: "If errors were what you watch, O Jah, O Jehovah, who could stand?" (Psalm 130:3) Jehovah does not watch for our every mistake, and he certainly does not try to trip us up. So, what does this part of the model prayer mean?

¹³ The one who is trying to trip us up, to cause us to fall by crafty acts, and even to devour us is Satan the Devil. (Ephesians 6:11, footnote) He is the great Tempter. (1 Thessalonians 3:5) By praying not to be brought into temptation, we are asking Jehovah not to allow us to fall when we are under temptation. We are asking him to help us not to be "overreached by Satan," not to succumb to temptations. (2 Corinthians 2:11) Our prayer is for us to remain in "the secret place

12, 13. (a) What could not be the meaning of the next-to-last request made in the model prayer? (b) Who is the great Tempter, and what is the meaning of our prayer not to be brought into temptation?

of the Most High," receiving the spiritual protection afforded those who recognize Jehovah's sovereignty in all they do.—Psalm 91:1-3.

¹⁴ We can be sure that if that is our sincere desire, expressed in our prayers and in our actions, Jehovah will never abandon us. The apostle Paul assures us: "No temptation has taken you except what is common to men. But God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear, but along with the temptation he will also make the way out in order for you to be able to endure it."—1 Corinthians 10:13.

"Deliver Us From the Wicked One"

¹⁵ According to the most reliable manuscripts of the Christian Greek Scriptures, Jesus' model prayer ends with the words: "Deliver us from the wicked one."* (Matthew 6: 13) Protection from the Devil is all the more necessary in this time of the end. Satan and his demons are waging war with the anointed remnant, "who observe the commandments of God and have the work of bearing witness to Jesus," and with their companions of the "great crowd." (Revelation 7:9; 12:9, 17) The apostle Peter admonished Christians: "Keep your senses, be watchful. Your adversary, the Devil, walks about like a roaring lion, seeking to devour someone. But take your stand against him, solid in the faith." (1 Peter 5:8, 9) Satan

* Some older Bibles, such as the *King James Version*, end the Lord's Prayer with what is known as a doxology (an expression of praise to God): "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen." *The Jerome Biblical Commentary* states: "The doxology . . . is not found in the most reliable [manuscripts]."

14. How does the apostle Paul assure us that Jehovah will not abandon us if we look to Him when we are under temptation?

15. Why is it more important than ever to pray for deliverance from the wicked one?

would like to stop our witnessing work, and by means of his agents on earth—whether religious, commercial, or political—he tries to intimidate us. If we stand firm, however, Jehovah will deliver us. The disciple James wrote: "Subject yourselves, therefore, to God; but oppose the Devil, and he will flee from you."—James 4:7.

¹⁶ Jehovah allowed his Son to be tempted. But after Jesus opposed the Devil, using God's Word as a protection, Jehovah sent angels to strengthen him. (Matthew 4:1-11) Likewise, Jehovah uses his angels to help us if we pray with faith and make him our refuge. (Psalm 34:7; 91:9-11) The apostle Peter wrote: "Jehovah knows how to deliver people of godly devotion out of trial, but to reserve unrighteous people for the day of judgment to be cut off."—2 Peter 2:9.

Full Deliverance Is Near

¹⁷ In the model prayer, Jesus puts things in their proper perspective. Our prime concern should be the sanctification of Jehovah's great and holy name. Since the instrument

16. What means does Jehovah have at his disposal to help his servants who are under trial?

17. By giving us the model prayer, how did Jesus put things in their proper perspective?

By Way of Review

- What things are implied by our request for "bread for this day"?
- Explain the prayer "forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors."
- What does it mean when we ask Jehovah not to bring us into temptation?
- Why do we need to pray "deliver us from the wicked one"?

for accomplishing this is the Messianic Kingdom, we pray for the Kingdom to come to destroy all imperfect human kingdoms, or governments, and to ensure that God's will takes place fully as in heaven also upon earth. Our hope of everlasting life on a paradise earth depends on the sanctification of Jehovah's name and the recognition throughout the universe of his righteous sovereignty. After praying for these all-important things, we can pray for our daily needs, forgiveness of our sins, and deliverance from temptations and the wiles of the wicked one, Satan the Devil.

¹⁸ Our complete deliverance from the wicked one and his corrupt system of things is getting near. Satan is well aware that he has only "a short period of time" left to vent his "great anger" on the earth, particularly on Jehovah's faithful servants. (Revelation 12:12, 17) In the composite sign of "the conclusion of the system of things," Jesus foretold exciting events, some of which are still ahead of us. (Matthew 24:3, 29-31) As we see these occur, our hope for deliverance will become brighter. Jesus stated: "As these things start to occur, raise yourselves erect and lift your heads up, because your deliverance is getting near."—Luke 21:25-28.

¹⁹ The succinct model prayer Jesus gave his disciples provides us with a sound guide as to what to include in our prayers as the end draws near. May we remain confident that right up to the end, Jehovah will continue to provide us with our daily needs, both spiritual and material. Our prayerful vigilance will enable us to "make fast our hold on the confidence we had at the beginning firm to the end."—Hebrews 3:14; 1 Peter 4:7.

18, 19. How does Jesus' model prayer help us to remain vigilant and to make our hope "firm to the end"?



"THE SCENE OF THIS WORLD IS CHANGING"

"This I say, brothers, the time left is reduced." —1 CORINTHIANS 7:29.

WHAT changes have you seen in your lifetime? Can you recount some of them? There is, for example, the progress that has been made in medical science. Thanks to research in that field, the average life expectancy in some lands has increased from under 50 years at the beginning of the 20th century to well over 70 years today! Think, too, of the ways in which we have benefited from the proper use of radio, television, cell phones, and fax machines. Not to be overlooked are the forward steps that have been taken in education, in transportation, and in human rights, all of which have improved life for millions.

² Of course, not all changes have been for the better. It is impossible to ignore the dev-

astating effects of soaring crime rates, plummeting moral values, mounting drug abuse, skyrocketing divorce rates, spiraling inflation, and the rising threat of terrorism. In any case, you will likely agree with what the apostle Paul wrote long ago: "The scene of this world is changing." —1 Corinthians 7:31.

³ When Paul made that statement, he was comparing the world to a stage. The performers on that stage—political, religious, and cultural icons—make their appearance, play their respective roles, and then leave the stage to others. This has gone on for centuries. In times past, a dynasty might rule for decades—even centuries—and changes were slow. Not so today, when the course of histo-

1, 2. What changes have you seen in your lifetime?

3. What did Paul mean when he wrote that "the scene of this world is changing"?

ry can shift in the time it takes for an assassin's bullet to find its mark! Yes, in these turbulent times, we do not know what tomorrow will bring.

⁴ If the world is a stage and its leaders are the performers, then Christians are the spectators.* Being "no part of the world," however, they do not overly concern themselves with the performance or even the identity of the players. (John 17:16) Rather, they are eagerly looking for indications that the drama is reaching its climax—a catastrophic finish—for they know that this system must end before Jehovah ushers in the long-awaited new world of righteousness.[#] Let us therefore examine two lines of evidence that demonstrate that we are living in the time of the end and that the new world is at hand. These are (1) Bible chronology and (2) deteriorating world conditions.—Matthew 24:21; 2 Peter 3:13.

A Mystery Solved at Last!

⁵ Chronology is a study of the relationship between time and events. Jesus spoke of a time during which the leaders of the world would occupy center stage without interference from God's Kingdom. Jesus called that period "the appointed times of the nations." (Luke 21:24) At the end of those "appointed times," God's heavenly Kingdom would come to power, with Jesus as its rightful Ruler. At first, Jesus would rule "in the midst of [his] enemies." (Psalm 110:2) Then, according to Daniel 2:44, the Kingdom would

* In a different context, Paul spoke of anointed Christians as being "a theatrical spectacle to the world, and to angels, and to men."—1 Corinthians 4:9.

[#] For example, regarding the identity of "the king of the north," mentioned at Daniel 11:40, 44, 45, see the book *Pay Attention to Daniel's Prophecy*, pages 280-1.

4. (a) What balanced view do Christians need to have regarding world events? (b) What two convincing lines of evidence will we now consider?
5. What are "the appointed times of the nations," and why are they of interest to us?

"crush and put an end" to all human governments, and it would stand forever.

⁶ When would "the appointed times of the nations" end and God's Kingdom rule begin? The answer, which was "sealed up until the time of the end," involves Bible chronology. (Daniel 12:9) As that "time" approached, Jehovah took steps to reveal the answer to a group of humble Bible students. With the help of God's spirit, they discerned that "the appointed times of the nations" began with the destruction of Jerusalem in 607 B.C.E. and that those "times" were 2,520 years in length. From this, they deduced that 1914 marked the end of "the appointed times of the nations." They also came to realize that 1914 was the beginning of the end for this system of things. As a Bible student, can you explain from the Scriptures how the date 1914 is calculated?*

⁷ One clue is concealed in the book of Daniel. Since Jehovah used King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon to destroy Jerusalem at the beginning of "the appointed times," in 607 B.C.E., He revealed through that ruler that the nations would continue without divine interference for a total of seven symbolic times. (Ezekiel 21:26, 27; Daniel 4:16, 23-25) How long are those seven times? According to Revelation 11:2, 3, and 12:6, 14, three and a half times are 1,260 days long. Thus, seven times must be twice that long, or 2,520 days. Is that the end of it? No, for Jehovah gave a contemporary of Daniel, the

* The Bible itself indicates that Jerusalem fell 70 years before the return of the exiled Jews in 537 B.C.E. (Jeremiah 25:11, 12; Daniel 9:1-3) For a detailed discussion of "the appointed times of the nations," see pages 95-7 of *Reasoning From the Scriptures*, published by Jehovah's Witnesses.

6. When did "the appointed times of the nations" begin, how long did they last, and when did they end?
7. What scriptures help us to figure out the beginning, the length, and the end of the seven times mentioned in the book of Daniel?

prophet Ezekiel, the rule for interpreting the symbolism: "A day for a year, a day for a year, is what I have given you." (Ezekiel 4:6) Therefore, the seven times would actually be 2,520 years long. Using 607 B.C.E. as the starting point and 2,520 years as the length, we can conclude that the appointed times were to end in 1914.

"The Time of the End" Confirmed

⁸ World events from 1914 onward confirm that the above understanding based on Bible chronology is correct. Jesus himself said that "the conclusion of the system of things" would be marked by wars, famines, and pestilences. (Matthew 24:3-8; Revelation 6:2-8) That has certainly been the case since 1914. The apostle Paul added to the picture, saying that there would be a marked difference in the attitudes of people toward one another. His description of the changes that we have all witnessed was right on target.—2 Timothy 3:1-5.

⁹ Has "the scene of this world" really changed so much since 1914? In the book *The Generation of 1914*, Professor Robert Wohl observes: "Those who lived through the war could never rid themselves of the belief that one world had ended and another begun in August 1914." Confirming this, Dr. Jorge A. Costa e Silva, as the mental-health director for the World Health Organization, wrote: "We live in a time of extremely fast changes, which end up causing anxiety and stress at levels never before seen in mankind's history." Has that been your personal experience?

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8. What evidence can you point to that world conditions have worsened since 1914?
 9. What do observers have to say regarding world conditions since 1914?



At last—the mystery is solved!

¹⁰ Who is the villain behind the worsening world conditions? Revelation 12:7-9 unmasks the culprit: "War broke out in heaven: Michael [Jesus Christ] and his angels battled with the dragon [Satan the Devil], and the dragon and its angels battled but it did not prevail, neither was a place found for them any longer in heaven. So down the great dragon was hurled, . . . who is misleading the entire inhabited earth." So Satan the Devil is the guilty troublemaker, and his ouster from heaven in 1914 has meant "woe for the earth and for the sea, because the Devil has come down to you, having great anger, knowing he has a short period of time."—Revelation 12:10, 12.

How the Final Act Will Play Out

¹¹ Aware that his end is approaching, Satan since 1914 has been stepping up his efforts to mislead "the entire inhabited earth." Always

10. How does the Bible enlighten us about the cause of worsening world conditions since 1914?
11. (a) What methods does Satan use to mislead "the entire inhabited earth"? (b) To what special effort of Satan did the apostle Paul draw attention?

the master deceiver, Satan works behind the scenes, putting on the stage the world's leaders and trendsetters as role players. (2 Timothy 3:13; 1 John 5:19) One of his goals is to deceive mankind into thinking that his way of governing can bring them true peace. By and large, his propaganda has succeeded, for people remain optimistic in spite of mounting evidence that conditions are going from bad to worse. The apostle Paul foretold that just before this system of things is destroyed, there will be a notable expression of satanic propaganda. He wrote: "Whenever it is that they are saying: 'Peace and security!' then sudden destruction is to be instantly upon them just as the pang of distress upon a pregnant woman."—1 Thessalonians 5:3; Revelation 16:13.

¹² In recent years, politicians have often used the phrase "peace and security" to describe various human schemes. They even dubbed 1986 the International Year of Peace, although that year did not live up to its name. Do such efforts by world leaders constitute the complete fulfillment of 1 Thessalonians 5:3, or was Paul referring to a specific event of such dramatic proportions as to claim world attention?

¹³ Since Bible prophecies are often fully understood only after they are fulfilled or are in the process of fulfillment, we will have to wait and see. It is of interest, though, that Paul compared the sudden destruction following the cry of "Peace and security!" to the birth pang of a pregnant woman. Over a period of about nine months, an expectant mother becomes increasingly aware of the baby that is growing within her. She may be able to hear her baby's heartbeat or feel its

12. What ongoing efforts have there been to bring peace in our time?

13. When Paul foretold the cry of "Peace and security!," to what did he compare the destruction to follow, and what can we learn from this?

movements in the womb. It may even kick her. The signs often become more and more pronounced until, one day, she feels a sharp pain, a pang, indicating that the hoped-for event—the baby's birth—has arrived. Hence, however the prophesied cry of "Peace and security!" may be fulfilled, it will lead to a sudden, painful, but ultimately blessed event—the destruction of wickedness and the beginning of a new world system.

¹⁴ The coming destruction will be fear-inspiring for faithful Christians watching from the sidelines. First, the kings of the earth (the political part of Satan's organization) will turn on the supporters of Babylon the Great (the religious part) and will destroy them. (Revelation 17:1, 15-18) Thus, in a stunning plot twist, Satan's kingdom will become divided against itself, with one part attacking the other, and Satan will be powerless to prevent it. (Matthew 12:25, 26) Jehovah will put it into the hearts of the kings of the earth "to carry out *his* thought," namely, to rid the earth of his religious adversaries. After false religion is destroyed, Jesus Christ will lead his heavenly armies in a complete rout of what is left of Satan's organization—the commercial and political elements. Finally, Satan himself will be put out of action. With that, the curtain will fall, and the long-running drama will come to an end.—Revelation 16:14-16; 19:11-21; 20:1-3.

¹⁵ When will all these things occur? We do not know the day or the hour. (Matthew 24:36) We do know, however, that "the time left is reduced." (1 Corinthians 7:29) It is vital, then, that we make wise use of the time that remains. How? As the apostle Paul explains, we must 'buy out the opportune time' for the more important things at the

14. In what general order will future events unfold, leading to what outcome?

15, 16. What impact should the reminder that "the time left is reduced" have on our lives?

expense of what is nonessential and make every day count. The reason? "Because the days are wicked." And 'perceiving what Jehovah's will is' for us, we will not waste the precious little time that is left.—Ephesians 5:15-17; 1 Peter 4:1-4.

¹⁶ Knowing that dissolution awaits the entire worldly system of things, how should we be affected personally? The apostle Peter wrote for our benefit: "Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of persons ought you to be in holy acts of conduct and deeds of godly devotion!" (2 Peter 3:11) What sort of persons indeed! In harmony with Peter's wise advice, we need (1) to keep close watch on our conduct in order to be sure that it is holy and (2) to make sure that our zealous deeds in Jehovah's service always reflect our deep love for him.

¹⁷ Love for God will prevent us from becoming attached to this world because of its allurements. In view of what is in store for the present system of things, it is dangerous for us to become enamored by the glitter and glamour of the worldly, hedonistic way of life. Although living and working in the world, we should heed the wise counsel not to use the world to the full. (1 Corinthians 7:31) In fact, we must do our best to guard against being misled by the world's propaganda. This world will not succeed in working out solutions to its problems. It will not keep on sustaining itself indefinitely. Why can we be so sure? Because the inspired Word of God says so: "The world is passing away and so is its desire, but he that does the will of God remains forever."—1 John 2:17.

The Best Is Yet to Come!

¹⁸ Jehovah will soon ring down the curtain

17. Against what snares of Satan must faithful Christians remain on guard?

18, 19. What changes are you looking forward to in the new world, and why will it have been worth the wait?

on Satan and his supporters. Thereafter, with God's blessing, faithful survivors of the end of this system will begin to work on "scene" changes that will endure forever. War will no longer mar the scene; God will make "wars to cease to the extremity of the earth." (Psalm 46:9) In place of food shortages, "there will come to be plenty of grain on the earth; . . . there will be an overflow." (Psalm 72:16) Gone will be prisons, police stations, sexually transmitted diseases, drug czars, divorce courts, bankruptcy proceedings, and terrorism.—Psalm 37:29; Isaiah 33:24; Revelation 21:3-5.

¹⁹ The memorial tombs will be emptied, and billions of resurrected ones—more players—will come into view. What joy there will be as one generation is reunited with another and when long-separated loved ones hug one another in a warm, heartfelt embrace! Eventually, everyone living will worship Jehovah. (Revelation 5:13) When the changes are complete, the curtain will rise upon an earth-wide paradise. How will you feel as you survey the scene? No doubt you will be moved to exclaim, 'I waited a long time for this, but it has been well worth the wait!'

How Would You Answer?

- How have the apostle Paul's words "the scene of this world is changing" proved true in our time?
- How does Bible chronology pinpoint the end of "the appointed times of the nations"?
- How do changing world conditions confirm that 1914 marks the beginning of "the time of the end"?
- How should the fact that "the time left is reduced" affect us?



EXPERIENCING JEHOVAH'S LOVING-KINDNESS AND CARE

AS TOLD BY
FAY KING

My parents were kind people, but like so many others, they did not have any use at all for religion. My mother used to say: "There must be a God, otherwise who made the flowers, and who made the trees?"

But that was as far as it went.

MY FATHER died in 1939 when I was 11 years old, and I lived with my mother in Stockport, just south of Manchester, England. I had always wanted to know more about my Creator and respected the Bible, although I knew nothing about it. So I decided to go to the Church of England to see what it had to offer.

The services did not mean much to me, but when the Gospels were read, Jesus' words somehow convinced me that the Bible must be true. Looking back, it does seem strange that I did not read the Bible for myself.

Even later, when a family friend gave me a "New Testament" in a modern translation, I never got around to reading it.

The outbreak of the Korean War in 1950 really made me think. Would the conflict spread, as World War II had done? If it did, how could I obey Jesus' command to love my enemies? But then again, could I stand by and see people invade my country and do nothing to stop them? If I did that, I would surely be evading my responsibility. Confused as my thinking was, I remained convinced that the answers to all my questions

were in the Bible, though I had no idea how or where to find them.

Searching for Truth in Australia

In 1954 my mother and I decided to immigrate to Australia, where my sister, Jean, was living. A few years later, Jean told me that she had asked Jehovah's Witnesses to call on me because she knew I was interested in the Bible and went to church. She wanted to find out what I thought about them. "I do not know if their explanations are right or not," she confided to me, "but at least they have explanations, which is more than the churches do."

Bill and Linda Schneider, the couple who visited me, were a delightful pair. They were in their late 60's and had been Witnesses for many years. They had worked at the radio station operated by Jehovah's Witnesses in Adelaide, and when the preaching work was banned in Australia during World War II, they enrolled as full-time evangelizers. As helpful as Bill and Linda were to me, however, I was still exploring different religions.

A work colleague took me to a meeting of evangelist Billy Graham, after which a number of us met with a clergyman who invited questions. I asked the one that was still bothering me: "How can you be a Christian and love your enemies when you go and kill them in a war?" The whole group immediately broke out in an uproar—that question had evidently worried them all! Eventually, the clergyman said: "I don't know the answer to that one. I'm still thinking about it."

Meanwhile, my study of the Bible with Bill and Linda was going on apace, and in September 1958, I was baptized. I set my heart on following the example of my tutors, so by August of the next year, I enrolled as

a regular pioneer, a full-time evangelizer. Eight months later I was invited to join the ranks of the special pioneers. How happy I was to learn that my sister, Jean, had progressed in her studies too and had been baptized!

A Door of Opportunity Opened

I was serving with one of the Sydney congregations and conducting a number of home Bible studies. One day I encountered a retired Church of England cleric and asked him what the church said about the end of the world. Although he told me that he had taught church doctrine for 50 years, his answer astounded me: "I'd have to take time to research that because I don't know the Bible as well as Jehovah's Witnesses do."

Soon after this, a call went out for volunteers to serve in Pakistan. I applied, not realizing that single women were not being sent, only single men or married couples. Evidently my application was forwarded to our Brooklyn headquarters because I soon received a letter telling me that there was a vacancy in Bombay (now called Mumbai), India, if I would like to accept it. That was in 1962. I did so and stayed in Bombay for 18 months before moving to

*Serving in
India*

I soon set myself to learn Hindi. This Indian language is generally consistent in both spelling and pronunciation, so it is not too difficult to master. It was often frustrating, however, when householders asked me



to speak English rather than to struggle with their language! But this new country presented interesting and stimulating challenges, and I enjoyed the association of fellow Witnesses from Australia.

In my early days, I thought about marriage, but by the time I was baptized, I was too busy serving Jehovah to think more about it. Now, however, I was again beginning to feel the need for a companion in life. I did not want to leave my foreign assignment, of course, so I made it a matter of prayer to Jehovah and then put it out of my mind.

An Unexpected Blessing

Edwin Skinner was overseeing the work of the India branch at that time. He had attended the eighth class of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead in 1946 with many other faithful brothers, including Harold King and Stanley Jones, who were assigned to China.* In 1958, Harold and Stanley were put in solitary confinement in prison on account of their preaching activity in Shanghai. When Harold was released in 1963, Edwin wrote to him. Harold replied after he returned to Hong Kong from his travels to the United States and Britain and mentioned that he wished to be married. He told Edwin that he had made this a matter of prayer while in prison, and he asked Edwin if he knew of a Witness who would make a suitable wife.

In India most marriages are arranged, and Edwin was constantly being asked to make such arrangements, but he always chose not to do so. He therefore handed Harold's letter to Ruth McKay, whose husband, Homer, was a traveling overseer. Eventually, Ruth wrote

* The life stories of these two missionaries appeared in *The Watchtower*, July 15, 1963, pages 437-42, and December 15, 1965, pages 756-67.

Harold King in 1963
and serving in China
in the 1950's



to me to say that a missionary who had been in the truth for many years was looking for a wife, and she asked if I would be interested in writing to him. She did not tell me who the brother was or anything more about him.

Nobody knew about my prayer for companionship, except Jehovah, of course, and my initial reaction was to reject the idea. Still, the more I thought about it, the more I was drawn to the conclusion that Jehovah rarely answers our prayers in a way we may think he will. So I wrote back to Ruth and said that as long as there was no obligation, she could ask the brother to write again. The second letter from Harold King was to me.

Photographs of Harold and his story had appeared in various newspapers and

magazines following his release from prison in China. By this time, he was well-known throughout the world, but it was his record of faithful theocratic service that impressed me. So we corresponded for five months, and then I went to Hong Kong. We were married on October 5, 1965.

We both wanted to be married and to stay in full-time service, and as we were getting older, we felt the need for companionship more than anything else. I grew to love Harold, and as I saw the kind and considerate manner in which he dealt with people and with problems that arose in connection with our service, he earned my deep respect. For 27 years we enjoyed a very happy marriage and received many blessings at Jehovah's hand.

The Chinese are an industrious people, and I like them very much. In Hong Kong the language spoken is Cantonese, a Chinese dialect that has many more tones, or inflec-



*Our wedding day in Hong Kong,
October 5, 1965*

tions, than Mandarin and is therefore quite hard to learn. Harold and I started off in the missionary home at the branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses, and then we served in assignments in various parts of the territory.

*With members of Hong Kong Bethel, the Liangs in
the middle, the Gannaways on the right*



Yes, we were very happy, but in 1976 my health presented a serious problem.

Coping With Health Problems

I had been hemorrhaging for a few months, and my blood count had dropped dramatically. I needed surgery, but the doctors at the hospital told me that they would not perform the operation without blood because if they did, I would probably die from shock. One day when the doctors were discussing my case, nurses tried to make me change my mind, saying that I had no right to throw my life away. There were 12 operations scheduled for that day, 10 of them abortions, but I noticed that not one word was spoken to the pregnant women about taking their babies' life.

Finally, Harold wrote a letter relieving the hospital of any responsibility should I die, and the doctors agreed to perform the necessary surgery. I was taken to the operating room and prepared for the anesthetic. At the last moment, however, the anesthetist refused to proceed, and the hospital had to discharge me.

We then consulted an independent gynecologist. Realizing the seriousness of my condition, he offered to perform the operation at a low price—as long as we did not tell anybody how much he charged us. He operated successfully—and without the use of any blood at all. Jehovah's loving-kindness and care were very evident to Harold and me at this particular time.

In 1992, Harold became terminally ill. We moved to the branch office and were both lovingly cared for there. My dear husband finished his earthly course in 1993 at the age of 81.

Return to England

I was happy to be a member of the Hong Kong Bethel family, but I was finding it in-

creasingly difficult to cope with the heat and humidity. Then came a surprise letter from Brooklyn headquarters, asking if, in view of my health, I would consider moving to a branch with more facilities. So in the year 2000, I moved back to England and joined the Bethel family in London. What a loving provision this has proved to be! I was warmly welcomed, and I greatly enjoy my different work assignments, which include helping to care for the Bethel family library and its 2,000 volumes.

I also associate with the Chinese congregation that meets in London, yet here things have changed. Nowadays, very few people come from Hong Kong but, rather, from the mainland of China. They speak Mandarin, and that presents a new challenge in the preaching work. Across the country there are reports of many interesting Bible studies being conducted with postgraduate students from China. They are hardworking and appreciate the Bible truth they are learning. It is a joy to help them.

In the quietness of my new home, I often reflect on my happy life and continue to marvel at Jehovah's loving-kindness. It permeates all things pertaining to his purpose, and his care for his servants as individuals is so apparent. I have every reason to be grateful for all his loving care of me.—1 Peter 5: 6, 7.

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

Is Religion at the Root of Mankind's Problems?

Guard Against Deception

Assembling at "the Navel of the World"

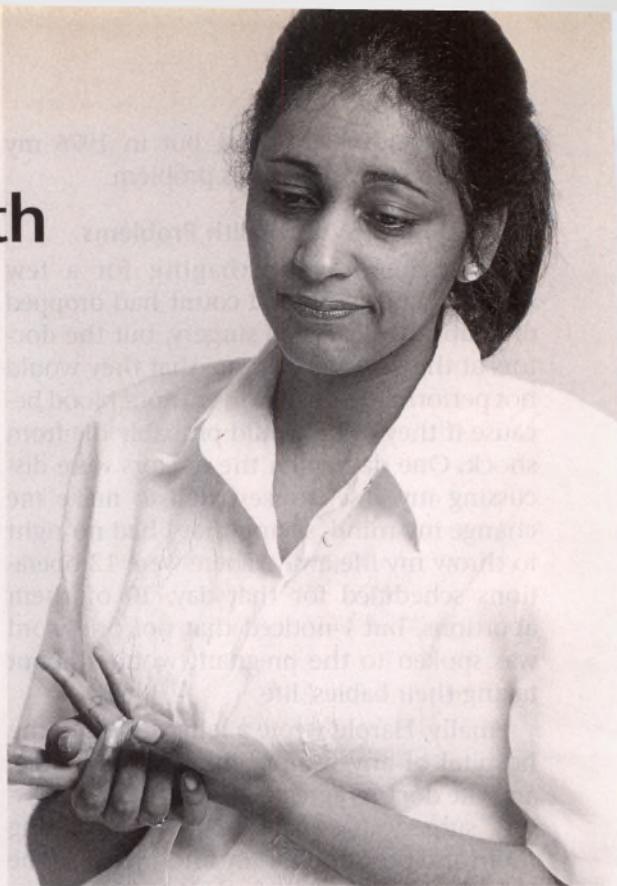
You Can Cope With Uncertainty

CERTAINLY!" "Sure thing!" "Guaranteed!" You have no doubt heard such expressions many times. In our daily life, however, there is not much that we can be sure of. Life is so unpredictable that we often wonder if there is anything that we can be absolutely certain about. Doubt and uncertainty seem to be a part of life.

Understandably, most people desire security and happiness for themselves and their family. They work very hard to acquire the things they believe will make them happy and secure—usually money and material possessions. However, an earthquake, a hurricane, an accident, or a violent crime can wipe out such possessions instantly. Serious illness, divorce, or unemployment can change lives overnight. True, such things may not actually happen to you. Yet, just knowing that something terrible can happen at any time is a disturbing and distressing feeling. But that is not all.

Uncertainty is synonymous with doubt, and one dictionary defines "doubt" as "uncertainty of belief or opinion that often interferes with decision-making." Furthermore, according to the book *Managing Your Mind*, "uncertainty about something important is a major cause of anxiety and worry." Doubt unresolved can lead to anxiety, frustration, and anger. Yes, worrying about what might or might not happen can harm our mental and physical health.

As a result, some people go to the other extreme. They are like the Brazilian youth



who said: "Why be concerned about what is going to happen? Today is today, and tomorrow is tomorrow." Such a fatalistic "let us eat and drink" attitude can lead only to disappointment, distress, and ultimately death. (1 Corinthians 15:32) It is far better for us to turn to the Creator, Jehovah God, with whom, says the Bible, "there is not a variation of the turning of the shadow." (James 1:17) If we examine God's Word, the Bible, we will find sound counsel and guidance on how to cope with the uncertainties of life. It can also help us to understand why there is so much uncertainty.

Reason for Uncertainty

The Scriptures provide a realistic view of life and help us to cultivate the proper attitude toward uncertainty and change. Though family connections, social position,

intelligence, good health, and so forth may provide a degree of security, the Bible shows that we cannot take such things for granted or expect to lead a "charmed" life. Said wise King Solomon: "The swift do not have the race, nor the mighty ones the battle, nor do the wise also have the food, nor do the understanding ones also have the riches, nor do even those having knowledge have the favor." Why not? "Because time and unforeseen occurrence befall them all." Hence, Solomon warned: "Just like fishes that are being taken in an evil net, and like birds that are being taken in a trap, so the sons of men themselves are being ensnared at a calamitous time, when it falls upon them suddenly." —Ecclesiastes 9:11, 12.

Jesus Christ also spoke of a time of extreme anxiety and uncertainty that would come upon a whole generation of people. In vivid language, he said: "There will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth anguish of nations, not knowing the way out because of the roaring of the sea and its agitation, while men become faint out of fear and expectation of the things coming upon the inhabited earth; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken." Yet, Jesus pointed to something positive for honesthearted people today: "When you see these things occurring, know that the kingdom of God is near." (Luke 21:25, 26, 31) Similarly, rather than being in fear of an uncertain future, we have faith in God that helps us to see beyond the uncertainty to a wonderful, secure future.

'Having Full Assurance of the Hope'

Although we cannot be certain about everything we hear, read, or see, we have good reason to trust in the Creator. He is not only the Supreme One but also a loving Father who cares for his earthly children. About his own word, God said: "It will not return to me without results, but it will certainly do that in which I have delighted, and it will

have certain success in that for which I have sent it."—Isaiah 55:11.

Jesus Christ taught the truth from God, and many who listened to him accepted it with conviction and certainty. For example, a group of honesthearted Samaritans told the woman who had first listened to Jesus: "We do not believe any longer on account of your talk; for we have heard for ourselves and we know that this man is for a certainty the savior of the world." (John 4:42) Likewise today, despite living in times of insecurity, we do not have to be uncertain about what to believe.

When it comes to religious belief, many are of the opinion that rather than trying to understand, we should simply believe. The Bible writer Luke, however, did not share that opinion. He did research and provided accurate information so that others might "know fully the certainty of the things" that he had written. (Luke 1:4) Since family and friends who do not



God's Word guarantees future blessings for mankind

share our faith may fear that we will end up disillusioned and disappointed, it is important that we are able to defend our faith. (1 Peter 3:15) Only by knowing accurately the reason for what we believe can we help others to trust in God. The Bible describes Jehovah in these words: "The Rock, perfect is his activity, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness, with whom there is no injustice; righteous and upright is he."—Deuteronomy 32:4.

Take that last statement: "Righteous and upright is he." What evidence do we have to be certain of this? The apostle Peter was fully convinced of that fact. He told a Roman officer and his household: "For a certainty I perceive that God is not partial, but in every nation the man that fears him and works righteousness is acceptable to him." (Acts 10: 34, 35) Peter said these words because he had just seen how God's own hand directed matters so that a family of Gentiles, formerly considered unclean and unacceptable, became acceptable to Him. Like Peter, we also can be convinced of God's impartiality and righteousness when we see with our own eyes "a great crowd" of people—six million strong—from over 230 lands around the earth who have abandoned their former way of life and walk in the path of righteousness.

—Revelation 7:9; Isaiah 2:2-4.

As true Christians, we want to be, not fanatic or dogmatic, but humble and reasonable. Yet, we are not uncertain about what we believe and what we expect of the future. To first-century Christians, the apostle Paul wrote: "We desire each one of you to show the same industriousness so as to have the full assurance of the hope down to the end." (Hebrews 6:11) Likewise, the good news from the Bible has brought us "the full assurance of the hope." That hope, based solidly on God's Word, "does not lead to disappointment," as Paul also explained.

—Romans 5:5.

Moreover, we are fully convinced that teaching others the good news from the Bible can bring them security and certainty spiritually, and even emotionally and physically. We can join Paul in saying: "The good news we preach did not turn up among you with speech alone but also with power and with holy spirit and strong conviction."

—1 Thessalonians 1:5.

Present Blessings in Spiritual Security

Although we cannot expect complete security in life today, there are things we can do that will help us lead a relatively stable and secure life. For example, regular association with the Christian congregation at the meetings contributes to stability because there we are taught right and sound principles and values. Paul wrote: "Give orders to those who are rich in the present system of things not to be high-minded, and to rest their hope, not on uncertain riches, but on God, who furnishes us all things richly for our enjoyment." (1 Timothy 6:17) By learning to put their trust in Jehovah and not in fleeting material things or pleasures, many have been able to rid themselves of the anxieties and

"None that rests his faith on him will be disappointed"

frustrations they formerly had to bear.—Matthew 6:19-21.

In the congregation, we also enjoy a warm brotherhood, which provides assistance and support in numerous ways. At one point in his ministry, the apostle Paul and his traveling companions felt "extreme pressure" and were "uncertain even of [their] lives." Where did Paul find support and relief? Of course, his trust in God never wavered. Nonetheless, he was encouraged and consoled by fellow Christians who came to his aid. (2 Corinthians 1:8, 9; 7:5-7) Today when natural disasters or other calamities strike, time and again our Christian brothers are the first on the scene to render needed assistance materially and spiritually to fellow Christians as well as to others in need.

Another avenue of help to deal with life's uncertainties is prayer. We can always turn to our loving heavenly Father when we are under unexpected pressure. "Jehovah will be-

come a secure height for anyone crushed, a secure height in times of distress." (Psalm 9:9) Human parents may fail in protecting their children. However, God is willing to



help us to cope with our fears and feelings of uncertainty. Throwing our anxieties upon Jehovah in prayer, we can be sure that he can "do more than super-abundantly beyond all the things we ask or conceive."—Ephesians 3:20.

Do you regularly turn to God in prayer? Are you convinced that your prayers are heard by God? "My mother told me that I should pray to God," said a young girl in São Paulo. "But I asked myself: 'Why speak to someone I do not even know?' However, Proverbs 18:10 helped me to understand that we need God's help and we have to speak to him in prayer." That scripture says: "The name of Jehovah is a strong tower. Into it the righteous runs and is given protection." Really, how can we develop trust and confidence in Jehovah if we do not make it a habit to speak to him? To enjoy the blessings of spiritual security, we need to make daily heartfelt prayer a habit. Jesus said: "Keep awake, then, all the time making supplication that you may succeed in escaping all these things that are destined to occur, and in standing before the Son of man." —Luke 21:36.

Something else that we can be certain about is our hope in God's Kingdom. Notice the words at Daniel 2:44: "The God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be brought to ruin. And the kingdom itself will not be passed on to any other people. It will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, and it itself will stand to times indefinite."

That hope is solid and is something we can be certain about. Human promises often fail, but we can always trust in Jehovah's word. Rather than being undependable, God is like a rock mass that we can rely on. We can feel like David, who said: "My God is my rock. I shall take refuge in him, my shield and my horn of salvation, my secure height, and my place for flight, my Savior; from violence you save me."—2 Samuel 22:3.

The aforementioned book *Managing Your Mind* further observes: "The more one

The Kingdom good news brings people security



thinks about the bad things that might happen, the more likely they seem, and the harder it is to see how to cope with them." So then, why allow ourselves to be burdened by the anxieties and doubts of the world? Instead, replace the uncertainties of this world with the certainties that God provides. By holding fast our faith in Jehovah's unfailing promises, we have this assurance: "None that rests his faith on him will be disappointed." —Romans 10:11.

An Honest Conscience

WHILE traveling home from work one day, Charles, an employee at a university in Kenya, lost his cellular phone. In Kenya, these are still a costly luxury item.

"I didn't expect anyone to return it," said Charles. A few days later, however, he was surprised to receive a phone call from the branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses in Kenya. He could hardly believe what he was hearing when he was asked to come and claim his cell phone! It turned out that a full-time minister of Jehovah's Witnesses had ridden in the same vehicle as Charles and had found the phone. In an effort to find the owner, the minister brought the phone to the branch office, and the volunteer workers there eventually located Charles by tracing the number displayed on the phone.

"I very much appreciate the efforts made to contact me despite the hardships involved," said Charles in a letter he wrote to the branch office. "I sincerely thank the members of your organization who found the cell phone, traced it to me, and returned it. It is not easy to find an honest person today, but it is en-

couraging that we have a few who stand out as true Witnesses of Jehovah God."

Jehovah's Witnesses everywhere are known for their honesty. They imitate the apostle Paul, who said: "We trust we have an honest conscience, as we wish to conduct ourselves honestly in all things." (Hebrews 13:18; 1 Corinthians 11:1) They appreciate that such conduct gives glory to Jehovah God, as Jesus said: "Let your light shine before men, that they may see your fine works and give glory to your Father who is in the heavens."—Matthew 5:16.

