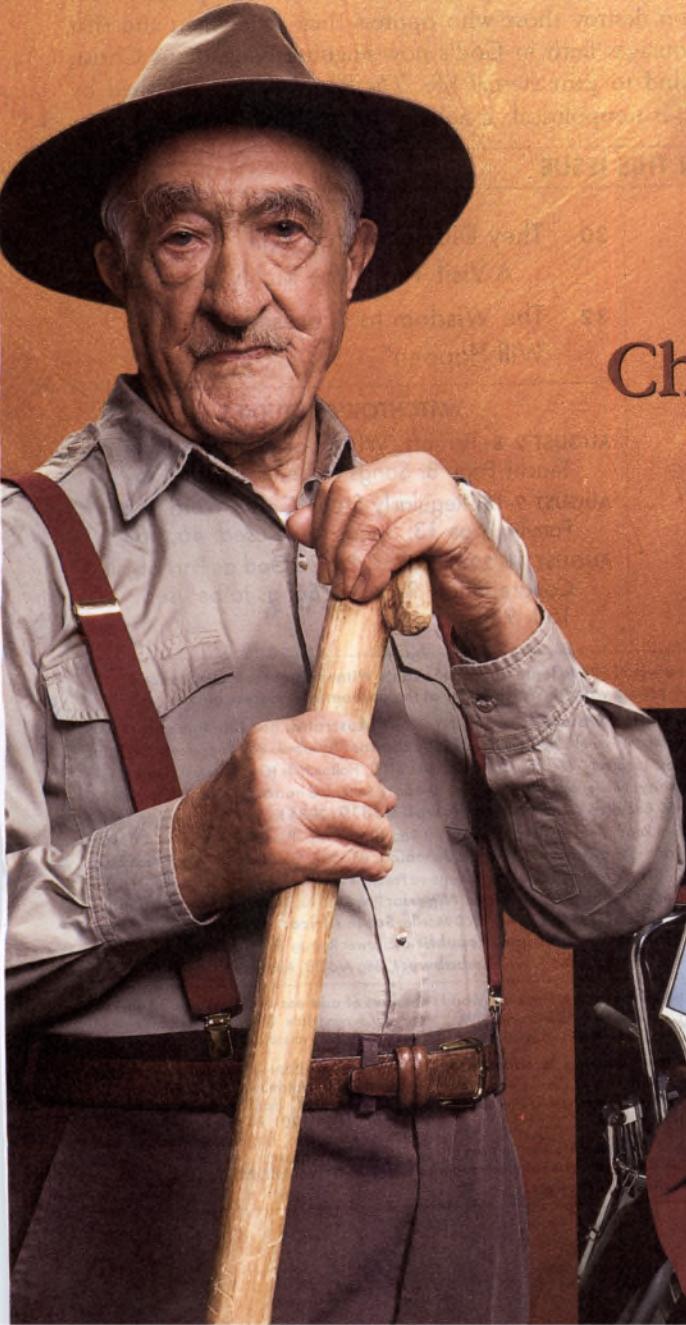


JULY 1, 1999

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



How
Jesus
Can
Change
Your
Life





THE WATCHTOWER®

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

July 1, 1999

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

IN THIS ISSUE

- 3 Why Believe in Jesus Christ?
- 4 How Can Jesus Change Your Life?
- 8 Parents, What Does Your Example Teach?
- 13 Regularly Study God's Word as a Family
- 18 Families, Praise God as Part of His Congregation
- 23 From Extreme Poverty to the Greatest of Riches
- 28 The Divine Name Uttered in Israel

- 30 They Did Jehovah's Will
A Visit That Was Richly Rewarded
- 32 The Wisdom to "Foresee What Will Happen"

WATCHTOWER STUDIES

- AUGUST 2-8:** Parents, What Does Your Example Teach? Page 8. Songs to be used: 106, 157.
- AUGUST 9-15:** Regularly Study God's Word as a Family. Page 13. Songs to be used: 46, 164.
- AUGUST 16-22:** Families, Praise God as Part of His Congregation. Page 18. Songs to be used: 160, 98.

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Why Believe in Jesus Christ?

"EVEN many people who are not Christians believe that He was a great and wise teacher. He was certainly one of the most influential people who ever lived." (*The World Book Encyclopedia*) Who is "He"? Jesus Christ, the founder of Christianity.

In spite of what the encyclopedia says, however, to hundreds of millions of people in the Orient and elsewhere, Jesus Christ is a stranger, just a name they may remember from high-school textbooks. Even in the churches of Christendom, there are theologians and clergymen who say that we really do not know Jesus and cast doubt on the genuineness of the four extant accounts of his life (the Gospels) found in the Bible.

Could the Gospel writers have forged the life story of Jesus? Not at all! The well-known historian Will Durant, after analyzing those Gospel accounts, wrote: "That a few simple men should in one genera-



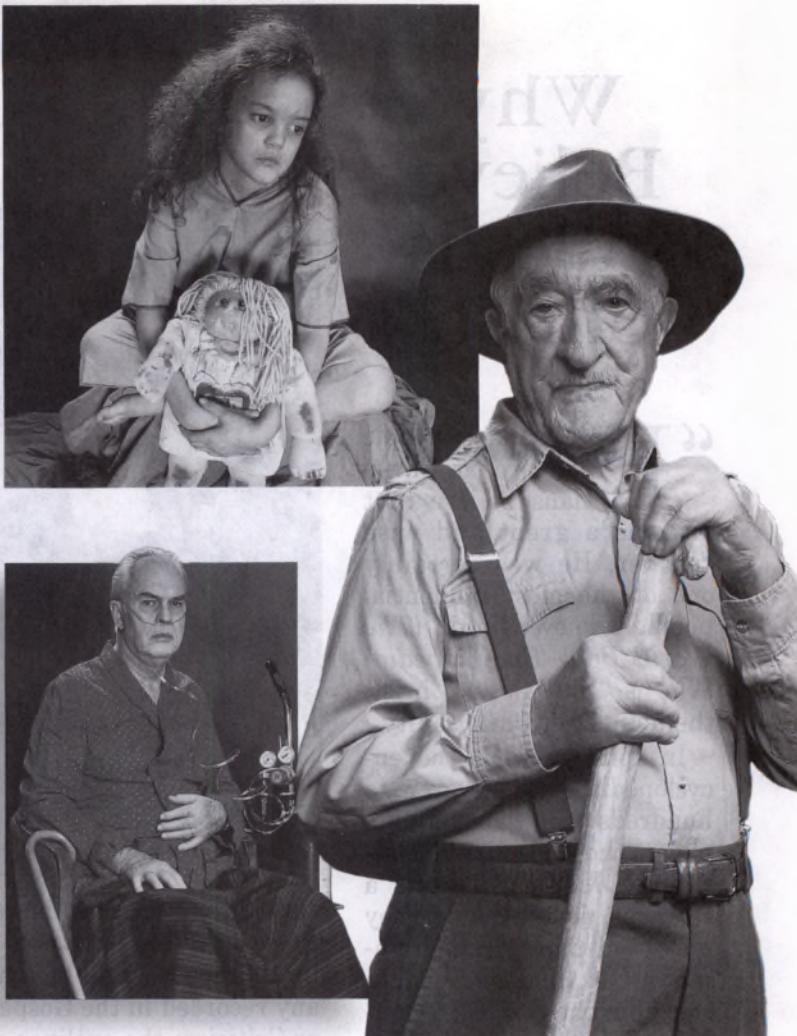
tion have invented so powerful and appealing a personality, so lofty an ethic and so inspiring a vision of human brotherhood, would be a miracle far more incredible than any recorded in the Gospels. After two centuries of Higher Criticism the outlines of the life, character, and teaching of Christ, remain reasonably clear, and constitute the most fascinating feature in the history of Western man."

Still, there are those who would dismiss Jesus Christ as unworthy of their attention because of what his professed followers have done. 'They dropped an atom bomb on Nagasaki,' some in Japan would say. 'And Nagasaki had more Christians than most cities in Japan.' But can you blame a physician for a patient's illness if the patient fails to follow the doctor's guidance? Most people claiming to be Christians have long ignored Jesus' prescription for overcoming mankind's ills. Yet, Jesus gave the remedy for our day-to-day problems as well as for the afflictions of mankind worldwide. That is why we invite you to read the following article and see for yourself what kind of man he was.

How Can Jesus Change Your Life?

JESUS CHRIST was a Great Teacher who lived in Palestine almost 2,000 years ago. Very little is known about his childhood. It is well attested, however, that when he was about 30 years of age, he started his ministry to "bear witness to the truth." (John 18:37; Luke 3:21-23) The four disciples who wrote accounts of his life focus on the three and a half years that followed.

During his ministry, Jesus Christ gave his disciples a command that could be an antidote to many of the world's ills. What was that? Jesus said: "I am giving you a new commandment, that you love one another; just as I have loved you, that you also love one another." (John 13:34) Yes, the solution to many of mankind's problems is love. When, on another occasion, Jesus was asked which commandment is the greatest, he answered: "You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart 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.'"—Matthew 22:37-40.

Jesus showed us by words and deeds how to love God and fellow humans. Let us consider a few examples and see what we can learn from him.

His Teachings

In one of the best-known sermons in history, Jesus Christ told his followers: "No one can slave for two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will stick to the one and despise the other. You cannot slave for God and for Riches." (Matthew 6:24) Is Jesus' teaching about putting God first in our lives still practical today, when so

many people believe that money solves all problems? True, we need money to get by. (Ecclesiastes 7:12) Yet, if we let "Riches" be our master, "the love of money" will control us, dominating our whole life. (1 Timothy 6:9, 10) Many who have fallen into this trap have ended up losing their family, their health, and even their lives.

On the other hand, looking to God as our Master gives meaning to life. As the Creator, he is the Source of life, and thus, he alone is worthy of our worship. (Psalm 36:9; Revelation 4:11) Those who learn about his qualities and come to love him are moved to observe his commandments. (Ecclesiastes 12:13; 1 John 5:3) By doing so, we benefit ourselves.—Isaiah 48:17.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus also taught his disciples how to show love for fellow humans. He said: "All things, therefore, that you want men to do to you, you also must likewise do to them." (Matthew 7:12) The word "men" that Jesus used here includes even one's enemies. In the same sermon, he said: "Continue to love your enemies and to pray for those persecuting you." (Matthew 5:43, 44) Would not such love solve many of the problems that we face today? Hindu leader Mohandas Gandhi thought so. He is quoted as saying: "When [we] shall get together on the teachings laid down by Christ in this Sermon on the Mount, we shall have solved the problems . . . of the whole world." Jesus' teachings about love, if applied, can solve many of mankind's ills.

His Deeds

Not only did Jesus teach profound truths about how to show love but he also practiced what he taught. For example, he put the interests of others ahead of his own. One day Jesus and his disciples were so busy helping people that they had no time even to eat a meal. Jesus saw the need for his disciples to rest up a bit, and he took them to a lonely place. But when they got there, they found a crowd waiting for them. How would you have responded upon seeing a crowd who expected you to work when you felt that you needed a little break? Well, Jesus "was moved with pity for them" and "started to teach them many things." (Mark 6:34) This concern for others always moved Jesus to assist them.

Jesus did more for people than teach them. He also extended practical help. For example, on one occasion he fed more than 5,000 people who had been listening to



Jesus has both the will and the power to cure the ailing

him until late in the day. Soon after that, he fed another large crowd—this time more than 4,000—who had been listening to him for three days and had nothing left to eat. On the first occasion, he used five loaves of bread and two fishes, and on the latter, seven loaves and a few little fishes. (Matthew

14:14-22; 15:32-38) Miracles? Yes, he was a miracle worker.

Jesus also healed many ailing ones. He cured the blind, the lame, the lepers, and the deaf. Why, he even raised the dead! (Luke 7:22; John 11:30-45) Once a leper entreated him: "If you just want to, you can make me clean." How did Jesus respond? "At that he was moved with pity, and he stretched out his hand and touched him, and said to him: 'I want to. Be made clean.'" (Mark 1:40, 41) Through such miracles, Jesus demonstrated his love for the afflicted.

Do you find it hard to believe in Jesus' miracles? Some do. Remember, though, that Jesus performed his miracles in public. Even his opposers, who tried to find fault with him on every occasion, could not deny that he was a miracle worker. (John 9:1-34) Further, his miracles had a purpose. They helped people to identify him as the One sent by God.—John 6:14.

In performing miracles Jesus was not seeking attention for himself. Rather, he glorified God, the Source of his power. In Capernaum he was once in a home filled with people. A paralyzed man wanted to be healed but could not get in. So his friends lowered him on a cot through the roof. Upon seeing their faith, Jesus healed the paralytic. As a result, the people "glorified God" and said: "We never saw

the like of it." (Mark 2:1-4, 11, 12) Jesus' miracles brought praise to Jehovah, his God, and helped those in need.

Miraculous healing of the sick, however, was not the main thrust of Jesus' ministry. One who wrote an account of Jesus' life explained: "These have been written down that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, and that, because of believing, you may have life by means of his name." (John 20:31) Yes, Jesus came to earth so that believing humans might have life.

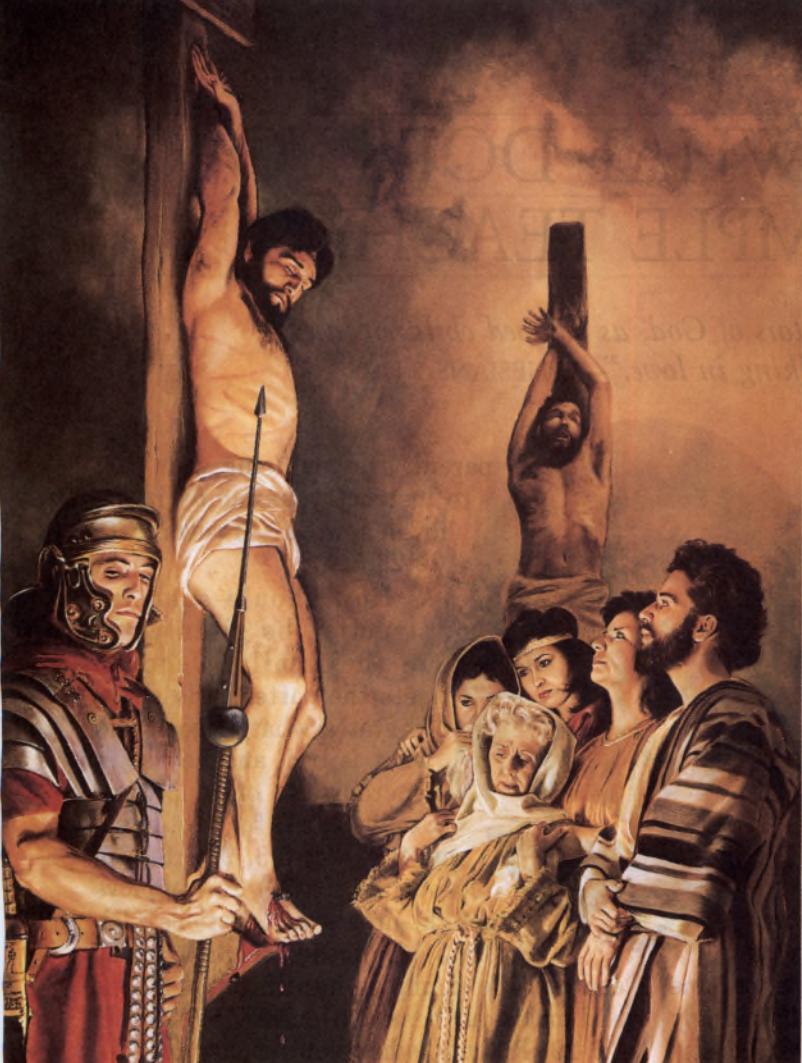
His Sacrifice

"Jesus came to earth?" you may ask. "Where did he come from?" Jesus himself said: "I have come down from heaven to do, not my will, but the will of him that sent me." (John 6:38) He had a prehuman existence as the only-begotten Son of God. What then was the will of the One who sent him to earth? "God loved the world so much that he gave his only-begotten Son," says John, one of the Gospel writers, "in order that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) How was this possible?

The Bible reveals how death became the unavoidable lot for mankind. The first human couple received from God life with the prospect of living forever. However, they chose to rebel against their Maker. (Genesis 3:1-19) As a result of this action, the first human sin, the offspring of Adam and Eve inherited the unwelcome legacy of death. (Romans 5:12) In order to give mankind real life, sin and death must be done away with.

No scientist can get rid of death by some kind of genetic engineering. Yet, the Creator of mankind has the means to bring obedient humans to perfection so that they can live forever. In the Bible this provision is called the ransom. The first human couple sold themselves and their offspring into slavery to sin and death. They traded life as perfect humans obedient to God for life independent of God, making their own decisions as to what is right and what is wrong. To buy back perfect human life, a price had to be paid that was equivalent to the perfect human life that our first parents forfeited. Having inherited imperfection, humans were not qualified to provide that price.—Psalm 49:7.

So Jehovah God stepped in to help. He transferred the perfect life of his only-begotten Son to the womb of a virgin, who gave birth to Jesus. Decades ago, you might have rejected the idea of a virgin birth. Today, however, sci-



How does Jesus' death affect you?

the power to cure the sick.
—Matthew 4:23.

After a ministry of three and a half years here on earth, Jesus was killed by his opposers. He showed that a perfect man can be obedient to the Creator despite even the greatest trials. (1 Peter 2:22) His sacrificed perfect human life became the ransom price, able to redeem mankind from sin and death. Jesus Christ said: "No one has love greater than this, that someone should surrender his soul in behalf of his friends." (John 15:13) On the third day after his death, Jesus was resurrected to spirit life, and some weeks later he ascended to heaven to present the ransom price to Jehovah God. (1 Corinthians 15:3, 4; Hebrews 9:11-14) By doing so, Jesus was able to apply the merit of his ransom sacrifice to those who follow him.

Would you be willing to benefit from this way of healing spiritual, emotional, and physical sicknesses? To do so requires faith in Jesus Christ. Why not come to the Physician yourself? You can do that by learning about Jesus Christ and his role in saving faithful mankind. Jehovah's Witnesses will be happy to help you.

tists have cloned mammals and introduced genes from one animal into another. Who, then, can rightly question the Creator's ability to bypass the ordinary process of procreation?

With the existence of a perfect human life, the price to redeem mankind from sin and death became available. Yet, the baby born on earth as Jesus had to grow up to be the "physician" able to furnish the "medication" to cure mankind's ills. He did this by living a perfect, sinless life. Jesus not only saw the anguish of mankind under sin but experienced the physical limitations of being a man. This made him an even more compassionate physician. (Hebrews 4:15) The miraculous healings that he performed during his life on earth proved that he has both the will and

PARENTS, WHAT DOES YOUR EXAMPLE TEACH?

"Become imitators of God, as beloved children, and go on walking in love."—EPHESIANS 5:1, 2.

JEHOVAH is the Originator of the family arrangement. Every family owes its existence to him because he established the first family and gave procreative powers to the first human couple. (Ephesians 3:14, 15) He provided Adam and Eve with basic instructions as to their responsibilities and also allowed them ample opportunity to use personal initiative in carrying these out. (Genesis 1:28-30; 2:15-22) After Adam and Eve sinned, the situations with which families had to cope became more complicated. Still, Jehovah lovingly provided guidelines that would help his servants to deal with such situations.

² As our Grand Instructor, Jehovah has done much more than provide written directions as to what we should do and what we should avoid. In ancient times he coupled written instruction with oral instruction through the priests and the prophets and through family heads. Who is he using to provide such oral teaching in our day? Christian elders and parents. If you are a



parent, are you doing your part to instruct your family in Jehovah's ways?—Proverbs 6: 20-23.

³ How should such instruction be given within the family? Jehovah sets the pattern. He clearly states what is good and what is bad, and he makes generous use of repetition. (Exodus 20:4, 5; Deuteronomy 4:23, 24; 5:8, 9; 6:14, 15; Joshua 24:19, 20) He employs thought-provoking questions. (Job 38:4, 8, 31) By means of illustrations and real-life examples, he stirs our emotions and molds our hearts. (Genesis 15:5; Daniel 3:1-29) Parents, when you teach your children, do you try to imitate that pattern?

⁴ Jehovah is firm for what is right, but he understands the effects of imperfection. So before he punishes, he teaches and gives repeated warnings and reminders to imperfect humans. (Genesis 19:15, 16; Jeremiah 7: 23-26) When he disciplines, he does it to the right extent, not excessively. (Psalm 103: 10, 11; Isaiah 28:26-29) If that is the way we deal with our children, it gives evidence

1. What kind of directions did Jehovah provide for the first human couple?
2. (a) By what means has Jehovah reinforced written counsel with oral instruction? (b) What question do parents need to ask themselves?

3. What can family heads learn from Jehovah as to effective teaching?
4. What do we learn from Jehovah as to administering discipline, and why is discipline important?

that we know Jehovah, and it will be easier for them to come to know him too.—Jeremiah 22:16; 1 John 4:8.

⁵ Marvelously, Jehovah listens as a loving heavenly Father. He does not simply issue orders. He encourages us to pour out our hearts to him. (Psalm 62:8) And if the sentiments that we express are not exactly right, he does not thunder a rebuke from heaven. He patiently teaches us. How appropriate, therefore, is the counsel of the apostle Paul: “Become imitators of God, as beloved children”! (Ephesians 4:31–5:1) What a fine example Jehovah sets for parents as they seek to instruct their children! It is an example that reaches our hearts and makes us want to walk in his way of life.

The Influence Exerted by Example

⁶ In addition to verbal instruction, example has a profound influence on young ones. Whether parents like it or not, their children are going to imitate them. It may please the parents—sometimes it may shock them—when they hear their children say things that they themselves have said. When both the conduct and the attitude of the parents reflect deep appreciation for spiritual matters, this exercises a positive influence on the children.—Proverbs 20:7.

⁷ The effect of parental example is well illustrated in the Bible. Jephthah, who was used by Jehovah to lead Israel to victory over the Ammonites, was also a father. The record of his reply to the king of Ammon indicates that Jephthah must frequently have read the history of Jehovah’s dealings with Israel. He could quote that history freely,

5. What can parents learn from Jehovah about listening?
6. How do the attitude and example of parents influence their children?
7. What sort of parental example did Jephthah set for his daughter, and with what outcome?

and he showed strong faith in Jehovah. No doubt, his example helped his daughter to develop the faith and self-sacrificing spirit that she displayed in undertaking a lifetime of service as a single woman devoted to Jehovah.—Judges 11:14–27, 34–40; compare Joshua 1:8.

⁸ Samuel was exemplary as a child and faithful to God as a prophet throughout his life. Would you like your children to turn out as he did? Analyze the example set by Samuel’s parents, Elkanah and Hannah. Though the situation in their household was not perfect, they regularly went up to Shiloh for worship, to the place where the sacred tabernacle was located. (1 Samuel 1:3–8, 21) Take note of the depth of feeling with which Hannah prayed. (1 Samuel 1:9–13) Observe how both of them felt about the importance of fulfilling any promise made to God. (1 Samuel 1:22–28) Their fine example undoubtedly helped Samuel to develop the qualities that enabled him to pursue a right course—even when people around him who supposedly served Jehovah showed no respect for God’s ways. In time, Jehovah entrusted Samuel with responsibility as His prophet.—1 Samuel 2:11, 12; 3:1–21.

⁹ Would you like your son to become like Timothy, who as a young man became an associate of the apostle Paul? Timothy’s father was not a believer, but his mother and his grandmother set a fine example of appreciation for spiritual things. This no doubt helped to lay a good foundation for Timothy’s life as a Christian. We are told that his mother, Eunice, and his grandmother Lois had “faith . . . without any hypocrisy.” Their lives as Christians were

8. (a) What fine attitude did Samuel’s parents manifest? (b) How did that benefit Samuel?
9. (a) What influences at home had a good effect on Timothy? (b) What sort of person did Timothy become?



**Many enjoy daily Bible reading
as a family**



not playacting; they really lived in harmony with what they professed to believe, and they taught young Timothy to do the same. Timothy proved that he was dependable and that he genuinely cared about the welfare of others.—2 Timothy 1:5; Philippians 2:20-22.

¹⁰ The examples that affect our children are not all within the home. There are the children with whom they attend school, teachers whose work is to mold young minds, people who feel strongly that everyone should conform to deeply entrenched tribal or community customs, sports stars whose achievements are widely praised, and public officials whose conduct is featured in the news. Millions of children have also been exposed to the brutality of war. Should it surprise us if these influences show up in the speech or attitude of our children? How do we react when they do? Does a sharp rebuke or a stern lecture solve the problem? Instead of giving a quick response to our children, would it not be better to ask ourselves, 'Is there something in Je-

vah's way of dealing with us that might help in discerning how to handle this situation?'—Compare Romans 2:4.

¹¹ Of course, imperfect parents are not always going to deal with situations in the best way. They will make mistakes. When children realize that, will it erode their respect for their parents? It may, especially if the parents try to gloss over their errors by harshly asserting their authority. But the outcome may be very different if the parents are humble and freely admit their mistakes. In this, they can set a valuable example for their children, who need to learn to do the same.—James 4:6.

What Our Example Can Teach

¹² There are many valuable lessons that can be taught most effectively when oral instruction is coupled with a good example. Consider a few.

11. When parents make mistakes, how may this affect the attitude of their children?

12, 13. (a) What do children need to learn about love, and how can this be taught most effectively? (b) Why is it important that children learn about love?

10. (a) What examples outside the home may affect our children? (b) How should we react when these influences show up in the speech or attitude of our children?

¹³ *Expressing unselfish love:* One of the most important lessons to be fortified by example is the meaning of love. “We love, because [God] first loved us.” (1 John 4:19) He is the Source and supreme example of love. This principled love, *a·ga’pe*, is mentioned in the Bible more than 100 times. It is a quality that identifies true Christians. (John 13:35) Such love is to be shown toward God and Jesus Christ and also by humans toward one another—even toward humans for whom we may not feel a fondness. (Matthew 5:44, 45; 1 John 5:3) This love must be in our hearts and evident in our lives before we can effectively teach it to our children. Actions speak louder than words. Within the family, children need to see and experience love and related qualities, such as affection. Without these things, the development of a child is stunted physically, mentally, and emotionally. Children also need to see how love and affection are properly manifested toward fellow Christians outside the family.—Romans 12:10; 1 Peter 3:8.

¹⁴ *Learning how to work:* Work is a fundamental aspect of life. To have a feeling of self-worth, a person needs to learn how to do good work. (Ecclesiastes 2:24; 2 Thessalonians 3:10) If a child is assigned tasks for which he has had very little instruction and then is scolded for not doing them well, it is unlikely that he will learn to do good work. But when children learn by actually working alongside their parents and are given suitable commendation, they are more likely to learn to do work that brings satisfaction. If the parents’ example is coupled with explanation, the children may learn not only how to get a job done but also how to overcome problems, how to stick to a job until it is finished, and how to reason and make de-

14. (a) How can children be taught to do good work that brings satisfaction? (b) How can this be done in your family situation?

cisions. In this setting they can be helped to appreciate that Jehovah also works, that he does good work, and that Jesus imitates his Father. (Genesis 1:31; Proverbs 8:27-31; John 5:17) If a family does farming or operates a business, some of the family members may work together. Or perhaps the mother can teach her son or daughter to cook and clean up after a meal. A father whose employment is away from the house can plan to work on projects at home with his children. How beneficial it is when the parents have in mind not merely getting immediate jobs done but equipping the children for life!

¹⁵ *Maintaining faith in the face of adversity:* Faith too is a vital aspect of our lives. When faith is discussed in a family study, the children may learn to define it. They may also become aware of evidence that causes faith to begin to grow in their hearts. But when they see their parents showing unshakable faith in the face of severe trials, the effect may last for a lifetime. A Bible student in Panama was threatened by her husband with expulsion from their house if she did not stop serving Jehovah. Still, with her four little children, she regularly walked 10 miles and then rode a bus for another 20 miles to get to the nearest Kingdom Hall. Encouraged by that example, some 20 members of her family have embraced the way of the truth.

Setting an Example in Daily Bible Reading

¹⁶ One of the most valuable customs that any family can establish—a custom that will benefit the parents and be an example for the children to imitate—is the regular reading of the Bible. If at all possible, do some Bible reading every day. It is not

15. In what ways can lessons in faith be taught? Illustrate.
16. Why is daily family Bible reading recommended?

the quantity read that is most important. Far more significant is the regularity and the manner in which it is done. For children, Bible reading might be supplemented by listening to audiocassettes of *My Book of Bible Stories* if they are available in your language. Reading from God's Word every day helps us to keep God's thoughts to the fore. And if such Bible reading is done not only by individuals but by families, this can help entire households to walk in Jehovah's ways. It is this practice that was encouraged at the recent "God's Way of Life" Conventions in the drama *Families—Make Daily Bible Reading Your Way of Life!*—Psalm 1:1-3.

¹⁷ Bible reading as a family is in harmony with what the apostle Paul wrote in his inspired letter to Christians in Ephesus, namely: "Fathers, do not be irritating your children, but go on bringing them up in the discipline and mental-regulating of Jehovah." (Ephesians 6:4) What does that mean? "Mental-regulating" literally means "putting mind in"; so Christian fathers are being urged to put the mind of Jehovah God in their children—to help the chil-

17. How do family Bible reading and memorizing of key scriptures help in applying the counsel at Ephesians 6:4?

Do You Remember?

- How can parents benefit from Jehovah's example?
- Why must verbal instruction of children be coupled with good parental example?
- What are some lessons that are best taught by parental example?
- How can we benefit fully from family Bible reading?

dren get to know God's thoughts. Encouraging the children to memorize key scriptures can help to achieve this. The objective is to have Jehovah's thoughts guide the thinking of the children so that their desires and conduct progressively come to reflect godly standards whether the parents are with the children or not. The Bible is the foundation for such thinking.—Deuteronomy 6:6, 7.

¹⁸ Of course, if the Bible is going to affect our lives, we need to understand what it says. For many, this may require reading portions more than once. To get the full force of certain expressions, we may need to look up words in a dictionary or in *Insight on the Scriptures*. If the scripture contains counsel or a commandment, take time to talk about situations in our day that make it appropriate. Then you might ask, 'How can applying this counsel benefit us?' (Isaiah 48:17, 18) If the scripture is telling about some aspect of Jehovah's purpose, ask, 'How are our lives affected by this?' Perhaps you are reading an account that tells about the attitudes and actions of people. What pressures in life were they experiencing? How did they deal with these? How can we benefit from their example? Always allow time to discuss what the account means in our lives today.—Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 10:11.

¹⁹ What a fine way to get God's thoughts impressed on our minds and hearts! Thus we will truly be helped to become "imitators of God, as beloved children." (Ephesians 5:1) And we will provide an example that is truly deserving of imitation by our children.

18. When reading the Bible, what may be needed in order to (a) understand it clearly? (b) benefit from the counsel it contains? (c) respond to what it reveals about Jehovah's purpose? (d) benefit from what it says about the attitudes and actions of people?

19. By being imitators of God, what will we be providing for our children?

REGULARLY STUDY GOD'S WORD AS A FAMILY

"Man must live, not on bread alone, but on every utterance coming forth through Jehovah's mouth."—MATTHEW 4:4.

JEHOVAH GOD gave family heads frequent reminders of their responsibility to teach their children. Such instruction would equip the children for the present life and could also help to prepare them for the life to come. An angel representing God pointed out to Abraham his responsibility to teach his household so that they would "keep Jehovah's way." (Genesis 18:19) Israelite parents were told to explain to their children how God had delivered Israel from Egypt and how he had given them his Law at Mount Sinai, in Horeb. (Exodus 13:8, 9; Deuteronomy 4:9, 10; 11:18-21) Christian family heads are admonished to bring up their children "in the discipline and mental-regulating of Jehovah." (Ephesians 6:4) Even if only one parent serves Jehovah, that one should endeavor to teach the children Jehovah's ways.

—2 Timothy 1:5; 3:14, 15.

² This does not mean that family study of God's Word is only for households where there are children. When a husband and wife have a family study even if there are no chil-

1. What does the Bible say about the responsibility of family heads to teach their children Jehovah's ways?

2. Is family study needed if there are no children in the home? Explain.



dren in the home, this shows fine appreciation for spiritual things.—Ephesians 5:25, 26.

³ To accomplish the most good, instruction needs to be given regularly, in harmony with the lesson that Jehovah taught Israel in the wilderness: "Not by bread alone does man live but by every expression of

Jehovah's mouth does man live." (Deuteronomy 8:3) Depending on the circumstances of the family, some households may arrange for a weekly study; others may have shorter study sessions on a daily basis. Whatever arrangement you choose, do not leave the study to chance. 'Buy out the time' for it. Paying the needed price for such time is a sound investment. The lives of the members of your family are at stake.—Ephesians 5:15-17; Philippians 3:16.

Objectives to Keep in Mind

⁴ When you conduct the family study, it will accomplish the greatest good if you have in mind clearly defined objectives. Consider a few possibilities.

3. Why is regularity of the family study important?

4, 5. (a) Through Moses, what did Jehovah set before parents as an important objective in teaching their children? (b) What does that involve today?

⁵ At each study, seek to build up love for Jehovah God. While Israel was assembled on the plains of Moab, before they entered the Promised Land, Moses focused their attention on what Jesus Christ would later identify as "the greatest commandment in the Law." What was it? "You must love Jehovah your God with all your heart and all your soul and all your vital force." (Matthew 22:36, 37; Deuteronomy 6:5) Moses urged the Israelites to impress this on their own hearts and to teach it to their children. That would require repetition, drawing attention to reasons for loving Jehovah, dealing with attitudes and conduct that could hinder the expression of such love, and demonstrating love for Jehovah in their own lives. Do our children need the same sort of instruction? Yes! And they too need help to 'circumcise their heart,' that is, to remove anything that would impede their love for God. (Deuteronomy 10:12, 16; Jeremiah 4:4) Among such impediments may be a desire for things of the world and for opportunities to get immersed in its activities. (1 John 2:15, 16) Love for Jehovah must be active, expressive, moving us to do the things pleasing to our heavenly Father. (1 John 5:3) For your family study to have long-term benefits, every session should be conducted in a manner that strengthens this love.

⁶ Impart accurate knowledge of God's requirements. What does that involve? It involves more than being able to read an answer out of a magazine or a book. It usually requires discussion to make sure that key words and principal ideas are clearly understood. Accurate knowledge is a vital factor in putting on the new personality, in keeping in focus the really im-

6. (a) What is required in order to impart accurate knowledge? (b) How do the Scriptures emphasize the importance of accurate knowledge?

tant things when dealing with problems in life, and, thus, in doing what truly pleases God.—Philippians 1:9-11; Colossians 1:9, 10; 3:10.

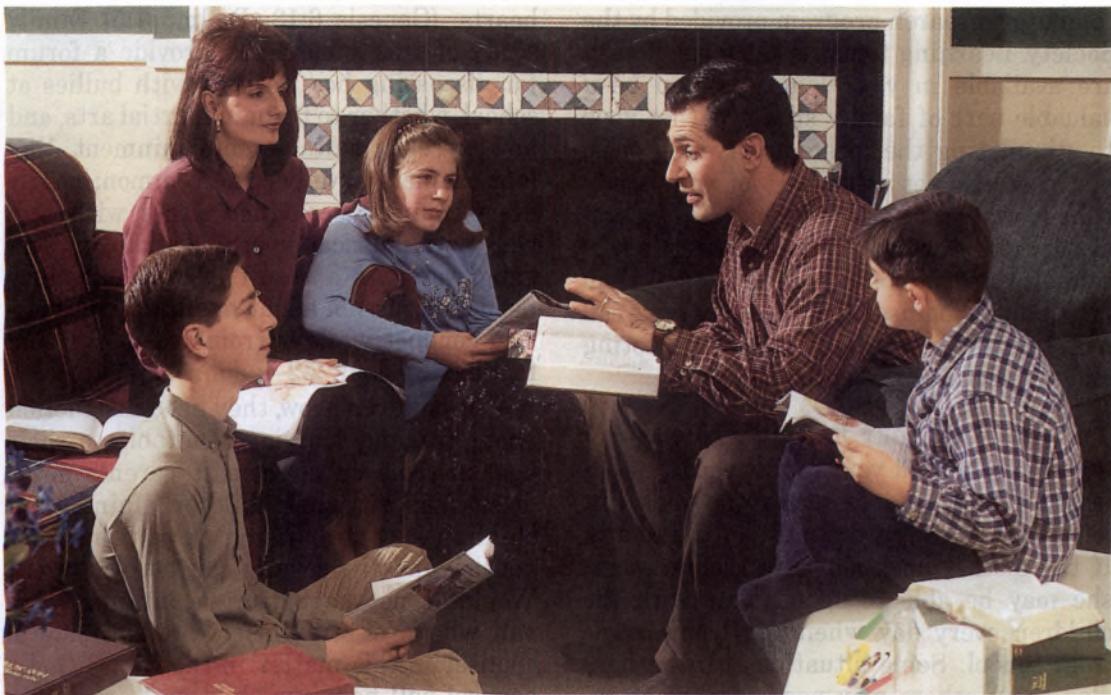
⁷ Help to make practical application of what is learned. With this objective in view, during each family study, ask: 'How should this material affect our lives? Does it require any change from what we are doing at present? Why should we want to make adjustments?' (Proverbs 2:10-15; 9:10; Isaiah 48:17, 18) Giving sufficient attention to the practical application of things learned can be an important factor in the spiritual growth of family members.

Use Teaching Tools Wisely

⁸ "The faithful and discreet slave" has provided an abundance of tools that can be used for study. The *Watchtower* magazine, for use with the Bible, is available in 131 languages. There are books for Bible study in 153 languages, brochures in 284, audio-cassettes in 61, videocassettes in 41, even a computer program for Bible research in 9 languages!—Matthew 24:45-47.

⁹ Many households use the family study period to prepare for the congregation *Watchtower* Study. How helpful that can be! *The Watchtower* contains the principal spiritual food that is provided to build up Jehovah's people worldwide. When you study *The Watchtower* as a family, do more than read paragraphs and answer printed questions. Earnestly seek understanding. Take time to look up scriptures that are cit-

7. (a) Use of what questions may help the family to make practical application of study material? (b) How do the Scriptures emphasize the value of such an objective?
8. What tools for Bible study has the slave class provided?
9. How might we apply the counsel in the scriptures cited in this paragraph when having a family *Watchtower* study?



Definite objectives will enhance your family study

ed but not quoted. Invite family members to comment on how these are related to what is stated in the paragraph under consideration. Get the heart involved.—Proverbs 4:7, 23; Acts 17:11.

¹⁰ If there are children in your household, what can you do to make your study not merely a family ritual but an upbuilding, interesting, and happy time? Endeavor to keep each one involved in an appropriate way so that the attention stays focused on the study material. Where possible, arrange for each child to have his own Bible and study magazine. In imitation of the warmth displayed by Jesus, a parent may have a young child sit very close, perhaps putting an arm around the little one. (Com-

10. What can be done to involve the children in the study and to make it an enjoyable time for them?

pare Mark 10:13-16.) A family head may have a youngster explain a picture that appears with the study material. A young child might be assigned in advance to read a certain scripture. An older one might be assigned to point out opportunities for practical application of the study material.

¹¹ Though you may be using *The Watchtower* as a basis for your discussion, do not forget the other study tools that are available in many languages. If background information or explanation of a Bible expression is needed, *Insight on the Scriptures* may provide it. Other questions may be answered by consulting the *Watch Tower Publications Index* or by using the

11. What other teaching tools have been provided, and where these are available, how might they be beneficially used in connection with the family study?

computer research program provided by the Society. Learning to use these tools, if they are available in your language, can be a valuable part of family study. With a view to stimulating the interest of young ones, you may also set aside part of your study time to watch a portion of one of the Society's instructive videos or to listen to a section of a drama on audiocassette and then discuss it. Good use of these study tools can help to make your family study interesting and beneficial to the entire family.

Adapt to Your Family's Needs

¹² It may be that your family usually studies the *Watchtower* lesson for the week. But keep your finger on the pulse of the family. If the mother does not have secular work, she may be able to spend time with the children every day when they come home from school. Some situations can be handled then; others may need further attention. When there are pressing family needs, do not ignore them. (Proverbs 27:12) These may involve not only problems at school but also other situations. Select appropriate material, and notify the family in advance about what will be studied.

¹³ As an example, a large part of the earth is in the grip of poverty; so in many places, it may be necessary to discuss how to cope with it. Would a family study built around real-life situations and Bible principles be advantageous to your household?—Proverbs 21:5; Ecclesiastes 9:11; Hebrews 13:5, 6, 18.

¹⁴ Another subject requiring discussion is violence. All of us need to have Jehovah's view firmly impressed on our minds and

12. How can the family study play a role in dealing with pressing family needs?
13. Why might family discussion of how to cope with poverty be beneficial?
14. What situations might make family discussion of Jehovah's view of violence, war, and Christian neutrality timely?

hearts. (Genesis 6:13; Psalm 11:5) Family study of this subject can provide a forum for discussing how to deal with bullies at school, whether to train in martial arts, and how to select suitable entertainment. Violent conflicts have become common; nearly every country is plagued either with civil war, with political or ethnic strife, or with gang wars. As a result, your family may need a discussion about maintaining Christian conduct while surrounded by warring factions.—Isaiah 2:2-4; John 17:16.

¹⁵ As children grow, they need instruction about sex and marriage, suitable to their age. In some cultures most parents never discuss sex with their children. Uninformed children may get twisted views from other youths, and the results can be disastrous. Would it not be better to imitate Jehovah, who gives straightforward but tasteful counsel on this matter in the Bible? Godly counsel will help our children to maintain self-respect and to treat those of the opposite sex with dignity. (Proverbs 5:18-20; Colossians 3:5; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8) Even if you have already discussed these matters, do not hesitate to do it again. As new situations arise, repetition is vital.

¹⁶ When can family study be done? In imitation of Bethel families around the earth, many households schedule their family study on Monday evening. For others it is different. In Argentina a family of 11, including 9 children, regularly got up at five o'clock every morning to have their family study. Because of varied work schedules, no other time was possible. It was not easy, but it impressed on the minds and hearts of the children the importance of family study. In the Philippines an el-

15. How should instruction about sex and marriage be given to children?
16. (a) In various households, when is family study done? (b) How have you dealt with obstacles in order to have a regular family study?

der had a regular family study with his wife and their three children as they were growing up. During the week the parents also had personal studies with each of the children so that each one would make the truth his own. In the United States, a sister whose husband is not a Witness walks with her children to the school bus each morning. While waiting for the bus, they spend about ten minutes together reading and discussing appropriate Scriptural study material, and then the mother offers a short prayer before the children board the bus. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, a woman whose unbelieving husband deserted the family has to work hard at study because of her limited education. Her grown son helps by visiting the family each week to take the lead in a study involving his mother and his younger brothers. The mother sets a fine example by her diligent preparation. Is there some situation that makes regular family study difficult in your household? Do not give up. Earnestly seek Jehovah's blessing on your efforts to have a regular Bible study.—Mark 11:23, 24.

Rewards From Perseverance

¹⁷ Planning is needed. Perseverance is required. But the benefits that come from regular family study are well worth it. (Proverbs 22:6; 3 John 4) Franz and Hilda, in Germany, raised a family of 11 children. Years later, their daughter Magdalena said: "What I consider of most importance today is that there was not a single day that passed without our receiving some spiritual instruction." When the spirit of nationalism became intense under Adolf Hitler, Magdalena's father used the Bible to prepare his family for the tests that he realized

17. (a) In order to have a regular family study, what is required? (b) What experience illustrates the value of regular family instruction in Jehovah's ways?

were coming. In time, the younger family members were seized and taken to a reform school; others of the family were arrested and held in prisons and concentration camps. Some were executed. The faith of all of them held firm—not only during that time of fierce persecution but also, for the survivors, during the years that followed.

¹⁸ Many single parents, as well as those whose mates do not share their faith, have likewise provided their children with regular Bible instruction. A single mother, a widow, in India worked hard to instill love for Jehovah in her two children. Her heart was broken, however, when her son stopped associating with Jehovah's people. She begged Jehovah to forgive her for any shortcomings in her training of her son. But the son had not really forgotten what he had learned. After more than a decade, he returned, made fine spiritual progress, and became a congregation elder. Now he and his wife serve as full-time pioneer ministers. How grateful are those parents who have taken to heart the counsel from Jehovah and his organization to provide regular Bible instruction within the family circle! Are you applying that counsel in your household?

18. How have the efforts of single parents been rewarded?

Can You Explain?

- Why is regular family study important?
- What should our objectives be during each family study?
- What tools for teaching have been made available to us?
- How can the study be adapted to family needs?

FAMILIES, PRAISE GOD AS PART OF HIS CONGREGATION

"Among the congregated throngs I shall bless Jehovah."

—PSALM 26:12.

WORSHIP of Jehovah includes not only prayer and study of the Bible at home but also activity as part of the congregation of God. Ancient Israel was commanded to "congregate the people, the men and the women and the little ones," to learn the law of God so as to walk in his way.

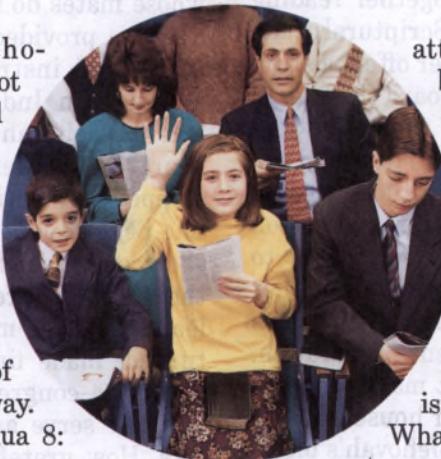
(Deuteronomy 31:12; Joshua 8:

35) Both older ones and 'young men and virgins' were encouraged to share in praising the name of Jehovah. (Psalm 148: 12, 13) Similar arrangements apply within the Christian congregation. In Kingdom Halls throughout the earth, men, women, and children participate freely in sessions that involve the audience, and many find great pleasure in having a share.—Hebrews 10:23-25.

² True, helping young ones to get into a wholesome routine of congregation activity can be a challenge. If some children who attend with their parents apparently do not enjoy the meetings, what may be the problem? Of course, most children have a short

1. What is an important part of true worship in addition to study and prayer at home?

2. (a) Why is preparation a key factor in helping young ones to enjoy the meetings? (b) Whose example is important?



attention span and are easily bored. Preparation can help to handle this problem. Without preparation, children cannot share in the meetings in a meaningful way. (Proverbs 15:23) Without preparation, it will be difficult for them to make spiritual advancement that brings satisfaction. (1 Timothy 4:12, 15)

What can be done? First, parents need to ask whether they themselves prepare for the meetings. Their example is a powerful influence. (Luke 6:40) Careful planning of the family study can also be an important factor.

Building Up the Heart

³ The family study should be a time not merely to fill heads with knowledge but also to build up hearts. This requires both an awareness of the problems that confront family members and a loving concern for each one. Jehovah is "an examiner of the heart."—1 Chronicles 29:17.

⁴ What does Jehovah find when he examines the hearts of our children? Most of

3. During the family study, why should special effort be made to build up hearts, and what does this require?

4. (a) What does it mean to be "in want of heart"? (b) What is involved in "acquiring heart"?

them would say that they love God, and that is commendable. Yet, one who is young or who is newly learning about Jehovah has limited experience in Jehovah's ways. Because he is inexperienced, he may be "in want of heart," as the Bible expresses it. Perhaps not all his motives are bad, but it takes time to bring one's heart into a condition that will really please God. This involves bringing one's thoughts, desires, affections, emotions, and goals in life into harmony with what God approves, to the extent that this is possible for imperfect humans. When someone does such molding of the inner person in a godly way, he is "acquiring heart."—Proverbs 9:4; 19:8.

⁵ Can parents help their children to 'acquire heart'? True, no human can put a good condition of heart into another person. Each one of us is endowed with free will, and much depends on what we allow ourselves to think about. With discernment, however, parents can often draw their child out, learning what is in the heart and where help is needed. Use such questions as 'How do you feel about this?' and 'What would you really like to do?' Then, listen patiently. Do not overreact. (Proverbs 20:5) An atmosphere of kindness, understanding, and love is important if you want to reach the heart.

⁶ To fortify wholesome inclinations, frequently discuss the fruitage of the spirit—each aspect of it—and work together as a family to cultivate it. (Galatians 5:22, 23) Build up love for Jehovah and for Jesus Christ, not merely by saying that we should love them but by discussing the *reasons why* we love them and *how we can express* that love. (2 Corinthians 5:14, 15) Strengthen the desire to do what is right by reasoning on the benefits that will re-

5, 6. How can parents help their children to 'acquire heart'?

sult. Build up the desire to shun wrong thoughts, speech, and conduct by discussing the bad effects of such things. (Amos 5:15; 3 John 11) Show how thoughts, speech, and conduct—whether good or bad—can affect one's relationship with Jehovah.

⁷ When a child has a problem or needs to make an important decision, we could ask him: 'How do you think Jehovah views this? What do you know about Jehovah that makes you say that? Have you prayed to him about it?' Starting as early as possible, help your children to build a pattern of life in which an earnest effort is always made to ascertain God's will and then to do it. As they come to have a close, personal relationship with Jehovah, they will find pleasure in walking in his paths. (Psalm 119:34, 35) This will build within them appreciation for the privilege of being associated with the congregation of the true God.

Preparation for Congregation Meetings

⁸ There are many matters that need attention during periods of family study. How can you fit them all in? It is impossible to do everything at the same time. But you may find it helpful to make a checklist. (Proverbs 21:5) From time to time, review it and consider what needs special attention. Take a keen interest in the progress of each family member. This arrangement for family study is an important part of Christian education, equipping us for life now and preparing us for the eternal life to come.—1 Timothy 4:8.

⁹ Does your family study include preparation for congregation meetings? There are a

7. What can be done to help children to deal with problems and to make decisions in a way that will keep them close to Jehovah?
8. (a) What may help us to include in our family study all the things that need attention?
(b) How important is this study?
9. What goals regarding meeting preparation might we gradually work on during our family studies?

Your family study may include preparation for congregation meetings

number of projects that you might progressively work on as you study together. Some of these may require weeks, months, or even years to accomplish. Consider these goals: (1) each one in the family ready to comment at the congregation meetings; (2) each one working on giving comments in his own words; (3) including scriptures in comments; and (4) analyzing the material with a view to personal application. All of this can help an individual to make the truth his own.—Psalm 25:4, 5.

¹⁰ Even if your family study is usually based on the *Watchtower* lesson for the week, do not overlook the importance of individual or family preparation for the Congregation Book Study, the Theocratic Ministry School, and the Service Meeting. These too are important parts of the program for teaching us to walk in Jehovah's way. You may periodically be able to prepare for the meetings as a family group. By your working together, study skills will be improved. As a result, more good will be derived from the meetings themselves. Among other things, discuss the benefits of regular preparation for these meetings and the importance of having a definite time set aside for it.—Ephesians 5:15-17.

10. (a) How might we give attention to each of our congregation meetings? (b) Why is this worthwhile?



¹¹ At the “God’s Way of Life” Conventions, we were encouraged to prepare for another feature of our meetings—the singing. Have you followed through on that? Doing so can help to etch Bible truths on our minds and hearts and at the same time enhance our enjoyment of congregation meetings.

¹² Preparation that includes reading and discussing the meaning of the words in some of the scheduled songs can help us to sing from the heart. In ancient Israel, musical instruments were prominently used in worship. (1 Chronicles 25:1; Psalm 28:7) Does someone in your family play a musical instrument? Why not use that instrument to practice one of the Kingdom songs for the week, and then sing the song as a family. Another possibility is to use a recording of the songs. In some lands our brothers sing beautifully without musical accompaniment. As they walk on the roads or go about their work in the fields, they often enjoy singing the songs that are scheduled for the congregation meetings that week.—Ephesians 5:19.

11, 12. How would preparation for congregation singing benefit us, and how might this be done?



Practice for singing at the meetings is beneficial

"God's fellow workers." (1 Corinthians 3:9) What a privilege! As we share in the ministry, we do so in cooperation with the holy angels. (Revelation 14:6, 7) What better time could there be to build up appreciation for this than in family discussions, whether at our weekly study or when discussing an appropriate text from *Examining the Scriptures Daily!*

¹⁵ Do you occasionally use time at your family study to assist the members of your household to prepare for the week's field service? Doing so can be very beneficial. (2 Timothy 2:15) It can help to make their service meaningful and productive. Occasionally, you might set aside an entire study session for such preparation. More often, you might deal with aspects of the field ministry in shorter discussions at the end of the family study or at some other time during the week.

¹⁶ Family sessions might focus on a series of steps, such as the following: (1) Prepare a well-rehearsed presentation including a scripture to read from the Bible if opportunity permits. (2) Make sure that each one has, if possible, his own field service bag, a Bible, a notebook, a pen or pencil, tracts, and other literature in good condition. The service bag does not have to be expensive, but it should be neat. (3) Discuss where and how to do informal witnessing. Follow up each stage of this instruction with periods during which you work together in the field service. Offer helpful suggestions, but do not counsel on too many points.

15. When might we prepare for field service as a family?

16. Discuss the value of each of the steps listed in the paragraph.

Family Preparation for Field Service

¹³ Witnessing to others about Jehovah and his purpose is an important part of our lives. (Isaiah 43:10-12; Matthew 24:14) Whether young or old, we enjoy this activity more and we accomplish greater good if we are prepared. How can we do this within the family?

¹⁴ As with all matters that involve our worship, it is important to prepare our hearts. We need to discuss not only what we are going to do but also why we are going to do it. In the days of King Jehoshaphat, the people were given instruction in divine law, but the Bible tells us that they "had not yet prepared their heart." This left them vulnerable to enticements that could take them away from true worship. (2 Chronicles 20:33; 21:11) Our goal is not simply to be able to report hours spent in the field service, nor is it merely to place literature. Our ministry should be an expression of our love for Jehovah and of our love for people who need the opportunity to choose life. (Hebrews 13:15) It is activity in which we are

13, 14. Why are family discussions that prepare our hearts for the field ministry valuable?

¹⁷ A major part of the work that Jesus Christ assigned to his followers is disciple making. (Matthew 28:19, 20) Making disciples involves more than preaching. It requires teaching. How can your family study help you to be effective in doing this?

¹⁸ As a family, discuss whom it would be good to make return visits on. Some of them may have accepted literature; some may simply have listened. They may have been met in the house-to-house work or in informal witnessing at the market or at school. Let God's Word guide you. (Psalm 25:9; Ezekiel 9:4) Decide whom each one of you wants to call on that week. What will be talked about? Family discussion can help each member to prepare. Make note of specific scriptures to share with interested ones as well as appropriate points from the brochure *What Does God Require of Us?* or the book *Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life*. Do not try to cover too much on one call. Leave the householder with a question that will be answered on the next visit. Why not make it part of the weekly

17, 18. (a) What sort of preparation as a family can help to make our field ministry more fruitful? (b) What aspect of this preparation could be done each week?

Can You Explain?

- Why is meeting preparation so important for our children?
- How can parents help their children to 'acquire heart'?
- How can our family study help in preparing for all the meetings?
- How might preparing for field service as a family help us to be more effective?

family routine to plan which return visits each one is going to make, when he will make them, and what he hopes to accomplish. Doing this can help to make the field ministry of the entire family more fruitful.

Go On Teaching Them Jehovah's Way

¹⁹ Being a family head in this wicked world is a challenge. Satan and his demons endeavor to destroy the spirituality of Jehovah's servants. (1 Peter 5:8) Moreover, today there is a lot of pressure on you parents, especially on you single parents. It is difficult to find the time to do all the things you would like to do. But it is worth the effort, even if you can apply just one suggestion at a time, and gradually improve your family study program. Seeing those who are very close to you walk loyally in Jehovah's way is a heartwarming reward. To walk successfully in Jehovah's way, family members need to find joy in being at congregation meetings and in sharing in the field ministry. For that to be true, preparation is required—preparation that builds up the heart and that equips each one to have a meaningful share.

²⁰ Concerning those whom he had helped spiritually, the apostle John wrote: "No greater cause for thankfulness do I have than these things, that I should be hearing that my children go on walking in the truth." (3 John 4) Family studies that are conducted with clear objectives in mind and family heads who deal in a kind, helpful manner with the individual needs of family members can do much to enable the family to share such joy. By cultivating appreciation for God's way of life, parents are helping their family to enjoy the very best way of life.—Psalm 19:7-11.

19. If family members are to continue walking in Jehovah's way, what must they experience, and what contributes to this?

20. What can help more parents to experience the sort of joy that is expressed at 3 John 4?

FROM EXTREME POVERTY TO THE GREATEST OF RICHES

AS TOLD BY MANUEL DE JESUS ALMEIDA

I was born in October 1916, the youngest of 17 children. Nine of my older brothers and sisters had died of sickness and malnutrition, so I never knew them. The remaining eight of us lived with our parents in a small village near Porto, Portugal.



OUR humble home consisted of a small living room and one bedroom. Drinking water was obtained from a well nearly a quarter of a mile away, and our cooking facilities were primitive.

As soon as my older brothers were physically able, they started working in the corn-fields. Their earnings helped provide some food for the family. With their help I became the only child to receive a little schooling. Although our life was hard, we were extremely faithful to the Catholic Church, hoping that in some way this would help our lives.

During the month of May, the church had what was called the novena. For nine consecutive days, we walked to the church early in the morning while it was still dark. There we prayed, believing that this would bring a blessing from God. We also thought that the priest was a holy man, God's representative. But, in time, our view changed.

Searching for Something Better

When we failed to pay the church tax, the priest made no allowances for our extreme financial difficulties. This discouraged us. My impression of the church changed radically, so when I was 18, I decided to leave my family to find out if there was not something better in life than working in the fields and disputing with the church. In 1936, I arrived in Lisbon, Portugal's capital city.

There I met Edminia. Although I felt deceived by religion, we followed custom and got married in the Catholic Church. Then in 1939, World War II began. During the war, I was in charge of 18 warehouses, and we would send off up to 125 truckloads of war materials in a single day.

The horrors of the war along with the deep involvement of the Catholic Church affected me greatly. I wondered, 'Does God truly care about mankind? How should we

worship him?" Years later in 1954, an elderly gentleman, one of Jehovah's Witnesses, spoke to me regarding questions that I had. This conversation changed my whole life.

Thrilled by the Bible's Hope

This kind man, Joshua, explained to me that God's Kingdom is the only solution to the world's problems and that peace and security will be realized only by means of the Kingdom's rule. (Matthew 6:9, 10; 24:14) What he said delighted me, but I was reluctant to accept his explanations because of my former experience with religion. When he offered to study the Bible with me, I accepted on the condition that he not ask for money and that he not talk about politics. He agreed, assuring me that what he offered was free.—Revelation 22:17.

My confidence in Joshua grew quickly. So I asked him for something that I had desired since my youth. "Would it be possible to have my own personal copy of the Bible?" After receiving it, how delighted I was to read for the first time from our Creator's own Word such promises as: "God himself will be with [mankind]. And he will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away!"—Revelation 21:3, 4.

In particular, the Bible promises about the elimination of poverty and sickness were comforting to me. The faithful man Elihu said of God: "He gives food in abundance." (Job 36:31) And under the righteous rule of God's Kingdom, the Bible says, "no resident will say: 'I am sick.'" (Isaiah 33:24) What loving interest Jehovah God has in mankind! How my interest in his promises grew!



Top: Brother Almeida in Lisbon announcing the arrangement to send delegates to the 1958 New York convention

Middle: Conducting a model servants' meeting at the "Peace on Earth" International Assembly in Paris

Bottom: Chartered buses getting ready for a district convention in France

I attended my first meeting of Jehovah's Witnesses on April 17, 1954. It was a special meeting—the Memorial celebration of Christ's death. From that time on, I was very regular at meetings. Soon I began sharing the good things that I was learning with others. In those days in Portugal, we had a picnic every month near the beach, and then we had a baptism. Seven months after Joshua first spoke with me, I made my dedication to Jehovah God and symbolized it by water baptism in the ocean.

Early in 1954 there were only about a hundred Witnesses in all of Portugal. Thus,



Conducting morning worship at Portugal branch

Portugal branch, dedicated in 1988



there was a great need for men to take the lead in the preaching work. I made rapid spiritual progress, and I was soon given responsibilities within the congregation. In 1956, I was appointed congregation servant, as the presiding overseer was then called, in the second congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses in Lisbon. Today, there are more than a hundred congregations in this city and its suburbs.

Benefited by Showing Hospitality

Even though Edminia and I were limited financially, our door was always open to our Christian brothers. In 1955 a pioneer, as full-time evangelizers of Jehovah's Witnesses are called, stopped in Portugal while en route from his home in Brazil to the international "Triumphant Kingdom" Assembly in Germany. Because of transportation problems, he stayed in our home for a month, and how we benefited spiritually from his visit!

Other visitors to our home at that time included members of the headquarters family of Jehovah's Witnesses in Brooklyn, New York, such as Hugo Riemer and his roommate Charles Eicher. They had dinner with us and gave talks to the Portuguese brothers. Like newly hatched chicks with opened

**Brother Hugo Riemer's
talks encouraged us
when he visited from
Brooklyn Bethel**

beaks, we waited for the juicy spiritual tidbits that such ones provided.

Traveling overseers of Jehovah's Witnesses also stayed in our home during their visits. A memorable visitor in 1957 was Álvaro Berecochea, branch overseer of Morocco, who was assigned to visit Portugal to encourage the brothers. He attended the book study in our home, and we insisted that he stay with us for the rest of his time in Portugal. We were deeply blessed and fattened spiritually during his month-long visit, while Álvaro put on weight in a physical way as a result of the good cooking of my dear Edminia.

Extreme poverty, such as I experienced in childhood, can leave a deep impression on a person. Yet, I came to appreciate that the more we give to Jehovah and to his faithful servants, the more he blesses us. Time and again this fact was impressed upon me as we showed hospitality to all we could.

At our convention in Porto in 1955, an announcement was made about the international convention of Jehovah's Witnesses that was to be held at Yankee Stadium in New York City in 1958. A contribution box was put in each Kingdom Hall in the country—which then were very few—to help finance sending Portuguese delegates to the convention. Can you imagine our rejoicing when my wife and I were selected to be among these delegates? What a joy it was to visit the world headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses in Brooklyn while we were in the United States for the convention!



With my wife

Enduring Persecution

In 1962 the preaching work of Jehovah's Witnesses was banned in Portugal, and the missionaries—including Eric Britten, Domenick Piccone, Eric Beveridge, and their wives—were expelled. Afterward, we weren't permitted to hold our meetings in Kingdom Halls, so we held them secretly in private homes; nor was it possible anymore to have large conventions in Portugal. So it became my responsibility to arrange transportation for our Christian brothers and sisters to attend such conventions in other countries.

To arrange for large numbers of Witnesses to travel to other countries was not easy. Yet, the effort was well worth it, considering the marvelous spiritual benefits that the Portuguese brothers received. What an upbuilding experience it was for them to be in attendance at conventions in Switzerland, England, Italy, and France! Such conventions also provided an opportunity for them to bring back literature into the country. During those years, we made numerous requests to be registered as a religious organization in Portugal, but all these requests were refused.

After the missionaries were expelled early in 1962, the secret police began to intensify its campaign to stop our preach-

ing work. Scores of our brothers and sisters were arrested and brought to court. Documented reports about a number of these events were published in this journal and in its companion magazine, *Awake!**

Among those imprisoned for preaching was a pioneer to whom I had introduced the good news of God's Kingdom. Since the police found my address among his belongings, I was summoned and interrogated.

Later, two police agents visited my home. They confiscated my Bible study aids as well as 13 copies of the Bible. They kept up their harassment, returning a total of seven different times to search our premises. Each time, they barraged us with questions.

Several times I was called upon to testify in behalf of fellow Witnesses in court cases. Though I did not have much secular education, Jehovah gave me 'wisdom that all opposers together were unable to resist or dispute.' (Luke 21:15) On one occasion the judge was so amazed by my testimony that he asked what education I had had. All in the courtroom laughed when I said that I had gone only as far as the fourth grade.

As the persecution increased, so did the number of those who responded to the Kingdom message. Thus, the fewer than 1,300 Witnesses in Portugal in 1962 grew to over 13,000 by 1974! In the meantime, in May 1967, I was invited to serve as a traveling overseer. In this work I visited congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses to strengthen them spiritually.

Enjoying the Greatest of Riches

In December 1974, I was privileged to be involved in the registration that legalized the work of Jehovah's Witnesses in Portugal. The following year my wife and I became members of the Bethel family of

* See *Awake!* of May 22, 1964, pages 8-16, and *The Watchtower* of October 1, 1966, pages 581-92.

Jehovah's Witnesses in Estoril. I was also appointed to serve as a member of the Portugal Branch Committee.

What a joy it has been to see the preaching work prosper in Portugal and in the territories under the supervision of our branch! These include Angola, the Azores, Cape Verde, Madeira, and São Tomé and Príncipe. Over the years it has been thrilling to see missionaries from Portugal sent out to serve in these lands, where tremendous interest in the Kingdom message has been shown. Imagine our rejoicing now to have more than 88,000 Kingdom proclaimers in these places, including more than 47,000 in Portugal! The Memorial attendance in these countries in 1998 topped 245,000, compared with less than 200 when I became a Witness in 1954.

Edminia and I concur wholeheartedly with the Bible psalmist who said that "a day in [Jehovah's] courtyards is better than a thousand elsewhere." (Psalm 84:10) When I think back to my humble beginnings and compare them with the spiritual riches that I have since enjoyed, I feel as did the prophet Isaiah: "O Jehovah, you are my God. I exalt you, I laud your name, for you have done wonderful things . . . For you have become a stronghold to the lowly one, a stronghold to the poor one."—Isaiah 25:1, 4.

In Our Next Issue

Why You Can Trust Bible Prophecy

**Helping People to
Draw Close to Jehovah**

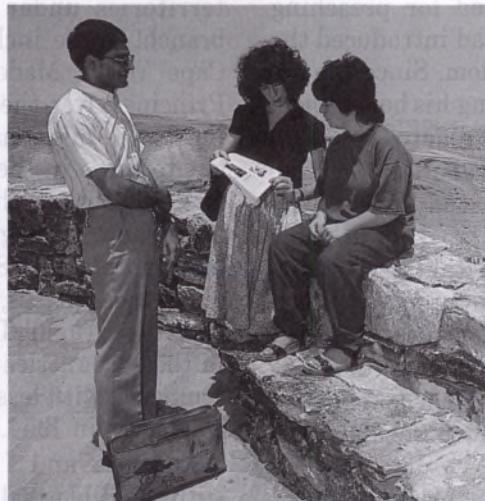
**Wholesome Communication—A Key
to a Good Marriage**

The Divine Name Uttered in Israel

FOR centuries traditional Judaism has strictly forbidden its adherents to pronounce the divine name, Jehovah. According to the Mishnah, anyone who utters God's name will have "no portion in the world to come."—Sanhedrin 10:1.*

On January 30, 1995, the former Sephardic chief rabbi of Israel deliberately pronounced the divine name. He did this while reciting a tikkun, a Cabalist prayer of correction. This prayer is uttered so that God might restore a degree of harmony to the universe, which, according to the worshippers, has been disrupted by evil forces. The newspaper *Yedioth Aharonoth* of February 6, 1995, stated: "This is a liturgy of such incredible power that its wording appears only in a special booklet that is not sold to the public." Invoking God's name in this context is thought to lend special force to the request.

It is noteworthy that the Bible commands God's servants to use the divine name, Jehovah. (Exodus 3:15; Proverbs 18:10; Isaiah 12:4; Zephaniah 3:9) In the original Hebrew



Here in the Negev, Jehovah's name and his Word are made known by his people

text of the Bible, that name appears almost 7,000 times. However, the Bible warns against misusing God's name. The third of the Ten Commandments states: "You must not take up the name of Jehovah your God in a worthless way, for Jehovah will not leave the one unpunished who takes up his name in a worthless way." (Exodus 20:7) How might God's name be taken up in a worthless way? A commentary by The Jewish

Publication Society notes that the Hebrew term translated "in a worthless way" can include not only "frivolous use" of the divine name but also "the recitation of an unnecessary blessing."

How, then, should we view the Cabalist tikkun prayer of correction? What is its origin? In the 12th and 13th centuries C.E., a mystical form of Judaism, called Cabala, started gaining popularity. In the 16th century, Isaac Luria, a rabbi, introduced "tikkunim" into Cabalist liturgy. God's name was used as a mystical charm with special powers, and it became a part of Cabalist ritual. Do you feel that this is a proper use of God's name?—Deuteronomy 18:10-12.

However you answer that question, you will agree that the open utterance of God's name in modern-day Israel was a most unusual event. Yet, God himself foretold:

* The Mishnah is a collection of commentaries supplementing Scriptural law, based on the explanations by rabbis called Tannaim (teachers). It was put into written form in the late second and early third centuries C.E.

Poster showing the divine name

"In that day you will certainly say: 'Give thanks to Jehovah, you people! Call upon his name. Make known among the peoples his dealings. Make mention that his name is put on high. Make melody to Jehovah, for he has done surpassingly. This is made known in all the earth.'"

—Isaiah 12:4, 5.

Happily, in Israel, as



in over 230 lands worldwide, Jehovah's Witnesses are making every effort to help their neighbors to gain accurate knowledge about Jehovah. Their hope is that many more will yet come to appreciate the meaning of such scriptures as Psalm 91:14: "Because on me [Jehovah] he has set his affection, I shall also provide him with escape. I shall protect him because he has come to know my name."

ANNUAL MEETING OCTOBER 2, 1999

THE ANNUAL MEETING of the members of Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania will be held on October 2, 1999, at the Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 2932 Kennedy Boulevard, Jersey City, New Jersey. A preliminary meeting of the members only will convene at 9:15 a.m., followed by the general annual meeting at 10:00 a.m.

The members of the Corporation should inform the Secretary's Office now of any change in their mailing addresses during the past year so that the regular letters of notice and proxies can reach them during July.

The proxies, which will be sent to the members along with the notice of the annual meeting, are to be returned so as to reach the Office of the Secretary of the Society not later than August 1. Each member should complete and return his proxy promptly, stating whether he is going to be at the meeting personally or not. The information given on each proxy should be def-



inite on this point, since it will be relied upon in determining who will be personally present.

It is expected that the entire session, including the formal business meeting and reports, will be concluded by 1:00 p.m. or shortly thereafter. There will be no afternoon session. Because of limited space, admission will be by ticket only. No arrangements will be made for tying in the annual meeting by telephone lines to other auditoriums.

A Visit That Was Richly Rewarded

THE trip from Sheba to Jerusalem must have been grueling for the queen. She was used to living in luxury. Now, she was trekking at a camel's pace on a journey of 1,500 miles, much of it through the burning desert. According to one estimate, her travels would have taken some 75 days to complete, and that was just one way!*

Why did this wealthy queen leave her comfortable home in Sheba and undertake such an arduous journey?

An Intriguing Report

The queen of Sheba came to Jerusalem after "hearing the report about Solomon in connection with the name of Jehovah." (1 Kings 10:1) Exactly what the queen heard is not stated. We know, however, that Jehovah blessed Solomon with exceptional wisdom, wealth, and honor. (2 Chronicles 1:11, 12) How did the queen come to know of this? Since Sheba was a center of trade, it may be that she heard of Solomon's fame through traders who visited her land. Some of these may have been to Ophir, a land with which Solomon had considerable business dealings.—1 Kings 9:26-28.

In any event, the queen arrived in Jerusalem "with a very impressive train, camels carrying balsam oil and very much gold and precious stones." (1 Kings 10:2a) Some say that the "impressive train" included an armed escort. This would be understandable, considering that the queen was a powerful dignitary and was traveling with tens of millions of dollars' worth of valuables.[#]

* Many scholars believe that Sheba was located in southwest Arabia, in what is today the Republic of Yemen.

[#] According to the ancient Greek geographer Strabo, the people of Sheba were enormously wealthy. He says that they made lavish use of gold in their furniture, their utensils, and even on the walls, doors, and roofs of their homes.

Note, however, that the queen heard of Solomon's fame "in connection with the name of Jehovah." So this was not just a business trip. Evidently, the queen came primarily to hear Solomon's wisdom—perhaps even to learn something about his God, Jehovah. Since she likely descended from Shem or Ham, who were worshipers of Jehovah, she may have been curious about the religion of her ancestors.

Perplexing Questions, Satisfying Answers

Upon meeting Solomon, the queen began testing him with "perplexing questions." (1 Kings 10:1) The Hebrew word here used can be translated "riddles." But this does not mean that the queen engaged Solomon in trivial games. Interestingly, at Psalm 49:4, the same Hebrew word is used to describe serious questions regarding sin, death, and redemption. Likely, then, the queen of Sheba was discussing deep subjects with Solomon that tested the depth of his wisdom. The Bible states that she "began to speak to him all that happened to be close to her heart." Solomon, in turn, "went on to tell her all her matters. There proved to be no matter hidden from the king that he did not tell her." —1 Kings 10:2b, 3.

The queen of Sheba was so impressed with Solomon's wisdom and the prosperity of his kingdom that there was "no more spirit in her." (1 Kings 10:4, 5) Some take this phrase to mean that the queen was left "breathless." One scholar even suggests that she fainted! Be that as it may, the queen was amazed at what she had seen and heard. She pronounced Solomon's servants happy for being able to hear this king's wisdom, and she blessed Jehovah for putting Solomon on the throne. Then she gave the king costly gifts, the gold alone totaling, by modern values, some \$40,000,000. Solomon



too presented gifts, giving the queen "all her delight for which she asked."*—1 Kings 10:6-13.

Lesson for Us

Jesus used the queen of Sheba as an object lesson for the scribes and Pharisees. "The queen of the south will be raised up in the judgment with this generation and will condemn it," he told them, "because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, but, look! something more than Solomon is here." (Matthew 12:42) Yes, the queen of Sheba showed great appreciation for God-given wisdom. If she traveled 1,500 miles to listen to Solomon, surely the scribes and Pharisees

should have listened intently to Jesus, who was right there in front of them.

We today can show deep appreciation for the Greater Solomon, Jesus Christ. How? One way is by following his directive to "make disciples of people of all the nations." (Matthew 28:19) Another way is to consider closely Jesus' example and his mental attitude and then imitate these.—Philippians 2:5; Hebrews 12:2, 3.

True, following the example of the Greater Solomon will require effort on our part. Yet, we will be richly rewarded. Indeed, Jehovah promises his people that if they show a self-sacrificing spirit, he will 'open to them the floodgates of the heavens and actually empty out upon them a blessing until there is no more want.'—Malachi 3:10.

* Some take this phrase to mean that the queen had sexual relations with Solomon. Legends state that they even had a son. There is no evidence, however, to support any of this.

The Wisdom to "Foresee What Will Happen"

THEY are a people who have lost their good sense and have no understanding. If they were wise, they would understand this and foresee what will happen to them."

—Deuteronomy 32:28, Beck.

These words were spoken by Moses to the Israelites as they stood at the border of the Promised Land. Moses was foretelling a time when they would forsake Jehovah and give little thought to the consequences of their actions. During the centuries that followed, the people of Israel—including many kings—ignored God's warnings.

Solomon, for example, knew the divine command not to marry worshipers of gods other than Jehovah. (Deuteronomy 7:1-4) Nevertheless, he came to have "many foreign wives." The result? The Bible record states: "It came about in the time of Solomon's growing old that his wives themselves had inclined his heart to follow other gods; and his heart did not prove to be complete with Jehovah his God like the heart of David his father." (1 Kings 11:1, 4) Though a wise man, Solomon lacked the good sense to 'foresee what would happen' if he disobeyed God's command.

What about us? We can avoid much pain if we give adequate forethought to life's decisions. For example, Christians are admonished to "cleanse [themselves] of every defilement of flesh and spirit." (2 Corinthians 7:1) This is wise, but many do not have the good sense to foresee what may happen if they disregard Paul's counsel. For example, many young people pollute their bodies by smoking tobacco, thinking that this makes them look sophisticated and adult. How tragic when, later in life, a number suffer from heart problems, lung cancer, or emphysema as a result!

It is important to give serious consideration to the consequences of our decisions and actions. With good reason, Paul wrote: "Whatever a man is sowing, this he will also reap; because he who is sowing with a view to his flesh will reap corruption from his flesh, but he who is sowing with a view to the spirit will reap everlasting life from the spirit."—Galatians 6:7, 8.

—*See also "Sowing and Reaping," page 10.*

Of course—know whom you

