

The **WATCHTOWER**

APRIL 1, 1958

Semimonthly

AVOID REBELLIOUS TENDENCIES

DESIRABLE TENDENCIES

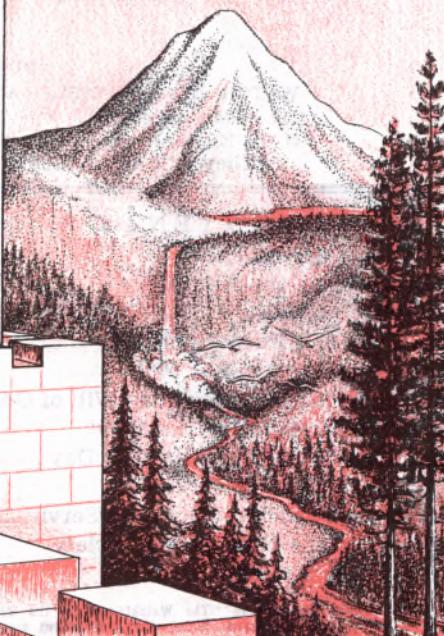
—CHRISTIAN SERVITUDE

NO EXCUSES FOR THE TRAITOR!

MAN—FREE AND RESPONSIBLE

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Announcing
**JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM**



"YOU ARE MY WITNESSES," SAYS JEHOVAH.—Isa. 43:12

THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER"

Literal towers in Bible times were elevated vantage points from which watchmen could observe happenings, warn of danger, or announce good news. Our magazine figuratively occupies such a vantage point, for it is founded on the very pinnacle of wisdom, God's Word. That elevates it above racial, national and political propagandas and prejudices, frees it from selfish bias. It is not bound by any traditional creed, but its message advances as the light on God's purposes and works increases.—Habakkuk 2:1-3.

It sees things Scripturally. When it observes this generation afflicted with greed, delinquency, hypocrisy, atheism, war, famine, pestilence, perplexity and fear, and persecution of unpopular minorities, it does not parrot the old fable about history repeating itself. Informed by Bible prophecy, it sees in these things the sign of the world's time of the end. But with bright hope it also sees opening up for us just beyond these woes the portals of a new world.

Thus viewed, "The Watchtower" stands as a watchman atop a tower, alert to what is going on, awake to note signs of danger, faithful to point out the way of escape. It announces Jehovah's kingdom established by Christ's enthronement in heaven, feeds his kingdom joint-heirs with spiritual food, cheers men of good will with glorious prospects of eternal life in a paradise earth, comforts us with the resurrection promise for the dead.

It is not dogmatic, but has a confident ring in its voice, because it is based on God's Word. It does not privately interpret prophecy, but calls attention to physical facts, sets them alongside prophecy, and you see for yourself how well the two match, how accurately Jehovah interprets his own prophecy. In the interests of our salvation, it keeps sharp and faithful focus on Bible truth, and views religious news generally.

'Be watchful in these perilous times,' God admonishes. So keep on the watch by regularly reading "The Watchtower".

PUBLISHED BY THE
WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA
117 Adams Street Brooklyn 1, N. Y., U. S. A.
N. H. KNORR, President GRANT SUITER, Secretary

"They will all be taught by Jehovah."—John 6:45; Isaiah 54:13

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- AS — American Standard Version
 AT — An American Translation
 AV — Authorized Version (1611)
 Da — J. N. Darby's version
 Dy — Catholic Douay version
 ED — The Emphatic Diaglott
- JP — Jewish Publication Soc.
 Le — Isaac Leeser's version
 Mo — James Moffatt's version
 Ro — J. B. Rotherham's version
 RS — Revised Standard Version
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Announcing
Jehovah's
Kingdom

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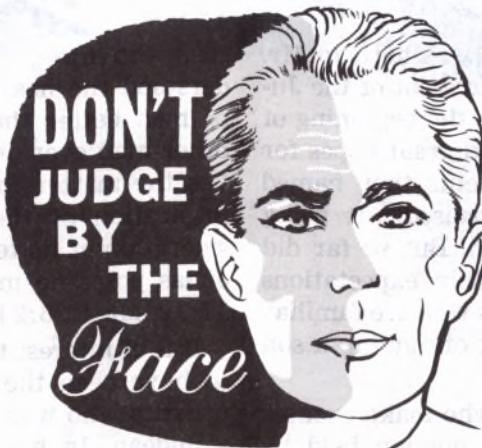
BECAUSE a person has a handsome face, does it mean he has a good heart? Does it mean he is honest and trustworthy? There are people who seem to think that it does, but in spite of what they think, the face is not a window to the heart. It does not reveal a person's true personality.

Beauty can hide the vilest kind of hearts. Satan, the god of this world, is a good example. He is a radiantly beautiful creature but yet is the embodiment of wickedness.

—Ezek. 28:17, AS.

Although we cannot penetrate a man's outward appearance and look at his heart, God can. Unlike humans who judge by what they see on the surface, God judges by what he sees in the heart.—1 Sam. 16:7.

A person may be able to hide his true personality from human eyes by a handsome face and a clean-cut appearance, but he cannot hide it from God. His personality is stripped of all covering and is laid bare before Him. "And there is not a creation



that is not manifest to his sight, but all things are naked and openly exposed to the eyes of him with whom we have an accounting."

—Heb. 4:13.

As men judge one another by outward appearances, so do they judge religious organizations. Because an organization has beautiful church buildings, colorful ceremonies and pious-appearing clerics, they judge it to be God's chosen servant. Jehovah's witnesses, on the other hand, are rejected because they do not present the same glamorous appearance. The witnesses are viewed by the world in the same manner as were the Christians of the first century. "We have become as the refuse of the world, the offscouring of all things."

—1 Cor. 4:13.

God has chosen his servants not on the basis of how they appear in the eyes of the world but on the basis of their heart condition. What he has chosen are "the ignoble things of the world and the things looked down upon." (1 Cor. 1:28) As a man's personality must be judged by his works and not by his face, so God's servants must be judged by their fruits.

No Excuses for the

TRAITOR!

Today many speculate on the fate of Judas. But there is no need to do so in view of the Bible's explicit testimony, even as the following will show.

WHEN a baby boy was born to Mr. and Mrs. Simon Iscariot of the Judean village of Kerioth at the beginning of our common era, they had great hopes for him. As God-fearing parents they named him Judas, meaning "Praised," it being the Greek form of Judah. But so far did Judas come short of their expectations that ever since no parents who are familiar with his life would think of naming a son Judas.

Still Judas has many who make excuses for him. Typical of the opinion held by many professed Christians is that found in the *Interpreter's Bible*. At John 18:2 it speaks of "The Mystery of Judas" and goes on to say that "at this point the Fourth Gospel grows . . . unsatisfying, particularly with regard to Judas. . . . Is there not a half hope for him in the man's unbearable horror of himself and his deed?" "The love of Christ is very wonderful. And my experience of it makes me still harbor hopes for Judas—and for me."—Vol. 8, pp. 754-757.

True, mercy is a virtue we all must have and show if we would receive mercy. (Matt. 5:7) But in view of Jesus' terming Judas "the son of destruction," and saying of him: "It would have been finer for him if that man had not been born," may we make excuses for Judas? No, we may not, even though needing mercy ourselves. Je-

sus, who understood the hearts of men better than any other man ever on earth, settles the matter for all who believe in the inspiration of the Bible. A careful consideration of its testimony will reveal that Judas poses no mystery whatever.—John 17:12; Matt. 26:24.

It is of interest that Judas Iscariot seems to have been the only one of the twelve apostles who was not a Galilean, he being a Judean. In his day Palestine consisted of Judea, Galilee and Samaria. The Judeans looked down upon the Galileans, and both looked down even more upon the Samaritans. Also, the Galileans had a rather uncultured dialect or accent. That is why some doubted Peter's denials of Jesus, his accent betraying him as a Galilean. It is very likely, therefore, that Judas considered himself better than the rest. His being made treasurer may also imply that he had a better education than the rest.—Matt. 26:73; Luke 22:59.

However, while such facts may throw light on Judas' disposition, they do not excuse his becoming a traitor. The Gospel writers certainly make no excuses for him. Matthew and Mark, in listing the twelve, not only place Judas last but add, "who later betrayed him"; while Luke makes it still stronger, "who turned traitor." In



fact, their righteous indignation is apparent in practically every reference they make to him.—Matt. 10:4; Mark 3:19; Luke 6:16.

JUDAS GRADUALLY WENT BAD

Nor did Jesus make any excuses for Judas. Aside from the foregoing, the only other references to Judas in the Gospel accounts, until the final week of Jesus' earthly ministry, are Jesus' strong words of condemnation of Judas, as recorded at John 6:64, 70. "Initially Jesus knew who were the ones not believing and who was the one that would betray him." Not that Jesus deliberately chose a traitor, that is wholly unthinkable, but rather that as soon as Judas' heart began going bad Jesus noticed it. In the same connection Jesus further said: "I chose you twelve, did I not? Yet one of you is a slanderer." No doubt Judas got the force of those words even if the rest failed to do so. Incidentally, the word rendered "slanderer" is *diabolos*, a word that with but few exceptions is translated "Devil."

Obviously, Judas, day in and day out, was living a lie. At the beginning of his call he rejoiced in the good news of the Kingdom that Jesus preached. And like the others, he looked for an earthly kingdom. But in his case, in the struggle between love of righteousness and love of selfish gain, the love of selfish gain won out. Finding that the following of Jesus was a narrow and cramped path of self-denial, Judas began to cheat. He refused to pay the price but rewarded himself out of the common fund with which he was entrusted, for which reason John bluntly terms him a thief. Jesus' warnings against greed and love of money fell upon deaf ears as far as Judas was concerned. Nor did he see anything inconsistent about his appropriating money from the common fund that had been contributed in appre-

ciation for spiritual and physical healing received, while at the same time Jesus his Master had "nowhere to lay down his head." In this Judas may be likened to Gehazi, the servant of Elisha, who sought to profit from his master's healing of Naaman and who was stricken with leprosy. Judas' selfishness caused him to be stricken with incurable spiritual leprosy, willful sin.—Matt. 8:20; 2 Ki. 5:1-27; Heb. 10: 26-29.

But "there is nothing hidden that will not become manifest, neither anything carefully concealed that will never become known." And so circumstances finally did make plain to all that although Judas was associated with Jesus and his apostles, he was at heart not one of them. It was pass-overtime, A.D. 33, and "the chief priests and the Pharisees had given orders that if anyone got to know where he was he should give the information, in order that they might get their hands on him." (Luke 8:17; John 11:57) Jesus and his disciples were guests at the home of Simon the leper when Mary, the sister of Lazarus and Martha, came and "took a pound of perfumed oil, genuine nard, very costly, and she poured it on the feet of Jesus and wiped his feet dry with her hair." From Matthew's and Mark's accounts it appears that she also poured this perfumed oil upon Jesus' head.—John 12:1-3.

But this was too much for greedy, dishonest and unloving Judas. As the account goes on to say: "But Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples, who was about to betray him, said: 'Why was it this perfumed oil was not sold for three hundred denarii and given to poor people?' He said this, though, not because he was concerned about the poor, but because he was a thief and had the money-box and used to carry off the monies put in it. Therefore Jesus said: 'Let her alone, that she may keep this observance in view of the day of my burial. For

you have the poor always with you, but me you will not have always.'”—John 12:4-8.

While both Matthew and Mark implicate others in this objection, from John's account it appears that these merely joined Judas in what they thought was a reasonable point, not suspecting any ulterior motive. The sting of this rebuke for making an ostensibly reasonable objection, as noted by others siding in with him, caused Judas to allow bitterness, hate and the Devil himself to enter his heart. “Then,” as Matthew tells us, “Judas Iscariot . . . went to the chief priests and said: ‘What will you give me to betray him to you?’ They stipulated to him thirty silver pieces. So from then on he kept seeking a good opportunity to betray him.”—Matt. 26:14-16; Mark 14:3-11.

The role that greed played in Judas' course will be better appreciated when we note just what was involved in the way of values. True, the thirty silver pieces or shekels, the price of a slave, may have come to as little as \$12.00. (Ex. 21:32) And the 300 denarii is valued at \$51.00. But in Jesus' day a denarius, according to *Clarke's Commentary*, was an average day's wages. At that rate the sum Judas received amounted to two and a half months' wages, while the costly perfumed oil represented a whole year's pay, considering they did not work on sabbath or feast days.—Matt. 20:2.

Further indicating the depth of Judas' depravity is his being able to meet with the twelve to celebrate the annual passover, hypocritically feigning to enter into the spirit of the occasion as did the rest. Note also his temerity on that evening to ask, after Jesus had announced that one of them would betray him: “It is not I, is it, Rabbi?” Jesus' reply, “That was for you to say,” may have sounded cryptic to the rest, but without a doubt Judas got the

full import of it, even as Judas also did of Jesus' further remarks to him, “What you are doing get done more quickly.”—Matt. 26:25; John 13:21-30.

Having dismissed Judas as one unworthy to be present, Jesus then instituted the memorial of his death, “the Lord's evening meal,” or “the Lord's supper,” as it is more commonly called. After that meal and Jesus' farewell counsel to them he and the eleven went out into the garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus prayed. Shortly thereafter, Judas “came and with him a great crowd with swords and clubs from the chief priests and older men of influence of the people. And going straight up to Jesus he said: ‘Good day, Rabbi!’ and kissed him very tenderly. But Jesus said to him: ‘Fellow, for what purpose are you present?’” “Judas, do you betray the Son of man with a kiss?”—Matt. 26:47, 49, 50; Luke 22:48.

NOT DESERVING OF PITY

A murderer may kill in cold blood and then, seeing the results of his crime, feel remorse. It was that way with Judas. His deed was not one done on the spur of the moment due to pressure and fleshly weakness, as was the case with Peter's denial of his Master three times. No, with Judas there was involved malice, pride, hypocrisy, scheming and sticking to a predetermined course. It is also necessary to bear in mind that because of his bad heart condition Satan was able to enter and spur him on. That he afterward felt remorse because of the burden of guilt or of its penalty does not excuse him. Like Esau, he shed tears in vain. He himself realized that fact, and being unable to live with himself any longer he committed suicide, admitting moral bankruptcy. So we read: “Then Judas, who betrayed him, seeing he had been condemned, felt remorse and turned the thirty silver pieces back.” The

priests refusing the money, Judas then "threw the silver pieces into the temple and withdrew, and went off and hanged himself."—Matt. 27:3-10.

In passing let it be noted that while Bible critics make much of the fact that Matthew's account given above differs from what Peter said about Judas "pitching head foremost he noisily burst in his midst and all his intestines were poured out," they do not contradict each other. It has been suggested that Judas hanged himself from a tree on a craggy terrain. The rope or branch breaking, Judas' end could be just as described by Peter.—Acts 1:16-18.

Thus the facts as recorded in the Scriptures help us to understand why Jesus referred to Judas as "the son of destruction" and why he said of him that "it would have been finer for him if that man had not been born." There is no justification for theorizing about "the mystery of Judas"; and to try to make excuses for him will lead us into the twofold snare of rebellion and carelessness.

Since God's judgment makes Judas' case hopeless, it is rebellion on our part to extend him sympathy. This rule God repeatedly stated in his dealings with his people Israel. Thus when Nadab and Abihu were struck dead by Jehovah for offering

illegitimate fire, Jehovah warned that Aaron and his remaining sons should not mourn for them. When Samuel mourned over Saul's rejection as king, God rebuked him for it. And repeatedly we read of Jeremiah's being told regarding his willfully wicked people: "Pray not thou for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me; for I will not hear thee." Our attitude at all times must be as expressed: "Great and wonderful are your works, Jehovah God, the Almighty. Righteous and true are your ways, King of eternity."—Jer. 7:16, AS; Rev. 15:3.

And for us to hold out hope for Judas would encourage us to become careless. If there is hope for the archtraitor, the betrayer of the Son of God, there will also be hope for us regardless of what we may do, since we simply could not descend that low, God's Son nevermore coming to earth as a man. But no, we must realize that Judas must have started out right or Jesus would not have chosen him. But he permitted selfishness to get the upper hand and eventually surrendered to the Devil. His end therefore forcibly drives home to us the counsel found at Proverbs 4:23: "More than all else that is to be guarded, safeguard your heart, for out of it are the sources of life."

Literacy Campaign Among Mexicans Appreciated

¶ Most of the 3,000 illiterate Mexicans who enrolled in the reading and writing classes of Jehovah's witnesses in February, 1956, successfully finished the course by December of that year, and since February, 1957, 1,500 more enrolled. The 1958 *Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses* in reporting on this activity quoted the following excerpt of a letter received from a Mexican school official in Veracruz, which is indicative of the way his government feels about this activity of the witnesses:

"I am grateful for your co-operation, and in behalf of the state government I convey to you their most sincere congratulations for your noble progressive work for the benefit of the people in bringing the light of knowledge to the illiterate. . . . I wish you success in your educational work." Incidentally, if the comparative handful of Jehovah's witnesses can accomplish so much in such a short time, what could the world's largest religious organization, which practically ran the country for four centuries, have accomplished had she really had the interests of the Mexican at heart?

Hospitality at Gilead's 30th Graduation

THE thirtieth class of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead graduated Sunday, February 9, 1958. The occasion will long be remembered by those who were present. Never before had the weather outside been so inhospitable, with its gray skies and blustery zero winter weather. And never before had hospitality been so stressed both in word and in action inside Gilead. Not only was there the usual very warm welcome by the students and by members of the Kingdom Farm family, on which farm the school is situated, but the main discourse of more than an hour was on the subject of showing spiritual hospitality. And to top it off, material hospitality was shown to some six hundred impromptu guests that had to stay over until Monday morning because of impassable roads.

But in spite of such weather, graduation Sunday morning saw 1,687 present. Most of these had arrived the evening before, coming from twenty-nine different states and four Canadian provinces, from as far away as Florida in the southeast to British Columbia in the northwest. The program, as usual, began at 9 a.m. with a favorite Kingdom song, which was followed by a prayer by Ulysses Glass, occasional Gilead instructor. Then brief, warm farewell talks filled with pointed Scriptural admonition were given by John Markus, the farm "servant," and by the four school instructors: Harold Jackson, Karl Adams, Maxwell Friend and A. D. Schroeder. Next, the numerous telegrams and cablegrams received from many parts of the world were read or acknowledged.

The main talk was given by N. H. Knorr, president of the Watch Tower Bible & Tract Society as well as of Gilead School. His subject was "Hospitality, a Responsibility." Most effectively he by logic, Scrip-

tural references and apt illustrations made his points, among which were: Hospitality primarily means showing love to strangers, to those we do not know. Hospitality thinks of others, shares with others; as Christians we must share our spiritual blessings with those conscious of their spiritual need. The Scriptures give many striking examples of hospitality, beginning with Jehovah God, Jesus Christ, faithful men of old, such as Abraham, Lot, Manoah, and the early Christians. The world is built upon selfishness. To show hospitality today takes strength and integrity, because one must run counter to the spirit of the world. Hospitality attracts men of good will and is richly rewarded by God.—Rom. 12:13, 14, 16; 1 Cor. 4:12, 13; Matt. 5:43-48.

At the conclusion of the talk Knorr, assisted by the registrar, Schroeder, handed out the diplomas. There were 109 graduating, whose ages ranged from eighteen to sixty-six years. They had come from England, Canada and the United States and were being sent to twenty-four different countries. A spokesman for the class then read a letter of sincere appreciation for the training they had received at Gilead as well as all the benefits that went with it.

The evening before, 1,358 were on hand for the weekly *Watchtower* study and the musical program by the students that followed. Sunday afternoon from two to four o'clock the students had opportunity to express themselves. At the conclusion of this program came the surprise announcement that Highway 34, on which Gilead is situated, still was impassable in both directions. Those unable to get quarters close by remained until the next morning when, with clear roads and sunny skies, all were soon on their way back home.

MAN

Free and Responsible



THE great Creator, the Supreme Being, Jehovah God, is the prime example of freedom and responsibility. As his Word tells us, there was a time when he was alone. At that time he was without any responsibility. Had he chosen, he could have ever continued in this carefree condition. But because he is love he put his attributes of wisdom and power to work, thereby becoming morally responsible for the lives, well-being and happiness of his creatures. Because of his greatness and supremacy, however, he is nevertheless accountable only to himself, even as the book of Job so clearly shows.

Even as Jehovah recognizes the responsibilities that come with his acts, he also recognizes those that his very words bring. His promises therefore can be relied upon. They are no mere scrap of paper or vain breath, but are as dependable and enduring as the Rock of Gibraltar, yes, and more so, even as he assures us: "I have spoken, I will also bring it to pass." And again, "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me

void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it."—Isa. 46:11; 55:11, AS. God, in creating man in his image, not only gave man a capacity for intelligence and a moral sense, a measure of his love, justice, wisdom and power, but also gave man a measure of his freedom and corresponding responsibilities. Freedom and responsibility, in fact, are correlative, the one involves and implies the other. Freedom brings with it the responsibility to choose, and by making a choice one assumes further responsibilities.

Thereby man differs greatly from the inanimate creation. The bodies in the starry heavens move in assigned orbits at certain rates of speed according to God's immutable laws. Likewise does man greatly differ from the brute creation who are subject to instincts and the vicissitudes of their environment. Neither the inanimate creation nor the brute creation is therefore morally accountable to the Creator.

But man is. He was given the capacity for being reliable and so was entrusted with certain interests and made answerable for them. Consistent therewith, God communicated to man His will regarding him in the form of mandates or commands: "Be fruitful and become many and fill the earth and subdue it, and have in subjection" all the brute creation. "From every tree of the garden you may eat to satisfaction. But as for the tree of the knowledge

of good and bad you must not eat from it, for in the day you eat from it you will positively die." These commands man was free to obey or disobey, being responsible, of course, for the consequences of his choice.—Gen. 1:28; 2:16, 17.

Throughout the life of man freedom and responsibility are relative matters. When he is born into the world as a helpless infant he is wholly without freedom and responsibility. As he grows in physical strength and knowledge and understanding he gains a measure of freedom and becomes correspondingly responsible. By the time he becomes an adult he is free and responsible to choose his course in life, his religion, whether or not to marry, and whom to marry, and, depending upon his capabilities and environment, is comparatively free to choose his trade or profession or means of gaining a livelihood. To the extent that he has matured mentally and emotionally, to that extent he will delight in this freedom and not look back longingly to childhood's carefree days.

"THE FLIGHT FROM RESPONSIBILITY"

Particularly during the past seventy-five years, however, certain worldly-wise men, denying that man was created by God and in his mental image, have done their worst to undermine the sense of responsibility that should be man's by reason of his freedom. They have built a philosophy of life around the Big Excuse. No matter what crime a man may commit, no matter how woefully short he may fall of carrying out his obligations, they can always find an excuse. They do not note that there are countless others who are in identical situations but who do not commit such crimes or fall so short. Rather, they prefer to excuse the wrongdoer on the basis of his imagined brute ancestry, his childhood training or his environment. Men such as Freud would even make man a

slave of his sex instincts, as though his brain were a mere appendage of his sex organs. Thus they would rob man of his responsibility to exercise self-control, of his obligation to do his best under all circumstances. They would deny the just logic of God's requirement that we treat others the way we want them to treat us. Thereby they also deny that man is free.

A like folly is "progressive education," so popular in many parts of the United States. It proceeds upon the theory that a child must not be required to exert and discipline himself and so learning must be made to appeal to his immature mind and inclinations. He is promoted automatically at the end of the term regardless of what he has learned, thereby robbing him of both incentive and responsibility. No wonder that the products of such education are found to be so woefully lacking in the professional, commercial and industrial fields and why such are more concerned with what a job offers in the way of vacations with pay and sick benefits than with what it has to offer in the way of a future.

The economic trend in Western lands is likewise toward relieving men of responsibility. It is seen in the deductions the employer makes for taxes, unemployment and old-age benefits, etc. Also, man becomes less and less personally responsible for any one finished product that would reflect his abilities, industry and integrity. As the late Dr. Alexis Carrell, one of the leading biologists of the twentieth century, shows in his book *Man, the Unknown*, material prosperity, modern inventions and mass production are combining to rob man of his sense of responsibility, of his personality and dignity, making him ever more like a robot, morally flabby; all of which, according to Carrell, bodes ill for mankind.

This modern trend is further seen in family life. Parents flee from responsibili-

ties they incurred by bringing children into the world, letting their children grow up as weeds. Children refuse to accept any responsibility in the home or toward other members of the family. Fathers follow the line of least resistance rather than shouldering their responsibilities, and mothers all too often shirk the responsibilities peculiarly theirs, while usurping those of the fathers. Husbands and wives ignore the responsibilities they have toward each other's mental, emotional and physical well-being, while lovers show the same disposition by trifling with each other's affections. Well has L. A. Alesen, M.D., termed this "*the flight from personal responsibility.*"

The most serious aspect of this flight from responsibility is seen in the field of religion. As noted in a newspaper report on the "State of the Churches," as given out by the National Council of Churches of the United States: "Interest in religion appears to be at an all-time high, with church membership over 100 million, but delinquency, immorality and social confusion also are at peaks." (*Progress Bulletin*, Pomona, California, December 3, 1957) Even as prophetically foretold, men show a form of godly devotion by becoming "church" members, but they deny its responsibilities by proving false to its power. The example of others and specious reasoning, termed "rationalization," are used by such to justify them in their irresponsible course.—2 Tim. 3:1-5.

This flight from responsibility can be seen even among some who recognize the trueness of the message brought to them by the witnesses of Jehovah. Such refuse to have a Bible study in their homes because they are afraid of the responsibilities that come from becoming a witness of Jehovah. Others, again, are like the stony or the thorny ground in which the seed prospers for a time. But when faced

with responsibilities they flee from them, and so let the seed of truth die. In fact, even among dedicated Christians there are some who shrink from conducting home Bible studies with persons or accepting added privileges of service in a congregation because of not wanting to shoulder the responsibilities that come with these. In passing, it might be noted that doubtless one reason why the atheist denies and the agnostic questions the existence of the Creator is that, either consciously or unconsciously, they do not want to accept the responsibility that comes from acknowledging the Creator's existence. To do so means to recognize that we owe Him both gratitude and obedience.

CHRISTIAN RESPONSIBILITIES

By reason of the fact that the truth makes a Christian free he thereby becomes more accountable. As the apostle Paul states: "For each one will carry his own load of responsibility." However, both these are relative, and one of the things they depend upon is knowledge: "If one knows how to do what is right and yet does not do it, it is a sin for him." And as Jesus said regarding his opposers: "If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin."—Gal. 6:5; Jas. 4:17; John 15:22.

And as one acts upon knowledge he becomes more responsible. Thus one who dedicates himself to God must carry out that dedication: "Whenever you vow a vow to God, do not hesitate to pay it, . . . What you vow, pay. Better is it that you vow not than that you vow and do not pay."—Eccl. 5:4, 5.

To guide us in paying our vows God has given us his Word, the Bible. It, however, does not tell us individually what to do in specific instances. Rather, it sets out basic principles or rules of conduct and then it

becomes our responsibility to apply these in our daily lives. We individually must draw the line as to what things belong to Caesar and what things to God, to give but one illustration.—Matt. 22:21.

Additionally, every Christian has the responsibility to bear fruit, even as Jesus showed. (John 15:2) Among such fruitage is "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faith, mildness, self-control." That includes helping our Christian brothers to the extent we have opportunity and means. We may not be like the priest and the Levite who tried to brush off their responsibility to the traveler who had been beaten and robbed by walking on the other side of the street. Rather, we must be like the good Samaritan who went out of his way to help the one in distress.—Gal. 5:22, 23; Luke 10:29-37.

And since Jesus came to earth for the very purpose of bearing "witness to the truth," Christian fruit bearing includes preaching 'this good news of God's kingdom' to the extent that one has knowledge and opportunity to do so. We may not be like the one-mina or one-talent slave of Jesus' illustrations who refused to shoulder responsibility for his master's goods but hid it away in the ground, when he could at least have put it out to interest

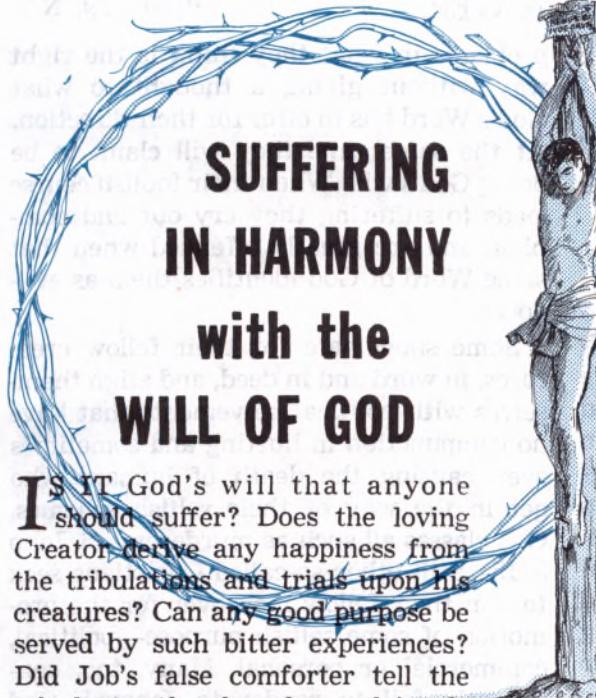
and realized some increase. Rather, we must feel as did Paul, who exclaimed: "Really, woe is me if I did not declare the good news!" He recognized his responsibilities and shouldered them.—John 18:37; 1 Cor. 9:16.

Another sphere of Christian responsibility that it seems well to stress is that accruing from our sins and shortcomings. We should have a sensitive conscience regarding these and continually beg forgiveness of God on the basis of Christ's sacrifice. But more than that, we must also shoulder moral responsibility for these. We may not blame God or our parents or our circumstances; neither may we blame the other fellow as did Adam, as did Eve and as did King Saul. To do so not only is unloving and shows a lack of maturity, but also indicates that we are not truly repentant and therefore not deserving of forgiveness.

Being free, we must shoulder our responsibilities. To do so requires a keen sense of justice as well as wisdom and love. As we mature we should increase in responsibility. Meeting its challenges, we will grow stronger, receive increasing satisfactions and joys and finally God's approval and reward of everlasting life in his new world.

"Lord, Here Am I, Send Me!"

¶ At a home in Sumatra, Indonesia, where she was conducting a Bible study, a Watch Tower missionary was asked if the witnesses sang songs. She replied that they did and then taught the family the song entitled "Lord, Here Am I; Send Me!" They thought the song truly beautiful, but one member of the family observed that the missionary was the only one who had a right to sing that song, as Jehovah had not sent them. The missionary then showed them how they too could share in serving Jehovah and be sent by him. Imagine her surprise when at the next call she found that, acting upon her suggestions, they had obtained seven subscriptions for the *Watchtower* magazine among their friends and expressed their desire to attend the coming congregational *Watchtower* study. They came the following Sunday and no one sang the song "Lord, Here Am I; Send Me!" more earnestly than did this family.—1958 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses.



SUFFERING IN HARMONY with the WILL OF GOD

IS IT God's will that anyone should suffer? Does the loving Creator derive any happiness from the tribulations and trials upon his creatures? Can any good purpose be served by such bitter experiences? Did Job's false comforter tell the whole truth when he exclaimed: "Not from mere dust does what is hurtful go forth, and from mere ground trouble does not spring up. For man himself is born for trouble, as the very sparks fly upward"?—Job 5:6, 7.

When Peter and his companions in the Christian ministry were seized and flogged by the religio-political authorities of the Jewish nation and forbidden to speak in the name of Jesus, they "went their way . . . rejoicing because they had been counted worthy to be dishonored in behalf of his name." (Acts 5:41) The vast majority of their contemporaries in Palestine no doubt took the view that they had acted foolishly, had brought the trouble upon themselves, and were only suffering the due punishment for their folly. Nobody would bother them if they kept their religion to themselves. But they did not, and suffered for it, and rejoiced in the experience, contrary to all expectations.



Those apostles were not fanatics filled with unreasoning, uncontrollable emotions that rendered them insensible to the cruelties and hardships that beset them. This fact is certified by their lucid arguments and their sympathetic concern for all their fellow Christians. They were not insulated from the frailties and sufferings of other creatures by self-imposed penances and self-inflicted pains. Following in the steps of their Leader, they never went looking for trouble or for a martyr's crown, but when fiery trials came upon them as a result of their faithful performance of the ministry they stood firm and rejoiced. How could they do this?

Those early Christian ministers well knew that in Eden God had decreed unremitting warfare between the offspring (seed) of the wicked and the offspring of the righteous. (Gen. 3:15) That continued state of war would produce its long train of sufferings, sorrows and casualties, but with what vividly contrasting effects! To those espousing the cause of wickedness—uncertainty, fearfulness, bitterness and hopelessness; but to those loving and supporting righteousness—confidence, boldness, fortitude and strong hope with peace. (Prov. 6:22, 23; Gal. 5:22) History continues to fulfill that long-range decree. Since that Edenic judgment day it is God's will that those creatures who would stand firm in their allegiance to him should endure the hatred and opposition of his enemies and give proof of their integrity under test. We can bring happiness to the loving Father in heaven by faithful endurance amid Devil-inspired sufferings, for here is his own precious counsel to those who would gain approval: "Be wise, my son, and make my heart rejoice, that I may make a reply to him that is taunting

me." (Prov. 27:11) What better reply for the great taunter, Satan, than our steadfast endurance throughout all his devilish pressures, so proving him the archliar and demonstrating our love and confidence in the Supreme Sovereign!

EXAMINE THE CAUSE OF SUFFERING

It becomes vitally important, then, to examine the cause and source of our sufferings in order to determine whether we are suffering according to the will of God or not. Certainly if we are not happy in the experience, then there must be something wrong and it may be an indication that we are not enduring in the right cause. Jesus declared: "Happy are you when people reproach you and persecute you and lyingly say every kind of wicked thing against you for my sake. Rejoice and leap for joy, since your reward is great in the heavens." (Matt. 5:11, 12) That does not mean that the happy sufferer will always have a grin on his face or a light-hearted tune on his lips. However, it does mean that he will have a deep-down sense of satisfaction derived from a conscience that is void of offense toward God. (1 Pet. 3:21) He must have the conviction that his tribulations do stem from his whole-hearted support of Jehovah's side of the universal issue. Do you have this satisfaction and this conviction?

Multitudes there are who apply to themselves the name of Christian and who undergo sufferings and trials throughout life, entertaining the stubborn belief that they are suffering undeservedly. Some are always so busily engaged in reforming others or giving them expert advice that they never have time to consider and correct their own glaring follies. How horrified they are when the unvarnished charge of being busybodies in other people's matters is leveled against them! Others sort out their domestic and marital and health-care

problems in what they think is the right way without giving a thought to what God's Word has to offer for their direction. At the same time they will claim to be doing God's will. When their foolish course leads to suffering they cry out and complain and are greatly offended when that same Word of God identifies them as evildoers.

Some show hate for their fellow creatures, in word and in deed, and align themselves with political movements that have no compunction in hurting and sometimes even causing the death of humans who get in the way of their selfish schemes. God classes all such as murderers. (1 John 3:15) Still other so-called Christians seek to win their fellow men over for the promotion of some selfish purpose—political, commercial or personal. Many, too, consistently fail to render to Jehovah God the honor and service and worship that are due him. All such ones are viewed by the Omnipotent One as cheats and thieves.—2 Sam. 15:6; Mal. 3:8, 9, AV.

All these types of people are unhappy, spiteful, embittered, when adversity hits them. They have given no attention to the warning expressed by the apostle Peter: "Let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a busybody in other people's matters." (1 Pet. 4:15) While flouting Jehovah's laws and ignoring his present-day comforting message of the Kingdom, they claim to be suffering for righteousness' sake. By their foolish course and complaining attitude they are really finding fault with the perfect and loving Sovereign of the universe.—Rom. 9:20.

SUFFERING FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS' SAKE

The reaction of true Christians to suffering contrasts so refreshingly. While doing God's will and serving his purpose, they bear all things patiently. They know why

they are called upon to suffer, and ever before their eyes is the Leader and Perfecter of their faith, Jesus, who "in the days of his flesh" suffered many things and "learned obedience from the things he suffered," perfect man though he was. (Heb. 5:7, 8) And even he took his troubles, his supplications and his tears to the God of all comfort, his heavenly Father. What a grand example for us! Here is one great source of power to endure: constant, close communion with our Father and our God. Remember, of Moses it was said that he "continued steadfast as seeing the one that is invisible."—Heb. 11:27.

We cannot afford to ever overlook the marvelous disciplinary effect of suffering for righteousness' sake. Paul was doubtless drawing upon his study of the ancient holy writings when he wrote for our benefit: "No discipline seems for the present to be joyous, but grievous; yet afterward to those who have been trained by it it yields peaceable fruit, namely, righteousness." (Heb. 12:11; Prov. 3:11, 12) Are we being trained by the discipline of Jehovah? The answer is Yes, if we maintain genuine happiness through the experiences of our ministry and go on faithfully and uncomplainingly serving. Our own disposition, opposition in our own household, the continual contrary talk of sinners, hatred from the world—whatever may be the immediate cause of our sufferings—we should main-

tain the right spirit if we are truly suffering in harmony with the will of God. (Gal. 5:22) Surely his mighty hand is molding and preparing us for greater and still happier privileges of service ahead in the new world. Peter therefore appropriately encourages us to "go on rejoicing forasmuch as you are sharers in the sufferings of the Christ, that you may rejoice and be overjoyed also during the revelation of his glory."—1 Pet. 4:13.

That revelation in power when he is taking vengeance upon his enemies is now at hand. Finished now is the time for patient endurance of his Father's reproachers. In the flesh Jesus willingly accepted the reproach and shame, but now the tables are turned and the entire host of God's enemies will go off into shameful and utter defeat. The glory of that victory already seems to envelop the courageous warriors of the new world's King as they now 'take their part in suffering evil.'—2 Tim. 2:3.

As the final attack of Gog and his forces draws near, and therefore also the time of greatest suffering, let all of Jehovah's servants stand firm. Take comfort from the promise kindly given us: "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 Cor. 10:13.

'Christendom Stands in the Way'

¶ A former editor of *The Christian Century*, Charles Clayton Morrison, has gone on record, saying: "We have allowed Christendom to belie its own Christianity. It is Christendom that stands in the way of the world triumph of Christianity. In the Orient and in all non-Christian lands Christ is loved and the missionaries who teach his way of life are held in high esteem, but when statesmen and students come from afar to our shores and behold Christendom after nineteen centuries of Christian influence they turn back to their own faiths and traditions unconvinced and unpersuaded."

Acting on Wise Sayings for Our Day

“JEHOVAH himself gives wisdom; out of his mouth there are knowledge and discernment.” Let worldly-wise men scoff at those words; the Christian witnesses of Jehovah have proved for themselves that acting upon God’s Word is indeed the course of wisdom for our day. By means of their preaching activity the scripture is being fulfilled: “True wisdom itself keeps crying aloud in the very street. In the public squares it keeps giving forth its voice. At the upper end of the noisy streets it calls out.”—Prov. 2:6; 1:20, 21.*

Why should we heed the call of wisdom? Because it tells us how to get life, everlasting life in fact, and without life we cannot enjoy anything. As we read: “Happy is the man that has found wisdom, . . . It is a tree of life to those taking hold of it, and those keeping fast hold of it are to be called happy.” And wanting to gain life, everlasting life, is not selfish, for God intended man to live forever in the first place and planted in man a strong love of life. Not to want to live forever would be showing a lack of appreciation, would be spurning God’s greatest gift.—Prov. 3:13, 18.

While the entire Word of God is a veritable library of divine wisdom, particularly does the book of Proverbs contain wise sayings for our day that we do well to act upon: “The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of knowledge” and “of wisdom.” “The name of Jehovah is a strong tower.” “More than all else that is to be guarded, safeguard your heart.” “Trust in Jehovah with all your heart and do not lean upon your own understanding.” “The generous soul will itself be made fat, and the one freely watering [others] will himself also

be freely watered.” “A true witness is delivering souls.”—Prov. 1:7; 9:10; 18:10; 4:23; 3:5; 11:25; 14:25.

We do well, therefore, to take heed to this divine wisdom, giving our hearts, our whole attention, to the Divine Instructor, even as he counsels us to do: “My son, do give your heart to me and may those eyes of yours take pleasure in my own ways.” That means, first of all, taking in knowledge by studying God’s Word. And then acquiring wisdom by using that knowledge in a right way, with good results to ourselves. And finally, we must also acquire understanding, for: “Wisdom is the prime thing. Acquire wisdom, and with all that you acquire, acquire understanding.” To have understanding means to be able to see something in its connected parts, know how and why they belong together, and to see all this in relation to God. With all Solomon’s wisdom he still lost out because he failed to keep in mind his relationship with Jehovah. He neglected understanding.—Prov. 23:26; 4:7.

Acting on these wise sayings that God has given us for our day means that we will let the fear of Jehovah deter us from a wicked or foolish course; it means that we will put full confidence in Jehovah, taking his name upon us and making it known to others. It also means that we will be careful of our hearts, that our affections are on the right things and that our motive is pure. Also that we will show ourselves generous, especially as regards spiritual things, eager to share with others the good things we have learned from God’s Word, thereby proving to be true witnesses delivering souls. Thus acting on these wise sayings for our day, we ‘will certainly find life and get good will from Jehovah.’—Prov. 8:35.

* For details see *The Watchtower*, November 1, 1957.

"I have called out
but you keep refusing,
... and you keep
neglecting all my counsel,
and my reproof
you have not accepted."
—Prov. 1:24, 25.

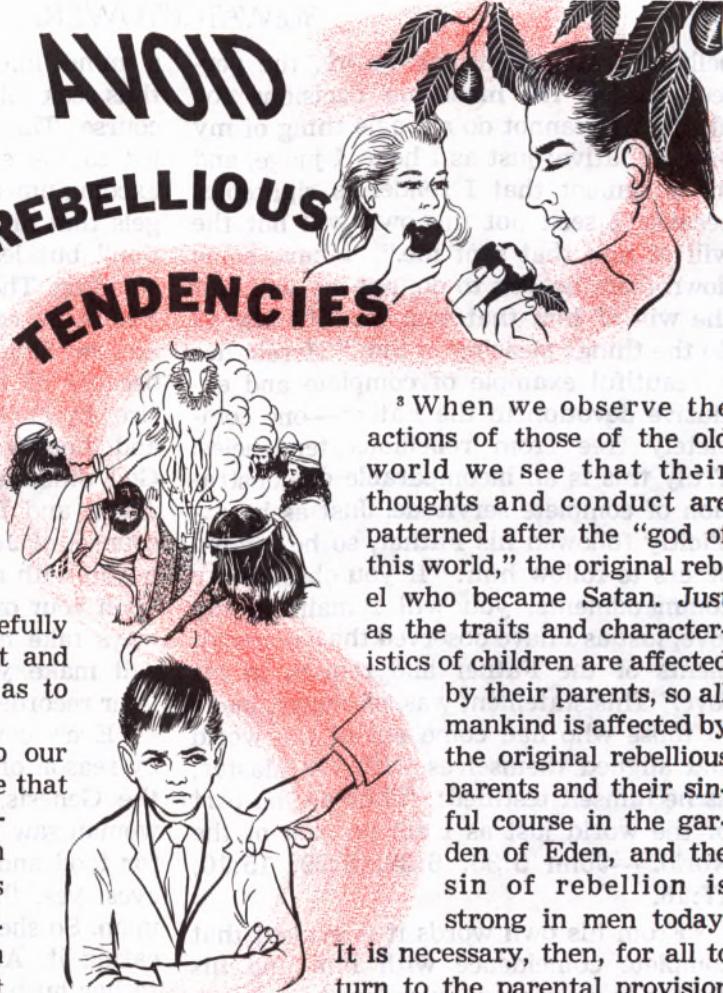


REBELLION was the first act of sin, in heaven and in earth. It resulted in the adverse judgment to those who followed a rebellious course. Now, because the first rebel is making his final stand against Jehovah and His loyal servants, using diverse and subtle means, it behooves all to scrutinize carefully thoughts, motives, conduct and every form of behavior, so as to be on guard.

In being on guard as to our thoughts, we should recognize that man's judgment or conclusions are correct only when they concur with Jehovah's as manifested through his Word. When they are at variance in any way, it discloses that there is a tendency to be guided by the thoughts of creatures. This is a form of rebellion. It may be only slight at the beginning, but when continually tainted by the wayward thoughts and decisions of men, it can lead to the condition spoken of by James: "But each one is tried by being drawn out and enticed by his own desire. Then the desire, when it has become fertile, gives birth to sin; in turn, sin, when it has been accomplished, brings forth death."—Jas. 1:14, 15.

1, 2. What was the first type of sin? What may be responsible for it, and how does it culminate?

AVOID REBELLIOUS TENDENCIES



When we observe the actions of those of the old world we see that their thoughts and conduct are patterned after the "god of this world," the original rebel who became Satan. Just as the traits and characteristics of children are affected by their parents, so all mankind is affected by the original rebellious parents and their sinful course in the garden of Eden, and the sin of rebellion is strong in men today.

It is necessary, then, for all to turn to the parental provision made by Jehovah God for man,

namely, his Son Jesus Christ. (John 3:16) Not that individuals then receive a new birth physically, but this acceptance of the Son is by making the mind over and obtaining a "new personality which through accurate knowledge is being renewed according to the image of the one who created it."—Col. 3:10.

Christ Jesus followed the perfect course, being entirely free from any re-

3. What determines people's conduct, and how can it be changed?

4, 5. (a) Upon what was Jesus' perfect example based?
(b) Why is complete subjection to the Father's will so important?

bellious traits, being, therefore, the perfect model. He made no decisions for himself. "I cannot do a single thing of my own initiative; just as I hear, I judge, and the judgment that I render is righteous, because I seek not my own will but the will of him that sent me." "I have come down from heaven to do, not my will, but the will of him that sent me." "I always do the things pleasing to him." Herein lies a beautiful example of complete and exclusive devotion to the Father—one completely free from rebellious tendencies. Truly this is an incomparable demonstration of complete servitude. Just as he explicitly followed his Father, so he invited others to follow him: "If you observe my commandments, you will remain in my love, just as I have observed the commandments of the Father and remain in his love." This statement was, of course, made to those who had come out of the world and aligned themselves with the Master; as he himself testified: "They are no part of the world just as I am no part of the world."—John 5:30; 6:38; 8:29; 15:10; 17:16.

⁵ From his own words it is evident that complete coincidence with him and his Father is mandatory in order to be recognized as children. Digression is therefore displeasing, constituting a rebellion against what is right. Therefore, decisions governing actions and deeds and motives must be well guarded to avoid rebellion.

⁶ The Father established righteous instructions; and inasmuch as they are perfect and exacting, liberties may not be taken by either angels or men. A prominent heavenly creature took a traitorous or insubordinate course personally at the garden of Eden and then induced others to follow. Those of a rebellious nature almost always seek to get others to be of

a mind like the one they are of, and thus seek followers to their own rebellious course. The rebel's course in this regard led to his expulsion. Disfellowshiping or excommunication resulted later to the "angels that did not keep their original position" but leaned upon their own understanding. The first human pair, Adam and Eve, were exiled from the paradise home and dwelling place given them by Jehovah, because of their selfish and covetous desire, by choosing to listen to the Serpent and thereby renouncing the true word of God. Since Jehovah 'changes not,' no doubt Adam and Eve were well aware of such counsel of Jehovah as this: "Trust in Jehovah with all your heart and do not lean upon your own understanding. In all your ways take notice of him, and he himself will make your paths straight," as was later recorded at Proverbs 3:5, 6.—Jude 6.

⁷ Eve's course of rebellion came about by reason of deception, as we notice from the Genesis account: "Consequently the woman saw that the tree's fruit was good for food and that it was a delight to the eyes, yes, the tree was desirable to look upon. So she began taking of its fruit and eating it. Afterward she gave some also to her husband when with her and he began eating it." Adam's course of rebellion was deliberate and without remorse, and brought with it the adverse judgment of Jehovah against him and also his wife. —Gen. 3:6, 17-19.

FORSAKING JEHOVAH

⁸ Even though having this historical record of what happened first in the garden of Eden and subsequently at the time of the Deluge, as well as Jehovah's might displayed in the Israelites' behalf when he delivered them from the oppressive hand of the Egyptians, the Israelites turned to

6. What results when a creature takes personal liberties with Jehovah's Word?

7. While sin resulted to both, what was the difference between Eve's sin and Adam's violation?
8, 9. What rebellious error did the Israelites commit?

a course of self-reliance, forsaking the favored position that Jehovah had given them among the nations. Besides having the written word of God to direct them, they had direct testimony from their forefathers of the remarkable display of Jehovah's strength and love expressed in their behalf. Jehovah even went beyond this in providing safeguards for his people when he gave them a law through Moses. Not only did he give them the Ten Commandments, by the direct writing of his own finger, but many other laws on lesser matters were given for safeguarding their conduct and every action.

⁹ When they went into the land given them by Jehovah they were especially warned by him of the idol-worshiping practices of the resident heathen. The command was given to tear down all the places of Baal worship so they might not be ensnared. Their failure to carry this out was direct disobedience. Where strict adherence to Jehovah's Word was slackened, many of the Israelites turned their attention to this false worship that they were commanded to destroy, and so their rebellion led to their bondage to false worship. It was once necessary for Joash to challenge the power of the false god Baal by saying to the Israelites: "Will you be the ones to make a legal defense for Baal to see whether you yourselves may save him? Whoever makes a legal defense for him ought to be put to death." (Judg. 6:31) In his having given this challenge, it shows that some followed this idolatrous practice and endeavored to support and champion this foreign religion, in defiance of Jehovah's command to destroy every vestige of it.

¹⁰ Further, the Israelites were advised not to set up for themselves a carved image of stone or wood in their land and bow

down to it, as this would be practicing a worship similar to that of the heathen nations round about them. Notice the appropriateness of the instruction given in the twenty-sixth chapter of Leviticus: "If you continue walking in my statutes and keeping my commandments and you do carry them out, then I shall certainly give your showers of rain at their proper time and the land will indeed give its yield and the tree of the field will give its fruit. And your threshing will certainly reach to your grape gathering." (Lev. 26:3-5) In this same chapter he goes on to show how he will provide for all their needs and will even help and be with them as they remove the strangers from the land. However, warning as to penalties that would be invoked for failure to obey is shown at verses 14-16: "If you will not listen to me nor do all these commandments, and if you will reject my statutes . . . to the extent of your violating my covenant, then I for my part shall do the following to you and in punishment I shall certainly bring upon you sudden terror." This language was very plain; yet we find the Israelites disregarding these decrees. This was a course of rebellion. It may actually have started in a small way, but, when persisted in, led to complete disobedience and resulted in Jehovah's disfavor. From this we must learn to obey, not rebel.

¹¹ For rebellion against covenant agreements on the part of man or woman in Israel, disciplinary action was definitely taken. Instruction was given to those in the nation who were in responsible positions to see that the violators were removed and stoned, because they were worthy of death (disfellowshiped) as the result of profaning God's Word. In fact, if those who were entrusted with the responsibility to keep the activities of the nation

10. What was the comparable position of the Israelites in Jehovah's eyes when obedient and when rebellious?

11. (a) What penalty was inflicted upon the violators?
(b) What was incumbent upon those in authority?

clean and free from rebellion failed, they would receive Jehovah's adverse judgment as well; for this showed a reliance on their own ideas, and a failure to carry out God's requirements resulted. They had the greater responsibility. This is illustrated at Deuteronomy 17:2-7: "In case there should be found in your midst in one of your cities that Jehovah your God is giving you a man or a woman who should practice what is bad in the eyes of Jehovah your God so as to overstep his covenant, and he should go and worship other gods and bow down to them or to the sun or the moon or all the army of the heavens, a thing that I have not commanded, and it has been told you and you have heard it and have searched thoroughly and, look! the thing is established as the truth, this detestable thing has been done in Israel! then you must bring that man or that woman who has done this bad thing out to your gates, yes, the man or the woman, and you must stone such one with stones and such one must die. . . . and you must clear out what is bad from your midst." It was incumbent upon the responsible ones to see that all manner of rebellious acts by those who had forsaken Jehovah were removed. It was clear that Jehovah detested rebellion and demanded that his people be kept from its uncleanness.

¹² Freely associating with those of the heathen nations marked the beginning of forsaking Jehovah, who required complete separation from such nations. Yet from this association contamination resulted, and soon many of the nation of Israel became of the same heart attitude as those of the heathen. So they said: "God never sees what we do!" (Jer. 12:4, Mo) Seemingly they thought their nefarious practices and open rebellion were not observed by God and they felt they were getting

away with something; but God's vision was never blighted. This fact he made clear by saying: "They are disappointed of their crops, by the fierce anger of the Eternal." (Jer. 12:13, Mo) Truly, when exposed, they did reap thorns. Fruitfulness could not possibly come from their deliberate rebellion—only thorns. There is no fruitful yield from loathsome works. Today, too, persons of that mind become disappointed when God's anger is exercised against them through his organization, and they are cast outside; or even if their secret deeds of evil are not known by Jehovah's visible organization so that proper disciplinary action can be taken, Jehovah is still aware of this and such ones soon become very sick spiritually, because they do not have Jehovah's favor, his blessings or his spirit any longer. Jehovah does not tolerate the lawless ones. Action taken for an insubordinate attitude even today is the same as in the days of the nation of Israel, and a rebel would be cast outside of Jehovah's favor for not adhering to his strict and righteous principles. His true servants, on the other hand, are dedicated to complete loyalty.

¹³ The sin of forsaking Jehovah is the sin of rebellion and is due to reliance on self or on the judgments of another human creature. Jeremiah had something to say in this regard: "A curse on him who relies on man, and leans upon mere human aid, turning his thoughts from the Eternal!" On forsaking Jehovah, a servant of God would find himself in the position described in these words: "For my people have done double wrong, they have forsaken me, the reservoir of fresh water, and hewn out cisterns for themselves, leaky cisterns that cannot hold any water!" Where there is no drinking in of spiritual truths, individuals suffer from spiritual thirst, and the

12. How may some people reason on wrongdoing just because they are not observed in their wayward course?

13, 14. (a) What results when relying upon personal judgment? (b) What penalties does Jehovah invoke?

continuance of this would lead to eventual death. Further, God asked ancient Israel: "How can I pardon thee? thy children have forsaken me, and sworn by them that are no gods. When I had fed them to the full, they committed adultery, and assembled themselves in troops at the harlots' houses; . . . shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?"—Jer. 17:5; 2:13, Mo; 5:5-9, AS.

¹⁴ Those who turned to instruction or counsel other than that which Jehovah gave found themselves rebuked by him directly. It is recorded at Deuteronomy 28:20: "Jehovah will send upon you the curse, confusion and rebuke in every undertaking of yours that you try to carry out until you have been annihilated and you have perished in a hurry, because of the badness of your practices in that you have forsaken me." What an utterly empty and calamitous condition for those who by their rebellious course abandoned Jehovah's law!

¹⁵ Even though much evidence was presented as to the snare of not heeding Jehovah's Word explicitly after being in covenant relationship with him, it did not end back there the matter of forsaking him. Even in Jesus' day, just before his time to be taken, Jesus recognized that under pressure some of his disciples would murmur, and he stated: "There are some of you that do not believe." When an individual no longer believes Jehovah's Word, it means that by his leaning on his personal wisdom or on the opinion of other imperfect creatures his attention has been directed away from a course of wisdom. This marks rebellion. Under such a circumstance Jesus asked his disciples: 'Do you want to go also?' The proper answer was given by Peter: "Master, Whom shall we go away to? You have sayings of everlasting life, and we have believed and come

to know that you are the Holy One of God." Those who continued in their course of murmuring forsook the Master at that time. A continued course of murmuring today will result in Jehovah's forsaking the murmurer.—John 6:64, 67-69.

¹⁶ Then the apostle Paul advised that a greater forsaking of God's way would take place later, when he stated: "I know that after my going away oppressive wolves will enter in among you and will not treat the flock with tenderness, and from among you yourselves men will rise and speak twisted things to draw away the disciples after themselves." This shows that more would rely upon their own understanding and would rebel and lead still a greater number to do the same thing. Further, Jesus warned that in the 'last days,' where we now are, there would also be a similar falling away, particularly at the time of his invisible second presence. He illustrated it by speaking of a 'foolish virgin' class that would have an inadequate supply of oil in their lamps for the period of darkness that would prevail. They were admonished to rely upon Jehovah's Word and permit it to be the governing directive in their lives, but their lamps were inadequately supplied and so they did not have spiritual light to direct them. This was the result of relying on their own judgment in the matter of spiritual things, and so many fell by the wayside.—Acts 20:29, 30; Matt. 25:1-13.

¹⁷ Let us therefore be aware and vigilant lest we fall into the snare of drawing our own conclusions and turning to a course of rebellion. To guard against such a lawless course, pages and pages of the Bible have recorded information for the guidance of those who desire righteousness and want to follow a faithful course. Je-

15. Describe the rebellious nature evidenced in Jesus' followers

16. Show what further rebelliousness would occur in the church just a little later.

17. What type of error must a Christian today guard against?

hovah does not license man's judgment to sway his organization on earth, but requires man's complete acquiescence to his divine judgment. Exclusive devotion to him is the obligation of those who have freely volunteered their servitude and dedication of life to him.—Josh. 24:19, 20.

REBELLION IN CHRISTENDOM

¹⁸ The religious divisions of Christendom have rebelled against the acceptance of Jehovah's rulership through his executive officer, Christ Jesus, at this time. Not only have they rejected the evidence presented by those who champion God's rule through his Son, but they persecute the true servants of God. While God's Word states that the Christian shall be separate from the world, they associate with and are an integral, allied part of the political and commercial elements of the world. (Jas. 4:4; 2 Cor. 6:17) God requires of Christians their abstinence from bloodguilt; yet Christendom shares freely in this sin by coalition with warring nations. Christendom has rebelled against Jehovah's righteous principles to the extent that adultery is tolerated within her realm. This she sanctions by her refusal to expel those who commit adultery and other violations. (1 Cor. 6:9, 10) They have rebelled against the supremacy of Jehovah God by supporting and championing the doctrine of the trinity, wherein Jehovah and Jesus are said to be coequal and coexistent. (John 14:28; Rev. 3:14) Rebellion is manifested in their rejection of the Bible truth that the soul dies, and in their accepting the false and pagan doctrine of the inherent immortality of the soul. (Ezek. 18:4, AS; Eccl. 9:5, 10; 1 Cor. 15:53) They are a part of the world just as were the Baal-worshiping Israelites, and are comparable

to the scribes and Pharisees of Jesus' day.—Matt. 23:9, 13, 15.

¹⁹ How evident it is, then, that the true Christian must maintain complete separation from the political, the ecclesiastical and the commercial and materialistic influences of this system of things. A returning to such course as is now followed by the world would certainly constitute reliance upon one's own mental conclusions and would be a turning away from God's Word of sound counsel. There is only one sure guide that will direct one's course aright, and that is Jehovah's Word, the Holy Bible.

AVOID MATERIALISTIC TENDENCIES

²⁰ The Christian's motive must be pure and be single in action. He must look neither to the right nor to the left; this is the pattern set by Christ Jesus, who said: 'I delight to do your will, O my God!' No other course set before him, such as the materialistic temptation by the great rebel Satan to give him all the kingdoms of the world, had any effect upon him. Paul was of the same adamant mind when stating that nothing could deter him from his single course of complete servitude to Jehovah. (Phil. 3:7-14) No other interests could overreach the apostle Paul and that included self, or material things to make his life easier.

²¹ This counsel against materialism is very well sustained in the sermon on the mountain, where Jesus advised: "Stop being anxious about your souls as to what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your bodies as to what you will wear. Does not the soul [or, life] mean more than food and the body than clothing?" (Matt. 6:25, margin) Jesus anticipated

18. (a) In what manner has nominal Christendom rebelled against Jehovah's rules and principles? (b) What contrary doctrines have they championed that dishonor Jehovah?

19. What discernment must the Christian exercise?
20. What examples do we have showing proper Christian motivation?
21. How does the sermon on the mountain warn Christians against improper evaluations of important things in life?

that some people would be very concerned about the things of this life; in fact, to such an extent that they would allow these material things and love for them to interfere with their taking up the Kingdom ministry. When our thinking is directed and continually fixed upon such fleshly desires, it means reliance upon self and upon personal judgment. Jehovah God is cognizant of the material requirements of his people and sees that their needs are provided. By our course of action we demonstrate whether we actually believe this or not. Our wants may far exceed our needs, and may cause many to be overreached or to become overanxious about their wants. Caution against this is expressed by Jesus in these words: "So never be anxious and say: 'What are we to eat?' or, 'What are we to drink?' or, 'What are we to put on?'" (Matt. 6:31) These anxieties are what the people of this old world are experiencing because of their unsatisfied desire for comfortable homes, luxurious automobiles, beautiful surroundings and many comforts of life. "For all these are the things the nations are eagerly pursuing." These are not the necessary things to carry on the ministry successfully. The reliable counsel as set forth in God's Word is: "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."—Matt. 6:32-34.

²² The Christian who patterns his life completely after Jehovah's Word will be likened to the discreet man who built his house upon the rock-mass. Then the storms and the floods and winds might lash against it, but would be unable to move it from its firm foundation. However, when the individual leans to his own understanding and turns from Jehovah's wise counsel in

this regard, turns his thoughts and attention to following a practice common to the nations, that is, to amass great wealth, then he begins deliberately to move from his house with the solid foundation and turn to a house built upon the sandy foundation of materialism. His course is one of rebellion against better knowledge, he having been thoroughly counseled as to the foolishness of such a course. The poor foundation is his own personal judgment of seeking first the wealth of the nations and putting Kingdom interests second.—Matt. 7:24-27.

²³ People who are Christians sometimes become so engrossed in their own planning and depending upon things of materialistic value that they lose sight of the most important thing, that is, living up to their dedication vow to God, and thus they expend their energy toward gaining wealth. This foolish course was foretold by Solomon: "I saw another futile thing under the sun—a lone man, kinless, without son or brother, and yet toiling on to make money; he cannot satisfy himself with what he gains, and he . . . is toiling and stinting himself of pleasure. This too is vain, a sorry business." Such a man, in seeking the money and pleasures of this world, soon rebels against and turns from the pleasure of God's service. The apostle Paul counseled: "Give orders to those who are rich in the present system of things not to be arrogant, and to rest their hope, not on uncertain riches, but on God." When one places his trust in material wealth it means he is relying on this for salvation. Money is a power and a defense, but does not lead the seeker thereof to eternal life. Rather, it is godliness with contentment that is great gain. Faithful Moses advised: "Silver and gold may increase for you and all that is yours may increase; and your heart may indeed be lifted up and you may

22. What benefits result to the person who builds on the figurative rock-mass?

23. What goals ensnare many?

indeed forget Jehovah . . . who fed you with manna." So it is better to rely upon the firm arm of Jehovah rather than on the weak support provided by wealth; or even on the strength of princes.—Eccl. 4:7, 8, Mo; 1 Tim. 6:17; Deut. 8:13, 14, 16; Pss. 118:9; 146:3.

²⁴ Those who possess wealth know that it is not the possession of it that is evil, but it is the love of it or the placing of one's salvation in it that brings evil results. As regards those who do not possess wealth but long for it, it is their constant longing for and seeking after it that brings the evil results; because this means using time and energy dedicated to Jehovah's service to attain it, and it is a course that can bring only disappointment to the seeker thereof, for even at best its sustaining power is short-lived. So how utterly foolish it is to forsake the riches of Jehovah's service for this fleeting bit of security. "Man's busy life indeed is but a phantom, making an empty ado, amassing wealth and knowing not who is to have his hoard." (Ps. 39:6, Mo) It is uncanny how the love of money invades a man's mind and becomes like a malignant growth. It readily replaces the love for God and becomes an insatiable desire. Yet it brings no lasting pleasure even to the one attaining it, as shown at Ecclesiastes 5:10-12 (Mo): "A lover of money will never be satisfied with his money, and a lover of wealth will never make anything of it (this too is vain!). The more a man gains, the more there are to spend it—while the owner can only look on. . . . the satiety of the rich keeps them from sleeping." The fallacy of material things is shown too at Proverbs 11:4 (Mo): "On the day of God's anger wealth is of no avail: goodness alone saves man from death." Frequently when an individual be-

gins to share success in a business way or materialistically, he may say: 'Well, I will spend my time this way for just a little longer and then I will have enough to take care of myself so as to be able to enter the full-time ministry.' Then more success comes his way and a repetition of such thoughts occurs. Extreme care ought to be taken lest the individual be overcome, as illustrated by Jesus in the case of the rich man who was also successful. After a while he stated: 'I have nowhere to gather my crops.' Rather than finding contentment in what he possessed, he stated: "I will do this: I will tear down my storehouses and build bigger ones, and there I will gather all my grain and all my good things, and I will say to my soul: 'Soul, you have many good things laid up for many years; take your ease, eat, drink, enjoy yourself.'" This is the natural line of reasoning when one is relying on one's own thoughts. But notice the disastrous consequences one might expect by the answer given to one who reasons along this line: "God said to him: 'Unreasonable one, this night they are demanding your soul from you. . . .' So it goes with the man that lays up treasure for himself but is not rich toward God." The apostle Paul also testified concerning the fallacy of depending upon one's own thoughts and following the course patterned by the world, saying: "You no longer go on walking just as the nations also walk in the unprofitableness of their minds, while they are in darkness mentally, and alienated from the life that belongs to God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the insensibility of their hearts." People of the world naturally are in darkness mentally and are therefore alienated from Jehovah. So to follow the pattern set by the world is an "unprofitable course," and it would be a course of rebellion against Jehovah's wise instruction. Christians are to shun

24. (a) Does the possession of wealth itself constitute sin? (b) Show how the love of money may constitute rebellion

such a course and not be deceived by the thoughts and examples of others.—Luke 12:16-21; Eph. 4:17, 18.

MURMURING

²⁵ The Israelites had many blessings during their trek from Egypt to the Promised Land, with many miracles performed in their behalf; yet they murmured against Jehovah. In this frame of mind it was not long before they lost sight of the benefits they had enjoyed at Jehovah's loving hand. They lost confidence in Jehovah and then began to lean upon their own understanding and, as the result, murmured against Him because they did not have enough of this world's goods. Though they were well fed they demanded more and better food; they demanded meat, and in their grumbling mentioned that it would have been better had they remained in bondage in Egypt. This was an out-and-out rebellious attitude on their part against Jehovah. This can be a good example for Christians today, so they do not fall into the category of rebellion by murmuring against Jehovah or even against his organization at this time. Paul admonished as to what would happen to murmurers, and definitely advised Christians to avoid this, saying: "Neither be murmurers, just as some of them murmured, only to perish by the destroyer." (1 Cor. 10:10) This was given for an example so Christians living today might avoid such a tragic course. If one is not aware and on guard against this frame of mind, soon one finds himself unhappy with the way Jehovah directs his organization, how he appoints his various servants to positions of responsibility, where he wants them to serve.

²⁶ Murmuring on the part of one who claims to be a faithful dedicated servant might mean the beginning of a rebellious

attitude and would cause one who indulges in this form of rebellion to suffer discipline eventually, if such a course is continued. Jehovah was displeased by a rebellious spirit on the part of his people in times past, and he made his feelings in the matter known so that those who would persist in such a course today might know for a certainty that they would come under his disfavor. A murmuring campaign against Jehovah or any part of his organization would not be tolerated. Those who have the oversight in the congregations would be obligated to take action against those sowing discord by their murmuring and course of rebellion.

²⁷ With a course of rebellion there is usually the spirit of rivalry and jealousy. This spirit of competition and envy is contrary to the spirit of love that prevails in Jehovah's organization; and one would make his brother his enemy by pursuing such a course of conduct. At James 3:14-17 counsel is given in this regard: "But if you have bitter jealousy and contentiousness in your hearts, do not be bragging and lying against the truth. This is not the wisdom that comes down from above, but is the earthly, animal, demonic. For where jealousy and contentiousness are, there disorder and every vile thing are." Then, note the contrast: "The wisdom from above is first of all chaste, then peaceable, reasonable, ready to obey, full of mercy and good fruits, not making partial distinctions, not hypocritical." Jealousy and rivalry are indications of spiritual sickness and can, like other forms of rebellion, lead one to the loss of life.

SELF-WILL AND STUBBORNNESS

²⁸ Self-will and stubbornness are not Christian qualities and are not practiced within Jehovah's organization. Jehovah's

25, 26. (a) How did the Israelites show a rebellious spirit? (b) How did Paul warn against murmuring? What murmuring should be avoided today, and why?

27. What rebellious attitude is disclosed by James 3: 14-17?

28. Of what are self-will and stubbornness an evidence?

true servants act in complete harmony with his divine Word. They are encouraged to continue in that way, and to strive continually to improve in mature conduct becoming a Christian. When one does display stubbornness and self-will, it is evident that God's Word is not in his thoughts sufficiently. Jehovah gave firm counsel thereon at 2 Kings 17:14, 15: "They did not listen but kept hardening their necks like the necks of their forefathers that had not exercised faith . . . they continued rejecting his regulations and his covenant . . . even in imitation of the nations that were all around them." At Jeremiah 7:24 (AS) Jehovah stated further on this: "But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in their own counsels and in the stubbornness of their evil heart, and went backward and not forward."

²⁹ When an individual refuses God's counsel or turns away from reproof, either from Jehovah's Word or from his organization, he rejects the counsel of Almighty God. "Turn back at my reproof. . . . but you keep refusing, . . . and you keep neglecting all my counsel, and my reproof you have not accepted."—Prov. 1:23-25.

³⁰ In the case of children, stubbornness is frequently shown by them. It is the responsibility of parents to guide the child properly in this regard so as to prevent this tendency to grow and become a part of the child's nature as he grows up. Such might very well cause him to receive of Jehovah's disfavor later in life, if proper discipline and guidance are not given when the tendency first becomes evident. When parents are unable to cope with the situation they may solicit the aid of a mature brother or members of the congregation service committee. Jehovah's Word is given on this matter at Deuteronomy 21:18-

29. What does one actually do when he refuses God's counsel?

30. What punishment did Jehovah mete out to stubborn children?

21: "In case a man should happen to have a son who is stubborn and rebellious, he not listening to the voice of his father or the voice of his mother, and they have corrected him but he will not listen to them, then his father and his mother must take hold of him and bring him out to the older men of the city and to the gate of his place and they must say to the older men of his city, 'This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious, he is not listening to our voice, being a glutton and a drunkard.' Then all the men of his city must stone him with stones and he must die. So you must clear away what is bad from your midst, and all Israel will hear and indeed become afraid." Of a certainty, today the youthful servant of God may know that he will come into disfavor with his God, Jehovah, by pursuing the course of stubbornness and self-will. These qualities are manifest only in the world belonging to Satan; and for one of Jehovah's children, youthful or aged, to display these qualities and persist in them would lead to that one's being cut off from Jehovah's clean and pure organization.

SELF-STYLED FREEDOM

³¹ Many persons outside Jehovah's organization today exercise what they term "complete freedom" of thought and action. They adopt a philosophy that allows them to satisfy their every whim. Because they do not wish to be restricted in any sense they refuse to accept the pure Word of God as a guide, and they continue on their course of self-styled freedom. This is a rebellious course, and is causing those who practice this to be fit only for destruction at the battle of Armageddon. Many such persons adopt this attitude because they see the conflict between the error of nominal religion and the philosophy of the religious leaders and feel that they are just

31. Why do many rebel against Jehovah's code of righteousness?

as capable of selecting and establishing their own code of ethics.

³² This type of philosophy then permits the individual to do what he wants to do when he wants to do it, without any infringement upon his desires. His standards and morals can be to his appropriation. With such conjecturing so popular in the world, those not bound by God's upright and praiseworthy moral standards soon find themselves seduced and duped into a low, wayward course, even associating with others of like thought so as to share their sensualized and meretricious carnalism. Without Jehovah's pure Word and organization to guide them, Christians too could become victimized by this false reasoning and fall into the trap that has ensnared the world of "free thinkers."

³³ Jehovah has not forsaken his people to be so victimized and misled. The world of free thinkers may allow themselves to fall into the immoral course that follows this type of rationalizing. But Jehovah's servants are well aware that adulterers and fornicators cannot attain the Kingdom, and they are ever cognizant of this counsel and it is a directing force in their lives, keeping them entirely clean and pure for Jehovah's service. They are well aware of the powerful forces within the human body, which, not properly controlled, can lead to a course of degradation. Young men and women within Jehovah's organization are therefore alert to keep themselves clean and above immoral conduct, lest they become depraved by their own selfish appetites. Not to have their emotions under control would be exercising their own will, or the will of the flesh, rather than the will of Jehovah, and would be direct rebellion against Jehovah's wise counsel. Jeho-

vah does not permit the inclusion of such practices in his organization just because surrounding Christendom condones it.

³⁴ When parents do learn of the shortcomings of their children in this regard, if they have fallen victim to an immoral relationship with one of the opposite sex, sometimes they are reluctant to report this to the responsible ones in the organization who have the obligation to keep the organization clean from such practices. Thus the parents become parties to a lawless course of action because the one involved is their own flesh and blood. This close relationship should have no bearing on justice, and such should be reported to the responsible ones in the congregation, whether it is one so close as one's own child or someone else in the Christian congregation. If one in the organization is acquainted with such a situation and fails to report it, he becomes a direct party to it, and then he too is sharing in a course of rebellion. Wrongdoing has no part or place in Jehovah's clean organization, and a faithful servant would not condone it by remaining silent and failing to report it to the ones having authority to take action in the matter. If one fails in this Christian duty he is relying upon his own thoughts and self-will, which is a course leading to rebellion against Jehovah's clean organization.

³⁵ A dedicated Christian recognizes that he must remain entirely separate from the world. This includes being separate from the world even in the matter of selecting a mate. Just as Jehovah would not permit the Israelites to enter into marriage relationships with the heathenish women at that time, so Christians today are going directly against Jehovah's counsel in se-

32. Why is the philosophy of "free thinkers" popular, and why is it seductive? What will befall those overreached by this philosophy?

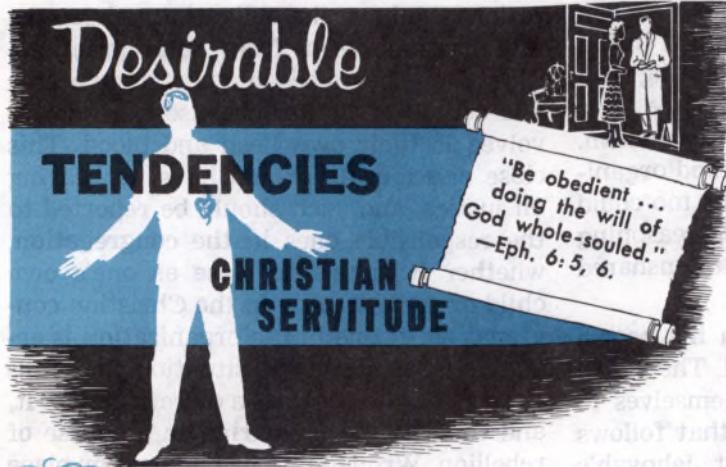
33. In contrast, what are Christians aware of? How do they guard themselves?

34. (a) What should be the attitude of parents who have children overreached by immoral acts? (b) How may the parents become parties to a wrong practice?

35. How is gross immaturity shown by a dedicated Christian when marrying an undedicated person?

lecting a mate not dedicated to the service of Jehovah. The yoke of such a bond would become heavy and unbearable because of not having Jehovah's blessing upon it. (2 Cor. 6:14) If some go directly contrary to Jehovah's command and counsel in this regard, does it not show a reliance on one's

own judgment and self-will, and a tendency to be rebellious? It would show gross immaturity on the part of the one so doing, and the one taking such a course would not qualify to represent Jehovah's pure organization in the capacity of an overseer in the congregation.



UHEN we are reviewing the tragic results of man's own self-determination in life, another pattern should be selected that has lasting benefits. Instead of acting upon one's own impulses, why not consider the unselfish suggestion recommended in Jesus' words relative to the two great commandments? He said: "You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole mind." This is the greatest and first commandment. The second, like it, is this: "You must love your neighbor as yourself." These words, rather than giving freedom of choice, extremely limit the course of action that could be pleasing to Jehovah. This commandment removes self-choice entirely. In fact, these words crowd out of one's life any desire

other than that of complete obedience and servitude to Jehovah.—Matt. 22:37, 38.

² This was the blueprint of life for Jesus and his followers. By choice, when a Christian dedicates his life to Jehovah God, he vows that he will follow the footsteps established by the Master Servant; in fact, it means the individual will be a slave to his Master. But, then, upon analyzing the matter we will find that an individual will be the servant or slave of one master or another, as Paul tells us at Romans 6:16: "Do you not know that if you keep presenting yourselves to anyone as slaves to obey him, you are slaves of him because you obey him, either of sin with death in view or of obedience with righteousness in view?" Then Paul exclaims: "But thanks to God that you were slaves of sin but you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were handed over. Yes, since you were set free from sin, you became slaves to righteousness. . . . so now present your members as slaves to righteousness with holiness in view." (Vss. 17-19) These words leave no alternative to the true Christian but to mold his life as a slave to his Master's wishes. Of course, such a righteous course shows Jehovah is the Master to whom one

1. How is complete servitude shown by the example set by Jesus?

2, 3. (a) What does dedication mean? (b) From what slavery has a Christian been liberated? (c) What slavery is desirable?

selects to render obedience and faithful service. The position of slavery is aptly mentioned by Paul at Ephesians 6:5, 6: "You slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters . . . as Christ's slaves, doing the will of God whole-souled. Be slaves with good inclinations, as to Jehovah, and not to men." The reward for such course is described for us at Colossians 3:24 in these words: "For you know that it is from Jehovah you will receive the due reward of the inheritance. You are slaves to the Master Christ."

³ When one considers that he has had opportunity to escape from slavery to the "god of this world" and from slavery to self, much happiness is the lot of those that will respond to the invitation to be 'slaves of Christ,' and render "sacred service" to Jehovah.—Rev. 22:3.

TRUSTWORTHY SLAVES

⁴ Slaves are frequently tried by the master to determine competency and loyalty. This is well illustrated to us when a man was about to travel abroad. He summoned his slaves before him and gave them varied numbers of talents; one five, another two, and still another only one. After considerable time had passed the master returned and asked for an accounting of what the respective slaves had done with the talents he had given them. The one that received five talents had gained five and was rewarded by receiving even more responsibility, because of faithful service. The same was true also of the one who had been given two talents; he likewise responded favorably and profitably. Then to this one who had received two talents the master said, after having been shown that two additional talents had been gained: "Well done, good and faithful slave! You were faithful over a few things. I will appoint

4, 5. How may a master test the loyalty of his slaves, and what reward is given to the worker? To the sluggard?

you over many things. Enter into the joy of your master."

⁵ But what about the slave who had received only one talent? Rather than putting the talent to use in service to his master, he hid the talent. When the master returned, the slave returned the one talent to his master, but he had nothing more to show his master. The reply in this instance was: "Wicked and sluggish slave, you knew, did you, that I reaped where I did not sow and collected where I did not winnow? Well, then, you ought to have deposited my silver monies with the bankers, and on my arrival I would be receiving what is mine with interest. Therefore take away the talent from him and give it to him that has the ten talents. For to everyone that has, more will be given and he will have abundance; but as for him that does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. And throw the good-for-nothing slave out into the darkness outside." With this picture in mind, no difficulty in making the proper decision should be experienced by a true slave. He will subject himself completely and irrevocably to the service of his Master. Blessed and happy will be the lot of those slaves of Christ Jesus, because the Father's blessings will include the inheriting of the kingdom that was provided for such faithful slaves. Slavery with this righteous Master can be a happy and desirable position, even for his "other sheep."—Matt. 25:14-30; Luke 12:32; Matt. 25:34.

⁶ That is why Jehovah's witnesses are happy people at this time. They recognize that they are in covenant relationship with Jehovah and have vowed to be in servitude to his every command. Rather than seeing how the limiting bounds given them as slaves may be stretched to suit their own personal desires, they say: 'How can I conform my course of action to be absolutely

6. How may a slave share happiness?

certain that I am within the restrictions set by the Master?"

Those who hear the words of liberation from Satan's servitude will respond anxiously so they may render to Jehovah faithful, loyal service and will do this constantly. There will be an immediate reward to such, as Jehovah gives promise, saying concerning his "other sheep": "They will hunger no more nor thirst any more, neither will the sun beat down upon them nor any scorching heat, because the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them, and will guide them to fountains of waters of life." God's promise is to wipe out every tear from their

7. What immediate reward is given to those who respond favorably to the Master's words? To those who refuse?

eyes. Just reflect, then, on this position of slavery in contrast with the miserable position of the great rebel Satan and his wicked invisible demons, his wicked earthly elements and those who are duped by all this. Through a knowledge of God's Word we ascertain that which is the good and acceptable and complete will of God, and then we follow out the instructions as obedient slaves to our Master. In fact, if we do not do this, it will be a manifestation of rebellion on our part and we shall pass away with this rebellious, doomed world, because it as well as its desires is passing away; but he that does the will of God remains forever. The righteous course, free from rebellious tendencies, means life forever to the faithful, willing slaves.—Rev. 7:15-17; 1 John 2:17.

MARKERS FOR THE NEW WORLD SOCIETY

SINCE 1919 the assemblies of Jehovah's witnesses have been markers for them in this time of the end. They have marked the growth of the New World society in a spiritual as well as a numerical way. It has been at these assemblies that many new truths have been revealed.

¶ It was in September of 1919 that the first of these assemblies was held. It was an eight-day convention that had upward of 7,000 people in attendance. It emphasized the great work that must be done by God's people before the battle of Armageddon.

¶ Then in 1922 another assembly was held at Cedar Point that gave the preaching work a tremendous push. Its daily sessions had an attendance of 10,000 witnesses. It was at this assembly that proof was submitted for the first time that the King Christ Jesus had come to the temple in 1918 and had begun judging apostate Christendom. The witnesses left this assembly with the slogan ringing in their ears, "Advertise the King and the Kingdom."

¶ In August of the next year a nine-day assembly was held in Los Angeles, California. Here, for the first time, the Society used radio to broadcast a convention session. It was at

this assembly that it was first revealed that the sheep in Matthew 25:31-46 refer to an earthly group this side of Armageddon.

¶ The assembly held in Columbus, Ohio, in 1931 was another marker for Jehovah's people. It was at this assembly, as at an earlier assembly in June in London, England, that new light was thrown on the ninth chapter of Ezekiel. It was revealed that the man with the writer's inkhorn was not an individual but rather a group of individuals, Jehovah's anointed ones. From this it was seen that the "faithful and wise servant" that Jesus spoke about was a class made up of the remnant and was not C. T. Russell, as some had thought. It was also at this Columbus assembly that it was seen that the name Jehovah's witnesses is the Scriptural name of God's people. The assembled crowds were thrilled with this new name.

¶ At the convention held in Washington, D.C., in 1935 new light was thrown on Revelation 7:9, which speaks about the great multitude. The thousands of witnesses gathered there learned for the first time that the "great multitude" is an earthly class composed of "other sheep" of the Good Shepherd.

¶ Later in 1938 at Kingsway Hall, London, England, Jehovah's witnesses learned about the procreation mandate and how it will be issued and go into force toward the "other sheep" surviving Armageddon.

¶ The New York assembly of 1950 was another marker for Jehovah's witnesses. This assembly had a record-breaking attendance of 123,707. It was at this assembly that Jehovah's witnesses were thrilled with the release of the first translation of the Christian Greek Scriptures that was made by the New World Bible Translation Committee. New light was thrown on what the Bible says about the princes. It was revealed that the faithful men of old were not the only ones that will be princes in the new world but that many of the "other sheep" of today will also be princes.

¶ In 1953, at a still larger assembly in New York, a translation of the first eight books

of the Hebrew Scriptures was released. New information was brought out on chapters 38 and 39 of Ezekiel regarding Gog of Magog. It was also pointed out that the "desire of all nations" mentioned at Haggai 2:7 (AV) applies to the "great crowd." This assembly had over 165,000 people at the public talk and was the greatest assembly the New World society ever held.

¶ These are only a few of the many outstanding assemblies that Jehovah's witnesses have held since 1919. When we consider the new truths that have come out at these assemblies as well as the new releases and the things that happened at them, it becomes evident that they are indeed markers in the history of the New World society. We can therefore look forward to the giant assembly planned in New York for this summer to be another marker bringing surprises and good things to Jehovah's modern-day people.



- What can individuals do to stem the rising tide of immorality and godlessness?

Some persons feel that the way to do this is by joining a church, by doing social work or by entering politics. But impressive church membership figures—the so-called religious revival—have not stemmed the rising tide of godlessness, nor has the doing of social work. After entering politics, men of integrity soon find that they must either abandon politics or be corrupted to some degree themselves. Remembering that Satan is the cause of the increased godlessness, we see the futility of social and political efforts to remedy the situation. God's Word points out the right course for individuals to take.

"Be training yourself with godly devotion as your aim." That is the Bible's counsel. So the honest-hearted individual does something toward stemming the tide of godlessness by starting with himself. He trains himself with godly

devotion, putting on what the Bible calls a "new personality." "Strip off the old personality with its practices, and clothe yourselves with the new personality which through accurate knowledge is being renewed according to the image of the one who created it."—1 Tim. 4:7; Col. 3:9, 10.

To put on the "new personality," take in accurate knowledge by studying God's Word. Mentally absorb its righteous principles and apply those principles to your life. Yes, make your mind over: "Quit being fashioned after this system of things, but be transformed by making your mind over, that you may prove to yourselves the good and acceptable and complete will of God."—Rom. 12:2.

By making your mind over and putting on the "new personality," you safeguard yourself from the rising tide of godlessness. Do more. The Scriptural rule is: "Bad associations spoil useful habits." So associate with those who will not spoil your good habits but who will encourage you in them. Associate with the New World society of Jehovah's witnesses; let these Christian witnesses encourage you in godly devotion.—1 Cor. 15:33.

Having protected yourself against the rising tide of godlessness, extend protection to others. How? By preaching to them both by word and by example.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

May 11: Avoid Rebellious Tendencies, 11-22.
Page 209.

May 18: Avoid Rebellious Tendencies, ¶23-35, and Desirable Tendencies—Christian Servitude. Page 215.

✓✓ CHECK YOUR MEMORY ✓✓

After reading this issue of "The Watchtower", do you remember—

- ✓ Why a person's heart condition cannot be judged by his face? P. 195, §2.
 - ✓ Why no excuse can be made for Judas Iscariot? P. 196, §3.
 - ✓ Why Jesus chose Judas, since he could read a man's heart? P. 197, §1.
 - ✓ Why freedom and responsibility go hand in hand? P. 201, §3.
 - ✓ How men are becoming like robots? P. 202, §4.
 - ✓ Why suffering comes upon persons who try to do God's will? P. 205, §4.
 - ✓ Why Christians should rejoice when they suffer for righteousness? P. 207, §1.
 - ✓ What was the first act of sin? P. 209, §1.

- ✓ Why God required the Israelites to keep separate from the pagan nations that were their neighbors? P. 212, ¶12.
 - ✓ How Christendom has shown rebellion against God? P. 214, ¶18.
 - ✓ What is of greater value than money? P. 215, ¶23.
 - ✓ What the greatest commandment is? P. 220, ¶1.
 - ✓ When it was revealed that Christ began judging apostate Christendom in 1918? P. 222, ¶4.
 - ✓ Where an honest-hearted person must begin in order to help stem the tide of godlessness? P. 223, ¶7.