

THE WATCHTOWER

MARCH 1, 2005

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



**How
Can You
Make Peace
With
Others?**



THE WATCHTOWER®

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

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

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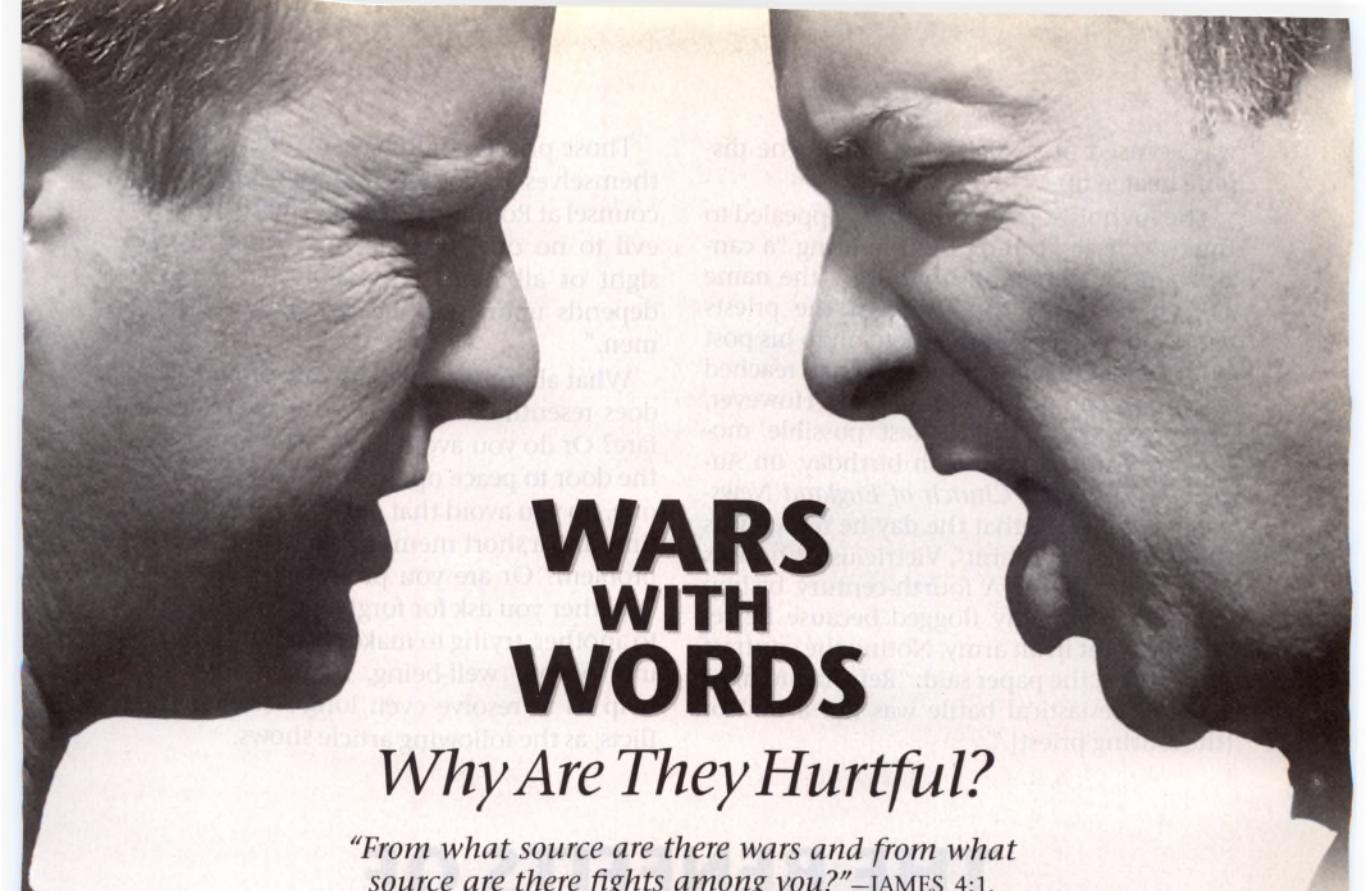
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WARS WITH WORDS

Why Are They Hurtful?

"From what source are there wars and from what source are there fights among you?"—JAMES 4:1.

THE Bible writer James did not direct this question to the soldiers of Rome's legions, which were then waging wars of conquest; nor was he probing the motives behind the guerrilla fighting of the Jewish Sicarii, or Dagger Men, of the first century C.E. James had in mind disputes that involved as few as two people. Why? Because like wars, personal battles are destructive. Note these Bible accounts.

The sons of the patriarch Jacob hated their brother Joseph so much that they sold him into slavery. (Genesis 37:4-28) Later, Israel's King Saul tried to kill David. Why? Because he was envious of David. (1 Samuel 18:7-11; 23:14, 15) In the first century, two Christian women, Euodia and Syntyche, disturbed the peace of an entire congregation with their arguing.—Philippians 4:2.

In more recent times, men settled their differences in duels, facing off with swords or pistols. Often one of the duelists was killed or was maimed for life. Today, those who feud usually limit their weaponry to bitter, cutting words. Although blood may not be drawn, the verbal attacks injure emotions and reputations. Innocent ones often suffer in these "wars."

Consider what took place some years ago when one Anglican priest accused another of mishandling church finances. Their quarreling became public, and the congregation they served split into factions. Some members refused to attend services if the minister they opposed was presiding. So intense was their mutual contempt that they snubbed each other when they were in church for worship. When the accusing priest himself

was accused of sexual misconduct, the dispute heated up.

The Archbishop of Canterbury appealed to the two clerics, calling their fighting "a cancer" and "a scandal dishonouring the name of Our Lord." In 1997 one of the priests agreed to retire. The other held on to his post until he had to leave because he had reached the age of compulsory retirement. However, he stayed on until the last possible moment, retiring on his 70th birthday, on August 7, 2001. *The Church of England Newspaper* mentioned that the day he retired was the feast day of "Saint" Victricius. Who was "Saint" Victricius? A fourth-century bishop who was reportedly flogged because he refused to fight in an army. Noting the contrast in attitudes, the paper said: "Refusing to fight in an ecclesiastical battle was not a trait of [the retiring priest]."

Those priests could have avoided injuring themselves and others had they applied the counsel at Romans 12:17, 18: "Return evil for evil to no one. Provide fine things in the sight of all men. If possible, as far as it depends upon you, be peaceable with all men."

What about you? If someone offends you, does resentment goad you into verbal warfare? Or do you avoid harsh words and keep the door to peace open? If you offend someone, do you avoid that person and hope that time and a short memory will cover over the problem? Or are you prompt to apologize? Whether you ask for forgiveness or extend it to another, trying to make peace will contribute to your well-being. Bible counsel can help us to resolve even long-standing conflicts, as the following article shows.

THE BENEFITS OF *Making Peace*

ED WAS dying, and Bill hated him. Two decades earlier, Ed had made a decision that cost Bill his job, and that tore these once close friends apart. Now Ed tried to apologize so that he could die in peace. Bill, however, refused to hear him out.

Almost 30 years later as Bill approached death, he explained why he did not extend forgiveness. "Ed didn't have to do what he did to his best friend. I just didn't want to make up after twenty years. . . . I may have been wrong, but that's the way I felt."*

* Based on *The Murrow Boys—Pioneers on the Front Lines of Broadcast Journalism*, by Stanley Cloud and Lynne Olson.

Personal differences do not usually have such a tragic outcome, but they frequently leave people feeling hurt or bitter. Consider someone who feels as Ed did. Realizing that his decision caused damage, such an individual might live with a guilty conscience and an overwhelming sense of loss. Yet, he feels hurt when he thinks of how his offended comrade discarded their friendship like so much trash.

Someone who shares Bill's view, however, sees himself as an unsuspecting victim and might be deeply bitter and resentful. To him, his erstwhile friend knew better and might have caused harm on purpose. Often, when there is a difference between two people,

each one is convinced that he is in the right and that the other bears all the blame. Hence, two former friends find themselves at war, as it were.

They carry on a fight with silent weapons —one turns away when the other walks by, and they ignore each other when they meet in a group. From a distance, they watch each other with furtive glances or lock their eyes in cold, hateful stares. When they do speak, they clip their words or offer insults that cut like knives.

Yet, while they seem completely opposed to each other, they likely agree on some matters. They may acknowledge that they have serious problems and that breaking with a close friend is sad. Each one likely feels the pain of the festering wound, and both know that something should be done to heal it. But who will take the first step to fix the damaged relationship and make peace? Neither is willing.

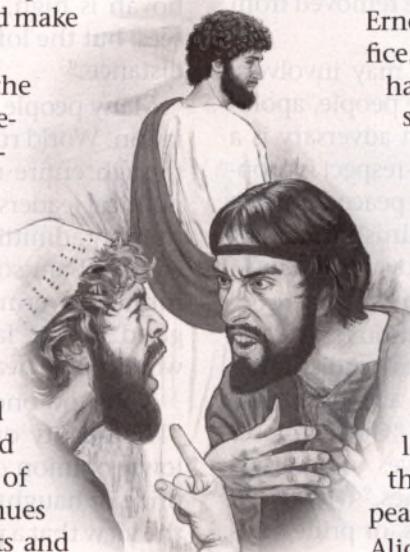
Two thousand years ago, the apostles of Jesus Christ sometimes got into angry arguments. (Mark 10:35-41; Luke 9:46; 22:24) After one of their altercations, Jesus asked: "What were you arguing over on the road?" Silenced by shame, not one of them replied. (Mark 9:33, 34) Jesus' teachings helped them to get back on good terms. His counsel, and that of some of his disciples, continues to help people solve conflicts and repair broken friendships. Let us see how.

Strive to Make Peace

"I do not want to talk to that person. If I ever see her again, it will be too soon." If you have spoken such words about someone, you

need to take action, as the following Bible passages show.

Jesus taught: "If, then, you are bringing your gift to the altar and you there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar, and go away; first make your peace with your brother." (Matthew 5:23, 24) He also said: "If your brother commits a sin, go lay bare his fault between you and him alone." (Matthew 18:15) Whether you have offended someone or someone has offended you, Jesus' words emphasize the need for *you* to talk the matter out *promptly* with the other person. You should do this "in a spirit of mildness." (Galatians 6:1) The goal of that conversation is, not to preserve your image by making excuses or to pummel your adversary into apologizing, *but to make peace*. Does this Bible counsel work?



Ernest is a supervisor in a large office.* For many years, his work has required him to handle sensitive matters with all kinds of people and to maintain good working relationships with them. He has seen how easily personal conflicts can develop. He says: "I have had differences with others at times. But when this happens, I sit down with the person and discuss the problem. Go to them directly. Face them, with the goal of making peace. It never fails to work."

Alicia has friends from many different cultures, and she says this: "Sometimes I say something, and then I sense that I may have offended someone. I go and apologize to that person. It may be that I apologize more often than I have to

* Some names have been changed.

because even if the other person was not offended, I feel better for it. Then I know that there is no misunderstanding."

Overcoming Obstacles

The way to peace in personal disputes, however, is often blocked by obstacles. Have you ever said: "Why must I be the first one to make peace? He caused the problem." Or have you ever gone to someone to clear up a problem only to hear that person say: "I have *nothing* to say to you"? Some people respond in those ways because of the emotional hurt they have suffered. Proverbs 18:19 says: "A brother who is transgressed against is more than a strong town; and there are contentions that are like the bar of a dwelling tower." So take the other person's feelings into account. If he rebuffs you, wait a short time and try again. Then the "strong town" may be open and the "bar" may be removed from the door to reconciliation.

Another obstacle to peace may involve a person's self-respect. To some people, apologizing or even speaking to an adversary is a humiliation. Concern for self-respect is proper, but does refusing to make peace enhance a person's self-respect or diminish it? Could this concern for self-respect cover up pride?

The Bible writer James shows that there is a connection between a contentious spirit and pride. After exposing the "wars" and "fights" that some Christians wage among themselves, he goes on to say: "God opposes the haughty ones, but he gives undeserved kindness to the humble ones." (James 4: 1-3, 6) How does haughtiness, or pride, hinder peacemaking?

Pride deludes people, making them believe they are better than others. Haughty ones feel that they have the authority to judge the moral value of their fellowman. In what way? When disagreements arise, they often view their antagonists as lost causes,

beyond hope of improvement. Pride moves some people to judge those who differ with them as undeserving of attention, let alone a sincere apology. Hence, those driven by personal pride often allow conflicts to continue rather than resolve them properly.

Like a barricade that halts traffic on a highway, pride often halts the steps leading to peace. So if you find yourself resisting efforts to make peace with someone, you may be struggling with pride. How can you overcome pride? By developing its opposite—humility.

Do Just the Opposite

The Bible highly recommends humility. "The result of humility and the fear of Jehovah is riches and glory and life." (Proverbs 22:4) At Psalm 138:6, we read God's view of humble individuals and of proud ones: "Jehovah is high, and yet the humble one he sees; but the lofty one he knows only from a distance."

Many people equate humility with humiliation. World rulers seem to feel this way. Although entire nations submit to their will, political leaders shrink from the challenge of humbly admitting their errors. Hearing a ruler say, "I am sorry" is newsworthy. When a former government official recently apologized for his failure in a fatal disaster, his words made headlines.

Note how one dictionary defines humility: "The quality of being humble or having a lowly opinion of oneself . . . the opposite of pride or haughtiness." So humility describes the view that a person has of himself, not the opinion that others have of him. Humbly admitting his mistakes and sincerely asking for forgiveness does not humiliate a man; rather, it enhances his reputation. The Bible states: "Before a crash the heart of a man is lofty, and before glory there is humility."—Proverbs 18:12.



Apologizing often restores peaceful relations

for offending him. Joseph encouraged his wife to forgive her brother. In time, William saw that Julie and Joseph sincerely wished to make peace, and his attitude softened. William and his wife met with Julie and Joseph; they all apologized, embraced, and restored their friendship.

If you long to resolve a personal conflict with someone, patiently apply Bible teachings and strive to make peace with that person. Jehovah will help you.

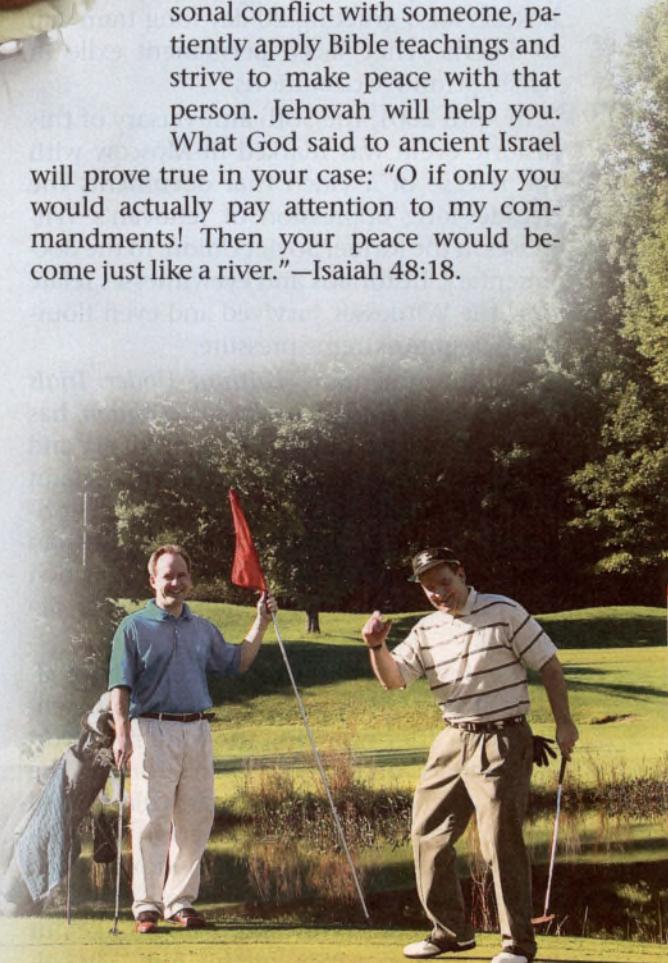
What God said to ancient Israel

will prove true in your case: "O if only you would actually pay attention to my commandments! Then your peace would become just like a river."—Isaiah 48:18.

Regarding politicians who do not apologize for their errors, one observer said: "Unfortunately they seem to think that such an admission is a sign of weakness. Weak and insecure people hardly ever say, 'Sorry.' It is large-hearted and courageous people who are not diminished by saying, 'I made a mistake.'" The same is true for those without political power. If you put forth the effort to replace pride with humility, your prospects for peace in a personal dispute are greatly improved. Note how one family discovered this truth.

A misunderstanding caused tensions between Julie and her brother William. William became so angry with Julie and her husband, Joseph, that he broke off all contact with them. He even returned all the gifts that Julie and Joseph had given him over the years. As the months went by, bitterness replaced the closeness that this brother and sister once enjoyed.

Joseph, however, decided to apply Matthew 5:23, 24. He tried approaching his brother-in-law in a spirit of mildness and sent him personal letters in which he apologized



"FAITHFUL UNDER TRIALS"

IN EARLY April 1951, the mighty Soviet government descended upon an innocent group of Christians in the western Soviet Union—Jehovah's Witnesses. Thousands of families—including little children, pregnant women, and the elderly—were loaded into boxcars for a grueling 20-day-long train trip to Siberia. They faced permanent exile in harsh, primitive conditions.

In April 2001, the 50th anniversary of this historic event was marked in Moscow with the release of a video that documents the decades-long oppression of Jehovah's Witnesses in the former Soviet Union. In the documentary, historians and eyewitnesses relate how the Witnesses survived and even flourished despite extreme pressure.

This documentary, *Faithful Under Trials—Jehovah's Witnesses in the Soviet Union*, has now been viewed by millions in Russia and elsewhere and has received high acclaim from the public in general and from historians. Following are two comments by Russian scholars who are living in the area to which the majority of Witness families were deported:

"I enjoyed this film very much. I have always liked the representatives of your religion, but after watching the film, my favorable impression of you is even stronger. The film was very professional! I particularly liked the way you presented each person as an individual. Although I am Orthodox and do not intend to change my religion, I am delighted with the Witnesses. I would like our faculty to keep a copy of this film. My colleagues and I have decided to show it to our



Stalin: U.S. Army photo

students and to include it in the curriculum."

—Professor Sergei Nikolayevich Rubtsov, dean of the faculty of history of the State Pedagogical University, Irkutsk, Russia.

"I welcome the arrival of this film. When one is making a film about repression, it is always very difficult to develop the story in a logical way. But you managed to do it. Please feel free to bring me more of your films."

—Professor Sergei Ilyich Kuznetsov, dean of the faculty of history of Irkutsk State University, Russia.

Jehovah's Witnesses living in Siberia also deeply appreciated the documentary. Following is a sampling of their reactions:

"During the time when the events portrayed in this film were taking place, many in Russia were misinformed about the activities of Jehovah's Witnesses. But after watching the film, they can see that our organization is not merely some sect, as they previously thought. Others who have recently

become Witnesses say: 'We couldn't have imagined that we were living and working alongside Christian brothers who had endured so much!' After watching the film, one Witness expressed his desire to become a full-time pioneer minister."—*Anna Vovchuk, who was exiled to Siberia.*

"When the film showed the secret police knocking on the door of a Witness home, I shuddered. It was like the knock on our door, and I remember my mother saying: 'Perhaps there's a fire somewhere.' But the film also reminds me that many Witnesses suffered more than I did. All this information gives us greater strength and enthusiasm to continue serving Jehovah."—*Stepan Vovchuk, who was exiled to Siberia.*

"I am the son of exiled Witnesses. I thought, therefore, that I had already heard a lot about those times. But after watching this film, I realized that I knew practically nothing. As I listened to the interviews, my eyes filled with tears. Now the experiences are not just stories for me but real life. The film has strengthened my relationship with God and helped prepare me to endure all future difficulties."—*Vladimir Kovash, Irkutsk.*

"For me, this film was more powerful than a written account. When I watched and heard



the interviews with the brothers, I felt as if I had lived through all their experiences with them. The example of the brother who drew postcards for his young daughters while



he was in prison motivates me to try to reach my own children's hearts with the Bible's truths. Thank you! This film has made Jehovah's Witnesses in Russia feel more than ever that they are part of Jehovah's worldwide organization."—*Tatyana Kalina, Irkutsk.*

"The saying, 'Seeing once is better than hearing a hundred times' certainly applies to this film. It is so alive, so real, so close to us! After watching it, I needed a lot of time to think. The film allowed me to immerse myself in the lives of those exiled Witnesses. Now when I compare my circumstances with theirs, I am helped to take a different view of our present-day problems."—*Lidia Beda, Irkutsk.*

Faithful Under Trials has thus far been released in 25 languages and is finding a warm reception around the world.* The entire documentary has been broadcast by television stations in St. Petersburg, Omsk, and other cities in Russia, as well as in the Ukrainian cities of Vynnytsya, Kerch, Melitopol and in the Lviv region. It has also earned awards from international film review boards.

The power of the message of this documentary lies in the examples of thousands of ordinary people who displayed extraordinary courage and spiritual strength through long years of persecution. Jehovah's Witnesses in the Soviet Union truly proved themselves faithful under trials. If you would like to see this documentary, Jehovah's Witnesses will be glad to provide it for you. Please contact one of them in your community.

* The video is available in Bulgarian, Cantonese, Czech, Danish, Dutch, English, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hungarian, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Lithuanian, Mandarin, Norwegian, Polish, Romanian, Russian, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish, and Swedish.

MARRIAGE CAN SUCCEED IN TODAY'S WORLD

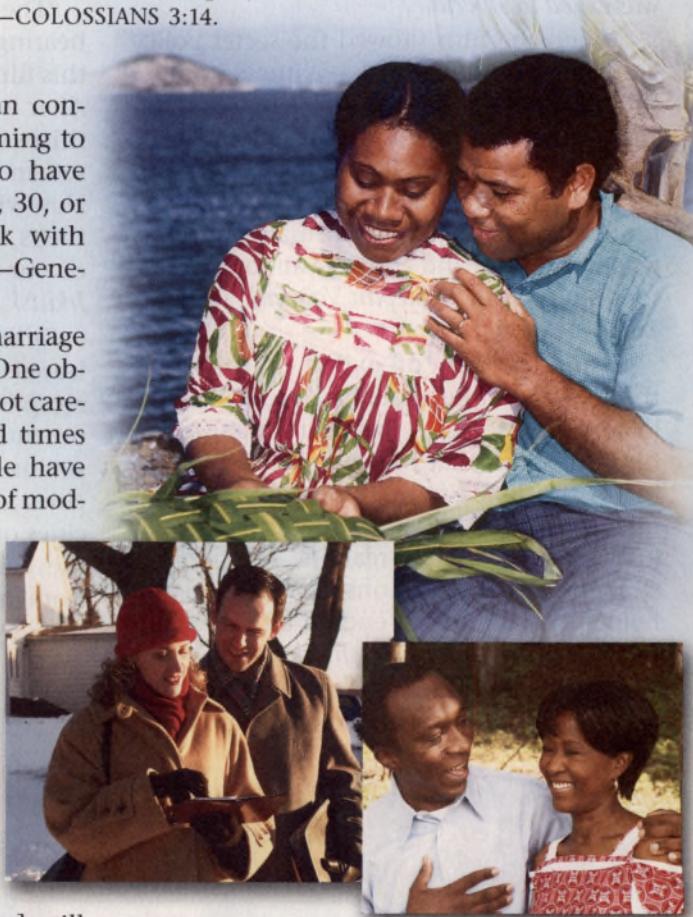
"Clothe yourselves with love, for it is a perfect bond of union."

—COLOSSIANS 3:14.

WHEN we look at the Christian congregation, is it not heartwarming to see so many married couples who have been loyal to their mates for 10, 20, 30, or even more years? They have stuck with their mates through thick and thin.—Genesis 2:24.

² Most would admit that their marriage has not been without its challenges. One observer wrote: "Happy marriages are not carefree. There are good times and bad times . . . But somehow . . . these people have stayed married despite the [turmoil] of modern life." Successful couples have learned to deal with the inevitable storms and crises that result from the pressures of life, especially if they have raised children. Experience has taught such couples that true love "never fails."—1 Corinthians 13:8.

³ In contrast, millions of marriages have suffered shipwreck. A report says: "Half of all U.S. marriages today are expected to end in divorce. And half of those [divorces] will happen within the first 7.8 years of marriage . . . Among the 75 percent of people who remarry, 60 percent will divorce again." Even countries that previously had relatively low



divorce rates have seen a change. For example, in Japan the divorce rate has nearly doubled in recent years. What are some of the pressures that have led to this situation, pressures that sometimes manifest themselves even within the Christian congregation? What is needed to make a success of marriage in spite of Satan's efforts to undermine that arrangement?

1, 2. (a) What fact is encouraging with regard to the Christian congregation? (b) What is a successful marriage?

3. What do statistics indicate about marriage and divorce, leading to what questions?

Pitfalls to Avoid

⁴ God's Word helps us to understand the factors that can undermine a marriage. Consider, for example, the words of the apostle Paul concerning conditions that would exist during these last days: "In the last days critical times hard to deal with will be here. For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, self-assuming, haughty, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, disloyal, having no natural affection, not open to any agreement, slanderers, without self-control, fierce, without love of goodness, betrayers, headstrong, puffed up with pride, lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God, having a form of godly devotion but proving false to its power; and from these turn away."—2 Timothy 3:1-5.

⁵ When we analyze Paul's words, we see that many of the things he listed could contribute to the breakdown of marital relationships. For example, those who are "lovers of themselves" are selfish and lack consideration for others. Husbands or wives who love only themselves are determined to get their own way. They are inflexible, unbending. Would such an attitude contribute to a happy marriage? In no way. The apostle Paul wisely counseled Christians, including married couples: "[You should be] doing nothing out of contentiousness or out of egotism, but with lowliness of mind considering that the others are superior to you, keeping an eye, not in personal interest upon just your own matters, but also in personal interest upon those of the others."—Philippians 2:3, 4.

⁶ Love of money can drive a wedge be-

4. What are some factors that can undermine a marriage?
5. Why is a 'lover of self' endangering his or her marriage, and what is the Bible's counsel in this regard?
6. How can love of money undermine a marital relationship?

tween a husband and a wife. Paul warned: "Those who are determined to be rich fall into temptation and a snare and many senseless and hurtful desires, which plunge men into destruction and ruin. For the love of money is a root of all sorts of injurious things, and by reaching out for this love some have been led astray from the faith and have stabbed themselves all over with many pains." (1 Timothy 6:9, 10) Sadly, Paul's warning has come true in many marriages today. In their quest for wealth, many spouses ignore the needs of their mates, including the basic need for emotional support and regular, warm companionship.

⁷ Paul also said that some in these last days would be "disloyal, having no natural affection, not open to any agreement." The marriage vow is a solemn promise that should lead to a permanent bond, not to treachery. (Malachi 2:14-16) Some, though, have turned their amorous attentions to individuals other than their spouses. One wife in her 30's whose husband left her explained that even before he left, he acted too familiarly, too affectionately, toward other women. He failed to recognize what was inappropriate conduct for a married man. She was deeply hurt when she saw this happening and tactfully tried to warn him of the dangerous path he was treading. Still, he fell into adultery. Even though kind warnings were given, the offending partner did not want to pay attention. He fell headlong into the trap.—Proverbs 6:27-29.

⁸ How clearly the Bible warns against adultery! "Anyone committing adultery with a woman is in want of heart; he that does it is bringing his own soul to ruin." (Proverbs 6:32) Usually, adultery is not a spontaneous,

7. In some cases, what behavior has led to marital disloyalty?
8. What can lead to adultery?

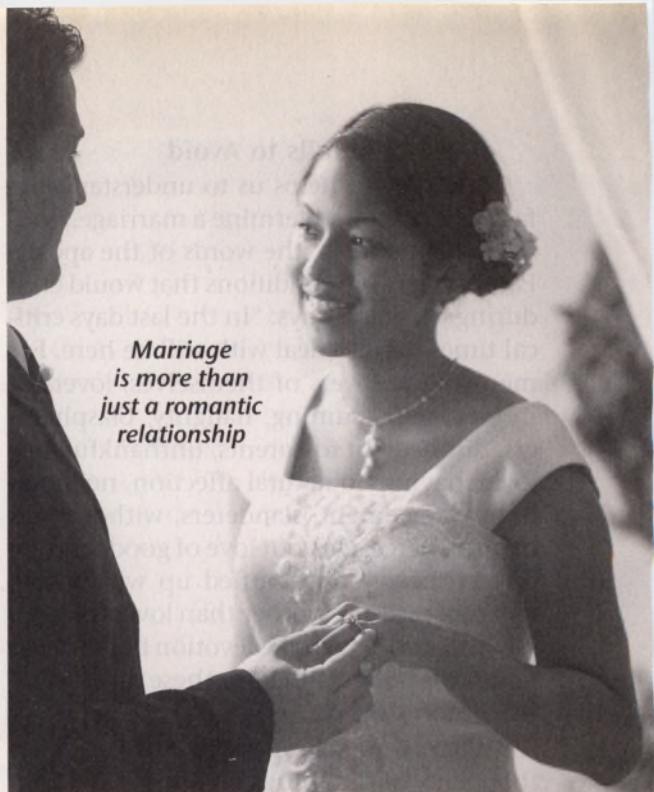
impulsive act. As the Bible writer James pointed out, a sin such as adultery usually takes place only after the thought has been conceived and entertained. (James 1:14, 15) The offending spouse gradually ceases to be loyal to the mate to whom he or she vowed lifelong fidelity. Jesus said: "You heard that it was said, 'You must not commit adultery.' But I say to you that everyone that keeps on looking at a woman so as to have a passion for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart."—Matthew 5:27, 28.

⁹ Therefore, the wise and loyal course is the one encouraged in the book of Proverbs: "Let your water source prove to be blessed, and rejoice with the wife of your youth, a lovable hind and a charming mountain goat. Let her own breasts intoxicate you at all times. With her love may you be in an ecstasy constantly. So why should you, my son, be in an ecstasy with a strange woman or embrace the bosom of a foreign woman?"—Proverbs 5:18-20.

Do Not Rush Into Marriage

¹⁰ Problems in marriage may arise when a couple enter into that relationship prematurely. They may be too young and inexperienced. Or perhaps they do not take the time to get to know each other—their likes and dislikes, their goals in life, their family background. It is wise to exercise patience, taking the time to get to know the prospective mate. Think of Jacob, the son of Isaac. He had to work for his prospective father-in-law for seven years before he was allowed to marry Rachel. He was willing to do that because his feelings were based on real love, not merely physical attraction.—Genesis 29:20-30.

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9. What wise counsel is found at Proverbs 5:18-20?
 10. Why is it wise to take time to get to know a prospective mate?



*Marriage
is more than
just a romantic
relationship*

¹¹ Marriage is more than just a romantic relationship. The marital union yokes together two persons from different family backgrounds and with distinct personalities, emotional makeup, and often disparate educational backgrounds. Sometimes it is a joining of two cultures, even two languages. At the very least, it brings together two voices with the ability to express differing opinions on all kinds of matters. Those two voices are a very real component of a marriage union. They can be constantly critical and complaining, or they can be warmly encouraging and edifying. Yes, with our words we can either hurt or heal our mate. Uncontrolled speech can put a real strain on a marriage.—Proverbs 12:18; 15:1, 2; 16:24; 21:9; 31:26.

¹² Therefore, it is wise to take the time really to get to know a prospective mate. An ex-

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11. (a) What does the marital union bring together? (b) Why is a wise use of speech vital in marriage?
 - 12, 13. What realistic view of marriage is encouraged?

perienced Christian sister once said: "When you view a prospective marriage partner, think of perhaps ten basic requirements you would like to see in that person. If you can find only seven, ask yourself, 'Am I willing to overlook the three that are missing? Could I on a daily basis tolerate those deficiencies?' If you have doubts, step back and think again." Of course, you need to be realistic. If you want to get married, know that you will never find a perfect mate. But, then, the person you eventually marry will not have found a perfect mate either!—Luke 6:41.

¹³ Marriage involves sacrifices. Paul highlighted this when he said: "I want you to be free from anxiety. The unmarried man is anxious for the things of the Lord, how he may gain the Lord's approval. But the married man is anxious for the things of the world, how he may gain the approval of his wife, and he is divided. Further, the unmarried woman, and the virgin, is anxious for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in her body and in her spirit. However, the married woman is anxious for the things of the world, how she may gain the approval of her husband."—1 Corinthians 7: 32-34.

Why Some Marriages Fail

¹⁴ A Christian woman recently experienced the trauma of divorce when her husband left her after 12 years of marriage and began a relationship with another woman. Did she notice any warning signs before the breakup? She explains: "He reached a point where he no longer prayed. He used flimsy excuses for missing Christian meetings and the preaching activity. He claimed to be either too busy or too tired to spend time with me. He would not talk to me. There was a

14, 15. What can contribute to the weakening of the marriage bond?

spiritual alienation. It was such a shame. He was no longer the man I had married."

¹⁵ Others report noticing similar signs, including neglect of personal Bible study, prayer, or attendance at Christian meetings. In other words, many individuals who eventually left their mates allowed their relationship with Jehovah to weaken. As a result, their spiritual vision dimmed. Jehovah was no longer a living God to them. The promised new world of righteousness ceased to be a reality. In some cases, this spiritual weakening happened even before the unfaithful spouse formed an attachment outside the marriage.—Hebrews 10:38, 39; 11:6; 2 Peter 3:13, 14.

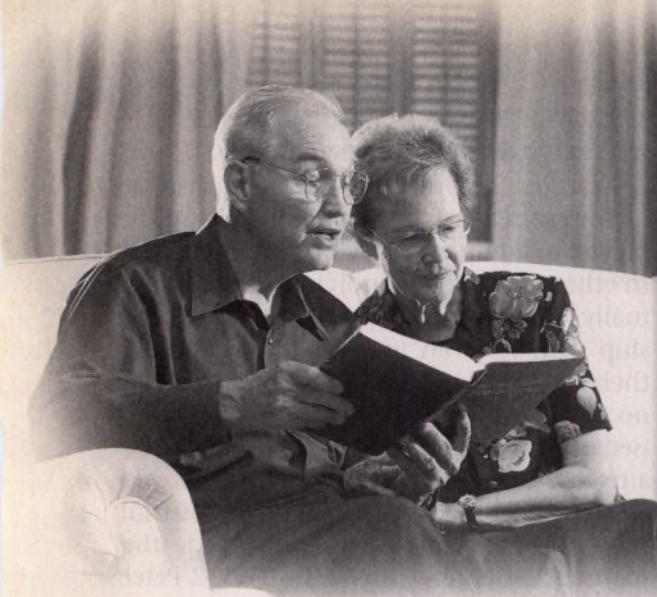
¹⁶ In contrast, one very happy couple attribute the success of their marriage to their strong spiritual bonds. They pray together and study together. The husband says: "We read the Bible together. We go out in the ministry together. We enjoy doing things together." The lesson is clear: Maintaining a good relationship with Jehovah will greatly contribute to the solidity of a marriage.

Be Realistic and Communicate

¹⁷ Two other things contribute to a successful marriage: Christian love and communication. When two people are enamored with each other, there is a tendency to ignore each other's faults. The couple may enter marriage with exaggerated expectations, perhaps based on what they have read in romance novels or seen in movies. Eventually, however, the couple have to face reality. Then, minor faults or mildly irritating habits may become major problems. If that happens, Christians need to display the fruitage of the spirit, an aspect of which

16. What strengthens a marriage?

17. (a) What two things contribute to a successful marriage? (b) How does Paul describe Christian love?



A strong relationship with Jehovah helps a couple to make a success of marriage

is love. (Galatians 5:22, 23) Love, indeed, is very powerful—not romantic love but Christian love. Paul described such Christian love, saying: “Love is long-suffering and kind. . . . [It] does not look for its own interests, does not become provoked. It does not keep account of the injury. . . . It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.” (1 Corinthians 13:4-7) Clearly, genuine love makes allowances for human frailties. Realistically, it does not expect perfection.—Proverbs 10:12.

¹⁸ Communication is also vital. Regardless of the years that have passed, spouses should talk with each other and truly listen to each other. Says one husband: “We openly express our feelings but in a friendly way.” With experience, a husband or a wife learns to listen not only to what is said but also to what is not said. In other words, as the years go by, a happily married couple learn to discern unspoken thoughts or unexpressed feelings. Some

wives have said that their husbands do not really listen to them. Some husbands have complained that their wives seem to want to communicate at the most inconvenient times. Communication involves compassion and understanding. Effective communication is beneficial for both husband and wife.
—James 1:19.

¹⁹ Communication sometimes includes apologizing. That is not always easy. It takes humility to admit one’s mistakes. Yet, what a difference it makes in a marriage! A sincere apology can remove a possible future cause for conflict and pave the way for real forgiveness and a solution to the problem. Paul stated: “Continue putting up with one another and forgiving one another freely if anyone has a cause for complaint against another. Even as Jehovah freely forgave you, so do you also. But, besides all these things, clothe yourselves with love, for it is a perfect bond of union.”—Colossians 3:13, 14.

18. How can communication strengthen a relationship?

19. (a) Why can apologizing be difficult? (b) What will motivate us to apologize?

²⁰ Also vital in a marriage is mutual support. A Christian husband and wife should be able to trust each other, to rely on each other. Neither should undermine the other or in other ways diminish his or her self-confidence. We lovingly commend our marriage partners; we do not harshly criticize them. (Proverbs 31:28b) Certainly, we do not demean them by making them the object of foolish and thoughtless jokes. (Colossians 4:6) Such mutual support is strengthened by regular expressions of affection. A touch or a quiet affectionate word can say: "I still love you. I'm glad you are with me." These are some factors that can influence a relation-

20. How should a Christian treat his marriage partner in private and in the presence of others?

Can You Explain?

- What are some factors that can undermine a marriage?
- Why is a hasty marriage unwise?
- How does spirituality affect a marriage?
- What factors help stabilize a marriage?

ship and help marriage to succeed in today's world. There are others, and the following article will offer additional Scriptural guidelines on how to make a success of marriage.*

* For more detailed information, see the publication *The Secret of Family Happiness*, published by Jehovah's Witnesses.

WISE GUIDANCE FOR MARRIED COUPLES

*"Let wives be in subjection to their husbands as to the Lord.
Husbands, continue loving your wives."*

—EPHESIANS 5:22, 25.

JESUS said that marriage is the yoking together by God of a man and a woman to be "one flesh." (Matthew 19:5, 6) It involves two people with differing personalities learning to develop common interests and working together toward common goals. Marriage is a lifelong commitment, not a casual agreement that can be lightly abandoned. In many countries, divorce is not difficult to obtain, but in the eyes of a Christian, the marriage relationship is sacred. It is ended only for a very serious reason.—Matthew 19:9.

1. What is the correct view of marriage?

² One marriage counselor said: "A good marriage is a process of continual change as it reflects new issues, deals with problems that arise, and uses the resources available at each stage of life." For Christian spouses, those resources include wise counsel from the Bible, support from fellow Christians, and a close, prayerful relationship with Jehovah. A successful marriage endures, and over the years, it brings happiness and

2. (a) What help is available to married couples?
(b) Why is it important to strive to make a success of marriage?

A Christian husband loves and cares for his wife



A Christian wife respects and honors her husband

contentment to husband and wife. More important, it brings honor to Jehovah God, the Originator of marriage.—Genesis 2:18, 21-24; 1 Corinthians 10:31; Ephesians 3:15; 1 Thessalonians 5:17.

Imitate Jesus and His Congregation

³ Two thousand years ago, the apostle Paul gave wise counsel to Christian couples when he wrote: “As the congregation is in subjection to the Christ, so let wives also be to their husbands in everything. Husbands, continue loving your wives, just as the Christ also loved the congregation and delivered up himself for it.” (Ephesians 5:24, 25) What fine comparisons are expressed here! Christian wives who keep in humble submission to their husbands imitate the congregation in recognizing and observing the headship principle. Believing husbands who continue to love their wives, whether in favorable or in trying times, demonstrate that they closely follow Christ’s example of loving the congregation and caring for it.

⁴ Christian husbands are the heads of their families, but they too have a head, Jesus. (1 Corinthians 11:3) Hence, as Jesus cared for his congregation, so husbands lovingly care for their families in a spiritual and

physical way, even if that takes personal sacrifice. They put the welfare of their families ahead of their own desires and preferences. Jesus said: “All things, therefore, that you want men to do to you, you also must likewise do to them.” (Matthew 7:12) That principle applies with special force in marriage. Paul showed this when he said: “Husbands ought to be loving their wives as their own bodies. . . . No man ever hated his own flesh; but he feeds and cherishes it.” (Ephesians 5:28, 29) A man should feed and cherish his wife with the same diligence that he feeds and cherishes himself.

⁵ Godly wives look to the Christian congregation as a model. When Jesus was on earth, his followers gladly abandoned their previous pursuits and followed him. After his death, they continued subject to him, and over the past nearly 2,000 years, the true Christian congregation has remained subject to Jesus and followed his leadership in all things. Christian wives similarly do not disdain their husbands or seek to downplay the Scriptural arrangement of headship in marriage. Instead, they support and are submissive to their husbands, cooperate with them, and thus encourage them. When both husband and wife act in such a loving way, their marriage *will* succeed and both will find joy in the relationship.

3. (a) Summarize Paul’s counsel to married couples. (b) What fine example did Jesus set?
4. How can husbands follow Jesus’ example?

5. How can wives imitate the Christian congregation?

Continue Dwelling With Them

⁶ The apostle Peter also had counsel for married couples, and his words to husbands were especially pointed. He said: “Continue dwelling in like manner with [your wives] according to knowledge, assigning them honor as to a weaker vessel, the feminine one, since you are also heirs with them of the undeserved favor of life, in order for your prayers not to be hindered.” (1 Peter 3:7) The seriousness of Peter’s counsel is seen in the final words of that verse. If a husband fails to honor his wife, his relationship with Jehovah will be affected. His prayers will be hindered.

⁷ How, then, can husbands assign honor to their wives? To honor one’s wife means to treat her lovingly, with respect and dignity. Such kindly treatment of a wife would have seemed novel to many. A Greek scholar

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6. What counsel did Peter give to husbands, and why is it important?
 7. How should a husband honor his wife?

Unlike Roman law, Christian teachings required a husband to honor his wife

writes: “Under Roman law a woman had no rights. In law she remained for ever a child. . . . She was entirely subject to her husband, and completely at his mercy.” What a contrast to Christian teachings! The Christian husband honored his wife. His dealings with her were governed by Christian principles, not by personal whim. Moreover, he was considerate of her “according to knowledge,” taking into account that she was a weaker vessel.

“A Weaker Vessel” in What Way?

⁸ In saying that the woman is “a weaker vessel,” Peter did not mean that women are weaker than men intellectually or spiritually. True, many Christian men have privileges in the congregation that women do not expect to have, and in the family women are subject to their husbands. (1 Corinthians 14:35; 1 Timothy 2:12) Nevertheless, the same faith, endurance, and high moral standards

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- 8, 9. In what ways are women equal to men?



are required of all, men and women. And as Peter said, both husband and wife are "heirs . . . of the undeserved favor of life." As far as salvation is concerned, they have equal standing before Jehovah God. (Galatians 3: 28) Peter was writing to anointed Christians of the first century. Hence, his words reminded Christian husbands that as "joint heirs with Christ," they and their wives had the same heavenly hope. (Romans 8:17) One day, both would serve as priests and kings in God's heavenly Kingdom!—Revelation 5:10.

⁹ Anointed Christian wives were in no way inferior to their anointed Christian husbands. And in principle, the same is true of those with an earthly hope. Both men and women of the "great crowd" wash their robes and make them white in the blood of the Lamb. Both men and women share "day and night" in the worldwide shout of praise to Jehovah. (Revelation 7:9, 10, 14, 15) Both men and women look forward to enjoying "the glorious freedom of the children of

God," when they will delight in "the real life." (Romans 8:21; 1 Timothy 6:19) Whether of the anointed or of the other sheep, all Christians serve Jehovah together as "one flock" under "one shepherd." (John 10:16) What a compelling reason for a Christian husband and wife to show due honor to each other!

¹⁰ In what way, then, are women 'weaker vessels'? Perhaps Peter was referring to the fact that, on average, women are smaller and have less physical strength than men. In addition, in our imperfect state, the wonderful privilege of bearing children exacts a physical toll. Women of childbearing age may be subject to physical discomforts on a regular basis. They certainly need special care and consideration when experiencing such discomforts or enduring the exhausting trials of being pregnant and giving birth. A husband who assigns honor to his wife, recognizing the support that she needs, will contribute greatly to the success of the marriage.

In a Religiously Divided Household

¹¹ What, though, if marriage mates have different religious views because one of them accepted Christian truth some time after they got married and the other did not? Can such a marriage succeed? The experience of many says yes. A husband and wife with different religious views can still have a successful marriage in the sense that it can be enduring and bring happiness to both. Besides, the marriage

10. In what sense are women 'weaker vessels'?

11. In what sense can a marriage succeed even if husband and wife are of different religions?

Both men and women of the "great crowd" look forward to everlasting life in Paradise



is still valid in Jehovah's eyes; they are still "one flesh." Therefore, Christian spouses are counseled to stay with the unbelieving partner if that partner is agreeable. If there are children, they benefit from the faithfulness of the Christian parent.—1 Corinthians 7:12-14.

¹² Peter addresses kindly words of counsel to Christian women living in religiously divided households. His words can also be applied in principle by Christian husbands in the same situation. Peter writes: "You wives, be in subjection to your own husbands, in order that, if any are not obedient to the word, they may be won without a word through the conduct of their wives, because of having been eyewitnesses of your chaste conduct together with deep respect."—1 Peter 3:1, 2.

¹³ If a wife can tactfully explain her faith to her husband, that is fine. What, though, if he does not want to listen? That is his choice. Still, all is not lost, since Christian conduct also gives a powerful witness. Many husbands who at first were not interested in or who were even opposed to the faith of their wives became "rightly disposed for everlasting life" after seeing the fine conduct of their wives. (Acts 13:48) Even if a husband does not accept Christian truth, he may still be favorably impressed by the conduct of his wife, with good results for the marriage. One husband whose wife is one of Jehovah's Witnesses admitted that he could never live up to their high standards. Still, he called himself "the happy husband of a charming wife" and warmly praised his wife and her fellow Witnesses in a letter to a newspaper.

¹⁴ Christian husbands who have applied the principles of Peter's words have likewise won their wives over by their conduct. Unbelieving wives have seen their husbands

gain a sense of responsibility, ceasing to waste money on smoking, drinking, and gambling and no longer using abusive language. Some of those mates have met other members of the Christian congregation. They were impressed with the loving Christian brotherhood, and what they observed among the brothers drew them to Jehovah. —John 13:34, 35.

"The Secret Person of the Heart"

¹⁵ What kind of conduct might win over a husband? Really, it is conduct that is naturally cultivated by Christian women. Peter says: "Do not let your adornment be that of the external braiding of the hair and of the putting on of gold ornaments or the wearing of outer garments, but let it be the secret person of the heart in the incorruptible apparel of the quiet and mild spirit, which is of great value in the eyes of God. For so, too, formerly the holy women who were hoping in God used to adorn themselves, subjecting themselves to their own husbands, as Sarah used to obey Abraham, calling him 'lord.' And you have become her children, provided you keep on doing good and not fearing any cause for terror."—1 Peter 3:3-6.

¹⁶ Peter counsels a Christian woman not to rely on external appearances. Instead, let her husband discern the effect of Bible teachings on her inner person. Let him witness the new personality in operation. Perhaps he will contrast it with the old personality that his wife used to have. (Ephesians 4:22-24) He will surely find her "quiet and mild spirit" refreshing and attractive. Not only is such a spirit pleasing to a husband but it is "of great value in the eyes of God."—Colossians 3:12.

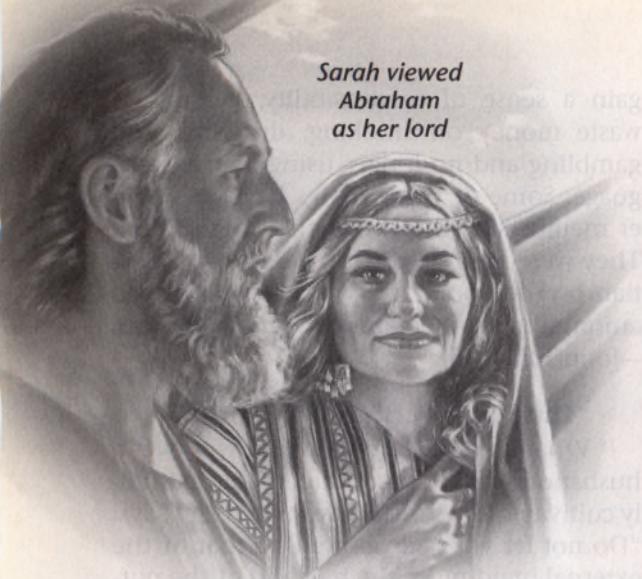
¹⁷ Sarah is pointed to as a model, and she is a worthy example for Christian wives

12, 13. Following Peter's counsel, how can Christian wives help unbelieving husbands?

14. How can husbands help unbelieving wives?

15, 16. What kind of conduct by a Christian wife might win over an unbelieving husband?

17. How is Sarah a fine example for Christian wives?



*Sarah viewed
Abraham
as her lord*

whether their husbands are believers or not. Sarah unquestionably viewed Abraham as her head. Even in her heart, she called him her "lord." (Genesis 18:12) Yet, that did not diminish her. She was clearly a spiritually strong woman with her own firm faith in Jehovah. Indeed, she is part of the "great cloud of witnesses" whose example of faith should move us to "run with endurance the race that is set before us." (Hebrews 11:11; 12:1) It is not demeaning for a Christian wife to be like Sarah.

- 18 In a religiously divided household, the
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18. What principles should be borne in mind in a divided household?

Do You Recall?

- How do Christian husbands imitate Jesus?
- How do Christian wives imitate the congregation?
- In what way can husbands honor their wives?
- What is the best course for a Christian wife whose husband is not a believer?

husband is still the head. If he is the believer, he will be considerate of his wife's beliefs while not compromising his own faith. If the wife is the believer, she too will not compromise her faith. (Acts 5:29) Still, she will not challenge her husband's headship. She will honor his position and remain under "the law of her husband."—Romans 7:2.

The Bible's Wise Guidance

19 Today, many things can strain the marriage bond. Some men fail to assume their responsibilities. Some women refuse to accept the headship of their husbands. In some marriages, one spouse is abused by the other. For Christians, economic stresses, human imperfection, and the spirit of the world with its immorality and distorted sense of values can test loyalties. Still, Christian men and women who follow Bible principles, whatever their situation, receive Jehovah's blessing. Even if only one partner in a marriage applies Bible principles, things are better than if neither did. Moreover, Jehovah loves and supports his servants who remain faithful to their marriage vows even in difficult situations. He does not forget their loyalty.—Psalm 18:25; Hebrews 6:10; 1 Peter 3:12.

20 After counseling married men and women, the apostle Peter concluded with warm words of encouragement. He said: "Finally, all of you be like-minded, showing fellow feeling, having brotherly affection, tenderly compassionate, humble in mind, not paying back injury for injury or reviling for reviling, but, to the contrary, bestowing a blessing, because you were called to this course, so that you might inherit a blessing." (1 Peter 3:8, 9) Wise counsel indeed for all, especially for married couples!

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19. What are some pressures that strain marriage bonds, but how can such pressures be resisted?
20. What counsel does Peter have for all Christians?



WE USED OUR CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES TO WITNESS FAR AND WIDE

AS TOLD BY

RICARDO MALICSI

When I lost my job because of my stand on Christian neutrality, my family and I asked Jehovah to help us chart our future. In our prayer, we expressed our desire to expand our ministry. Soon thereafter, we embarked on a nomadic journey that took us to eight foreign countries on two continents.

As a result, we were able to carry out our ministry in faraway places.

I WAS born in the Philippines in 1933 to a family affiliated with the Philippine Independent Church. All 14 members of our family belonged to that church. When I was about 12 years of age, I asked God in prayer to direct me to the true faith. One of my teachers enrolled me in a religion class, and I became a devout Catholic. I never missed Saturday confession or Sunday Mass. However, skepticism and dissatisfaction set in. Questions about what happens to people when they die and about hellfire and the

Trinity bothered me. Answers given by religious leaders were hollow and unsatisfactory.

Getting Satisfying Answers

While studying in college, I joined a fraternity that got me involved in fighting, gambling, smoking, and other unsavory activities. One evening, I met the mother of one of my classmates. She was one of Jehovah's Witnesses. I posed to her the same questions that I had asked my religion

teachers. She answered all my questions from the Bible, and I was convinced that what she said was the truth.

I bought a Bible and started to study it with the Witnesses. Soon I was attending all the meetings of Jehovah's Witnesses. Following the wise Bible observation that "bad associations spoil useful habits," I parted company with my immoral friends. (1 Corinthians 15:33) This helped me to make progress in my Bible study and eventually to dedicate myself to Jehovah. After my baptism in 1951, I served as a full-time minister (pioneer) for a while. Then in December 1953, I married Aurea Mendoza Cruz, who became my lifetime partner and faithful coworker in the ministry.

An Answer to Our Prayers

We were really wanting to serve as pioneers. However, our desire to serve Jehovah more fully did not materialize immediately. Even so, we did not stop asking Jehovah to open up opportunities in his service. Yet, our life was hard. Still, we kept our spiritual goals in mind, and at the age of 25, I was appointed congregation servant, the presiding overseer in a congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses.

As I progressed in Bible knowledge and got a better understanding of Jehovah's principles, I realized that my job violated my conscientious position as a neutral Christian. (Isaiah 2:2-4) I decided to quit. This proved to be a test of our faith. How would I care for the needs of my family? Again we approached Jehovah God in prayer. (Psalm 65:2) We told him of our concerns and fears, but we also expressed to him our desire to serve where the need for Kingdom preachers was greater. (Philippians 4:6, 7) Little did we know what a variety of opportunities would open up to us!

Starting Out on Our Journey

In April 1965, I accepted a job as crash fire and rescue supervisor at Vientiane International Airport, in Laos, and we moved there. In the city of Vientiane, there were 24 Witnesses, and we enjoyed the preaching work with the missionaries and the few local brothers. Later, I was transferred to Udon Thani Airport, Thailand. There were no other Witnesses in Udon Thani. As a family, we conducted all the weekly meetings by ourselves. We preached from house to house, made return visits, and started Bible studies.

We remembered Jesus' admonition to his disciples that they should "keep bearing much fruit." (John 15:8) So we determined to follow their example and continued proclaiming the good news. Soon we enjoyed results. A Thai girl accepted the truth and became our spiritual sister. Two North Americans accepted the truth and in time became Christian elders. We continued preaching the good news for more than ten years in northern Thailand. How happy we are to know that there is now a congregation in Udon Thani! Some of the seeds of truth we planted are still yielding results.

Sadly, though, we had to move again, and we prayed that "the Master of the harvest" would help us to continue to have a share in the preaching work. (Matthew 9:38) We were transferred to Tehran, the capital of Iran. This was during the time of the Shah's rule.

Preaching in Challenging Territories

Upon arrival in Tehran, we found our spiritual brothers right away. We associated with a small group of Witnesses made up of 13 different nationalities. We had to make adjustments in order to preach the good news in Iran. Although we experienced no outright opposition, we had to be careful.

With my wife, Aurea

Because of the work schedule of interested ones, we sometimes had to conduct Bible studies at midnight or later—into the early morning. Yet, how happy we were to see the fruitage of that hard work! A number of Filipino and Korean families accepted Christian truth and dedicated themselves to Jehovah.

My next work assignment was in Dhaka, Bangladesh. We arrived there in December 1977. This was another country where our preaching activity was not easy to accomplish. However, we always had in mind that we must keep active. With the guidance of Jehovah's spirit, we were able to find many families of professed Christians. Some of them were thirsting for the refreshing waters of truth found in the Holy Scriptures. (Isaiah 55:1) As a result, we started many Bible studies.

We kept in mind that God's will is that "all sorts of men should be saved." (1 Timothy 2:4) Happily, no one tried to cause problems for us. To overcome any prejudice, we made sure that we used a very friendly approach. Like the apostle Paul, we tried to "become all things to people of all sorts." (1 Corinthians 9:22) When we were asked the reason for our visit, we would kindly explain, and we found that most were quite friendly.

In Dhaka we found a local Witness and encouraged her to join us in our Christian meetings and later in the preaching work. Then, my wife studied the Bible with a family and invited them to our meetings. By Jehovah's loving-kindness, the whole family came into the truth. Later, their two daughters helped with translating Bible literature into Bengali, and many of their relatives also came to know Jehovah. Many other Bible students accepted the truth. Most of them are now serving as elders or pioneers.



Since Dhaka is a very populous city, we invited some of our family members to help us in the preaching work. Several responded and joined us in Bangladesh. How joyful and how thankful to Jehovah we are for the opportunity we had to share in preaching the good news in that country! From the very small beginnings of only one person, there are now two congregations in Bangladesh.

In July 1982, we had to pull up stakes and leave Bangladesh. We left the brothers with tears in our eyes. Not long thereafter, I received employment at Entebbe International Airport, in Uganda, where we would stay for four years and seven months. What would we be able to do in honoring Jehovah's great name in this land?

Serving Jehovah in East Africa

Upon our arrival at Entebbe International Airport, a driver picked up my wife and me to take us to our accommodations. As we were leaving the airport, I started preaching to the driver about God's Kingdom. He asked me: "Are you one of Jehovah's Witnesses?" When I answered in the affirmative, the driver said: "One of your brothers works at the control tower." Right away, I asked him to take me there. We met the brother, who was very happy to see us, and

arrangements were made for meetings and field service.

There were only 228 Kingdom publishers in Uganda at that time. Along with a couple of brothers in Entebbe, we spent our first year planting seeds of truth. Since people there are fond of reading, we were able to place much literature, including hundreds of magazines. We invited brothers from Kampala, the capital, to help us preach in Entebbe's territory on weekends. At my first public talk, the attendance was five—including me.

Over the next three years, we experienced some of the happiest moments of our life, seeing those whom we taught respond and make rapid progress. (3 John 4) At one circuit assembly, six of our Bible students were baptized. Many of them said that they were encouraged to pursue the full-time service because they saw us serving as pioneers, even though we had full-time jobs.

We realized that our workplace could also be fruitful territory. On one occasion, I approached an airport fire officer and shared with him the Bible-based hope of life on a paradise earth. I showed him from his own Bible that obedient humankind will live in peace and unity, suffering no more from poverty, lack of housing, war, sickness, or death. (Psalm 46:9; Isaiah 33:24; 65:21, 22; Revelation 21:3, 4) Reading this in his own Bible sparked his interest. A Bible study was started right away. He attended all meetings. Soon he dedicated himself to Jehovah and was baptized. Later he joined us in the full-time ministry.

Civil unrest broke out twice in Uganda while we were there, but that did not bring our spiritual activities to a halt. The dependents of those working for international agencies were transferred to Nairobi, Kenya, for six months. Those of us left in Uganda kept on with our Christian meetings and the



preaching work, although we had to be prudent and cautious.

In April 1988, my job assignment was completed and we moved again. We left the Entebbe Congregation with a feeling of deep satisfaction over the spiritual developments there. In July 1997, we had an opportunity to visit Entebbe again. By then, some of our former Bible students were serving as elders. How thrilled we were to see 106 in attendance at the Public Meeting!

Moving On to Untouched Territory

Would we be able to enter new doors of opportunity? Yes, my next work assignment was at Mogadishu International Airport, in Somalia. We were determined to make good use of this new opportunity to serve in untouched territory.

Our preaching activity was confined mostly to embassy staff, Filipino workers, and other foreigners. Often we met them in the marketplace. We also made friendly visits to their homes. By combining ingenuity, resourcefulness, prudence, and complete reliance on Jehovah, we were able to share Bible truths with others, and this bore fruit among those



from different nationalities. After two years, we left Mogadishu—just before war broke out there.

The International Civil Aviation Organization next assigned me to Yangon, Myanmar. Again, fine opportunities opened up for us to help honesthearted ones learn about God's purposes. After Myanmar, we were assigned to Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. Preaching the good news from house to house in Dar es Salaam was much easier because there was an English-speaking community.

In all the countries we worked in, we had very few problems in carrying out our ministry, although in many cases, there were restrictions on the work of Jehovah's Witnesses. Because of the status of my work, which was usually connected with government or international agencies, people did not question our activities.

My secular employment required that my wife and I live as nomads for three decades. However, we viewed my job as only a means to an end. Our first goal was always to promote the interests of God's Kingdom. We thank Jehovah for helping us to make good use of our changing circumstances and to en-

joy the wonderful privilege of spreading the good news far and wide.

Back Where It All Started

At the age of 58, I decided to take early retirement and return to the Philippines. When we got back, we prayed to Jehovah to direct our steps. We started serving in a congregation in Trece Martires City, in the province of Cavite. When we first arrived, there were only 19 proclaimers of God's Kingdom. Daily preaching activities were organized, and many Bible studies were started. The congregation began to grow. At one time, my wife had as many as 19 home Bible studies, and I had 14.

Soon the Kingdom Hall became too small. We prayed to Jehovah about this. A spiritual brother and his wife decided to donate a piece of land, and the branch office approved a loan for building a new Kingdom Hall. The new building has had a big impact on the preaching work, and the attendance increased week by week. At present, we travel over one hour each way to assist another congregation, of 17 publishers.

My wife and I cherish the privilege we have enjoyed serving in so many different countries. Looking back at our nomadic life, we feel deeply satisfied to know that it was used in the best way possible—to help others to learn about Jehovah!

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

Lessons Jesus Taught—Are They Practical for You?

Living No Longer for Ourselves

Samson Triumphs in the Strength of Jehovah!

Jehovah's Word Is Alive

Highlights From the Book of Ruth

IT IS a heartwarming drama of loyalty between two women. It is an account of appreciation for Jehovah God and trust in his arrangement. It is a story that underscores Jehovah's keen interest in the Messianic line of descent. It is a touching narrative of the joys and sorrows of a family. The Bible book of Ruth is all that and more.

The book of Ruth covers a period of about 11 years "in the days when the judges administered justice" in Israel. (Ruth 1:1) The events recorded must have occurred early in the period of the Judges, since the landowner Boaz, one of the characters in this real-life drama, was the son of Rahab of Joshua's day. (Joshua 2:1, 2; Ruth 2:1; Matthew 1:5) The narrative was likely written by the prophet Samuel in 1090 B.C.E. This is the only book in the Bible that bears the name of a non-Israelite woman. The message contained in it "is alive and exerts power."—Hebrews 4:12.

"WHERE YOU GO I SHALL GO" (Ruth 1:1–2:23)

When Naomi and Ruth arrive in Bethlehem, they become the center of attention. Pointing to the older of the two, the women of the town keep asking: "Is this Naomi?" To this, Naomi says: "Do not call me Naomi. Call me Mara, for the Almighty has made it very bitter for me. I was full when I went, and it is empty-handed that Jehovah has made me return."—Ruth 1:19-21.



Do you know why Ruth did not abandon Naomi?

When a famine in Israel causes her family to move from Bethlehem to the land of Moab, Naomi is "full" in that she has a husband and two sons. Some time after they settle in Moab, though, her husband, Elimelech, dies. Later, the two sons marry the Moabite women Orpah and Ruth. About ten years pass, and the two sons die childless, leaving the three women on their own. When the mother-in-law, Naomi, decides to return to Judah, the widows of her sons go with her. Along the way, Naomi urges her daughters-in-law to go back to Moab and find husbands from among their own people. Orpah acquiesces. However, Ruth sticks with Naomi, saying: "Where you go I shall go, and where you spend the night I shall spend the night. Your people will be my people, and your God my God."—Ruth 1:16.

The two widows, Naomi and Ruth, reach Bethlehem at the start of the barley harvest. Taking advantage of a provision made in God's Law, Ruth begins gleaning in a field that happens to belong to a kinsman of Elimelech—an elderly Jew named Boaz. Ruth gains Boaz' favor and continues gleaning in his field "until the harvest of the barley and the harvest of the wheat" come to an end.—Ruth 2:23.

Scriptural Questions Answered:

1:8—Why did Naomi tell her daughters-in-law to return "each one to the house of

her mother" instead of to the house of her father? Whether Orpah's father was alive at the time is not stated. However, Ruth's father was. (Ruth 2:11) Still, Naomi spoke of the mother's house, perhaps thinking that the reference to their mothers would bring to their mind the comfort of motherly affection. This would be particularly soothing to daughters overwhelmed by the sorrow of parting from their beloved mother-in-law. The comment may also reflect the thought that unlike Naomi, the mothers of Ruth and Orpah had well-established homes.

1:13, 21—Did Jehovah make life bitter for Naomi and cause her calamity? No, and Naomi did not charge God with any wrongdoing. In view of all that had happened to her, however, she thought that Jehovah was against her. She felt bitter and disillusioned. Moreover, in those days the fruitage of the belly was considered a divine blessing and barrenness, a curse. Lacking grandchildren and with two sons dead, Naomi might have felt justified in thinking that Jehovah had humiliated her.

2:12—What "perfect wage" did Ruth receive from Jehovah? Ruth had a son and received the privilege of becoming a link in history's most important lineage—that of Jesus Christ.—Ruth 4:13-17; Matthew 1:5, 16.

Lessons for Us:

1:8; 2:20. Despite the tragedies she experienced, Naomi maintained her confidence in Jehovah's loving-kindness. We should do the same, particularly when undergoing severe trials.

1:9. A home should be more than just a place where family members eat and sleep. It should be a peaceful place of rest and comfort.

1:14-16. Orpah "returned to her people and her gods." Ruth did not. She left the

comfort and security of her native land and remained loyal to Jehovah. Cultivating loyal love for God and manifesting a

What gave Ruth the reputation of being "an excellent woman"?



self-sacrificing spirit will help protect us from succumbing to selfish desires and 'shrinking back to destruction.'—Hebrews 10:39.

2:2. Ruth wanted to take advantage of the provision of gleaning made for the benefit of the foreigners and the afflicted. She was humble at heart. A needy Christian should not be too proud to accept the loving assistance of fellow believers or any governmental aid he or she may qualify for.

2:7. Despite having the right to glean, Ruth asked for permission before doing so. (Leviticus 19:9, 10) This was a sign of meekness on her part. We are wise to "seek meekness," for "the meek ones themselves will possess the earth, and they will indeed find their exquisite delight in the abundance of peace."—Zephaniah 2:3; Psalm 37:11.

2:11. Ruth proved to be more than a relative to Naomi. She was a true friend. (Proverbs 17:17) Their friendship was solid because it was based on such qualities as

love, loyalty, empathy, kindness, and a self-sacrificing spirit. More important, it was based on their spirituality—their desire to serve Jehovah and to be among his worshipers. We too have fine opportunities to cultivate genuine friendships with true worshipers.

2:15-17. Even when Boaz made it possible for Ruth to ease her work load, “she continued to glean in the field until the evening.” Ruth was a hard worker. A Christian should have a reputation for being a diligent worker.

2:19-22. Naomi and Ruth enjoyed pleasant conversation during the evening hours, the older one taking an interest in the activities of the younger, both freely expressing their thoughts and feelings. Should it be any different in a Christian family?

2:22, 23. Unlike Jacob’s daughter Dinah, Ruth sought association with worshipers of Jehovah. What a fine example for us!—Genesis 34:1, 2; 1 Corinthians 15:33.

NAOMI BECOMES “FULL” (Ruth 3:1-4:22)

Naomi is too old to bring forth children. So she instructs Ruth to substitute for her in a marriage by repurchase, or brother-in-law marriage. Following Naomi’s direction, Ruth asks Boaz to act as a repurchaser. Boaz is ready to comply. However, there is a closer relative who should be given the first opportunity.

Boaz loses no time in settling the matter. The very next morning, he gathers ten older men of Bethlehem before the relative and asks him if he is willing to do the repurchasing. The man refuses to do so. Hence, Boaz acts as a repurchaser and marries Ruth. Their marriage produces a son, Obed, the grandfather of King David. The women of Bethlehem now say to Naomi: “Blessed be Jehovah . . . He has become a restorer of your soul and

one to nourish your old age, because your daughter-in-law who does love you, who is better to you than seven sons, has given birth to him.” (Ruth 4:14, 15) The woman who had returned “empty-handed” to Bethlehem has again become “full”—Ruth 1:21.

Scriptural Questions Answered:

3:11—What gave Ruth the reputation of being “an excellent woman”? It was not “the external braiding of the hair” or “the putting on of gold ornaments or the wearing of outer garments” that caused others to admire Ruth. Rather, it was “the secret person of the heart”—her loyalty and love, her humility and meekness, her diligence and self-sacrificing spirit. Any God-fearing woman desiring a reputation like that of Ruth must strive to cultivate these qualities.—1 Peter 3:3, 4; Proverbs 31:28-31.

3:14—Why did Ruth and Boaz wake up before daybreak? This was not because something immoral had transpired during the night and they wanted to be secre-

*What was the “perfect wage”
for Ruth from Jehovah?*



tive. Ruth's actions that night were apparently in line with what was customarily done by a woman seeking the right of brother-in-law marriage. She acted in harmony with Naomi's instruction. Moreover, Boaz' response clearly indicates that he did not see anything wrong in what Ruth did. (Ruth 3:2-13) Evidently, Ruth and Boaz got up early so that no one would have a reason for starting groundless rumors.

3:15—What was significant about Boaz' giving Ruth six measures of barley? This act perhaps signified that just as a day of rest followed six days of work, Ruth's day of rest was near. Boaz would see to it that she would have "a resting-place" in the house of her husband. (Ruth 1:9; 3:1) It may also be that six measures of barley is all that Ruth could carry on her head.

3:16—Why did Naomi ask Ruth: "Who are you, my daughter?" Did she not recognize her daughter-in-law? This could very well be, for when Ruth returned to Naomi, it may still have been dark. The question, though, may also mean that Naomi was inquiring about Ruth's possible new identity in connection with her being repurchased.

4:6—In what way could a repurchaser "ruin" his inheritance by doing the repurchasing? First of all, if the one falling into poverty had sold his land inheritance, a repurchaser would have to put out money to buy the land at a price determined by the number of years remaining till the next Jubilee. (Leviticus 25:25-27) Doing so would reduce the value of his own estate. Moreover, should a son be born to Ruth, that son, rather than any of the repurchaser's current near relatives, would inherit the purchased field.

Lessons for Us:

3:12; 4:1-6. Boaz scrupulously followed Jehovah's arrangement. Are we conscientious

in following theocratic procedures?—1 Corinthians 14:40.

3:18. Naomi had confidence in Boaz. Should we not have similar confidence in faithful fellow believers? Ruth was willing to perform brother-in-law marriage with a man she hardly knew, a man unnamed in the Bible. (Ruth 4:1) Why? Because she had confidence in God's arrangement. Do we have similar confidence? When it comes to seeking a marriage mate, for example, do we heed the counsel to marry "only in the Lord"?—1 Corinthians 7:39.

4:13-16. Although she was a Moabitess and a former worshiper of the god Chemosh, what a privilege Ruth received! This illustrates the principle that "it depends, not upon the one wishing nor upon the one running, but upon God, who has mercy."—Romans 9:16.

God "May Exalt You in Due Time"

The book of Ruth portrays Jehovah as a God of loving-kindness, who acts in behalf of his loyal servants. (2 Chronicles 16:9) When we reflect on how Ruth was blessed, we see the value of putting our confidence in God with unquestioning faith, fully believing "that he is and that he becomes the rewarder of those earnestly seeking him."—Hebrews 11:6.

Ruth, Naomi, and Boaz placed their complete trust in Jehovah's arrangement, and things worked out well for them. Similarly, "God makes all his works cooperate together for the good of those who love God, those who are the ones called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28) Let us then take to heart the apostle Peter's counsel: "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time; while you throw all your anxiety upon him, because he cares for you."—1 Peter 5:6, 7.

2005 "GODLY OBEDIENCE" DISTRICT CONVENTION LOCATIONS

MAY 27-29

BAKERSFIELD, CA, Centennial Garden Arena, 1001 Truxtun Ave.
LONG BEACH, CA, Convention Center Arena, 300 E. Ocean Blvd.
PORTLAND, ME, Cumberland County Civic Center, 1 Civic Center Sq.
WEST PALM BEACH, FL, Christian Convention Center of Jehovah's Witnesses, 1610 Palm Beach Lakes Blvd.

JUNE 3-5

BAKERSFIELD, CA (Spanish only), Centennial Garden Arena, 1001 Truxtun Ave.
BILLINGS, MT, MetraPark Arena, 308 6th Ave. N.
FORT WORTH, TX, Convention Center, 1111 Houston St.
PORTLAND, ME, Cumberland County Civic Center, 1 Civic Center Sq.
SAN FRANCISCO, CA, Cow Palace, 2600 Geneva Ave.
WEST PALM BEACH, FL, Christian Convention Center of Jehovah's Witnesses, 1610 Palm Beach Lakes Blvd.

JUNE 10-12

EVANSVILLE, IN, Roberts Stadium, 2600 Division St.
FLORENCE, SC, Civic Center, 3300 W. Radio Dr.
FORT WORTH, TX (Spanish only), Convention Center, 1111 Houston St.
KANSAS CITY, MO, Kemper Arena, 1800 Genesee St.
LONG BEACH, CA (Spanish only), Convention Center Arena, 300 E. Ocean Blvd.
SAN DIEGO, CA, Qualcomm Stadium, 9449 Friars Rd.
SAN FRANCISCO, CA, Cow Palace, 2600 Geneva Ave.
TOLEDO, OH, Seagate Convention Centre Arena, 401 Jefferson Ave.
WEST PALM BEACH, FL, Christian Convention Center of Jehovah's Witnesses, 1610 Palm Beach Lakes Blvd.

JUNE 17-19

AMHERST, MA, The Mullins Center, University of Massachusetts, Commonwealth Ave.
BAKERSFIELD, CA (Spanish only), Centennial Garden Arena, 1001 Truxtun Ave.
COLLEGE STATION, TX, Reed Arena, Texas A&M University, Olsen Blvd.
DAYTON, OH, Ervin J. Nutter Center, Wright State University, 3640 Colonel Glenn Hwy.
DULUTH, GA, The Arena at Gwinnett Center, 6400 Sugarloaf Pkwy.
EVANSVILLE, IN, Roberts Stadium, 2600 Division St.
FLORENCE, SC, Civic Center, 3300 W. Radio Dr.
FORT WORTH, TX (Spanish only), Convention Center, 1111 Houston St.
GREEN BAY, WI, Resch Center, 1901 S. Oneida St.
JACKSON, MS, Mississippi Coliseum, 1207 Mississippi St.
LONG BEACH, CA (Spanish only), Convention Center Arena, 300 E. Ocean Blvd.
LOVELAND, CO (Spanish only), Budweiser Events Center, The Ranch, 5290 Arena Cir.
READING, PA, Sovereign Center Arena, 700 Penn St.
SAN DIEGO, CA (Spanish only), Qualcomm Stadium, 9449 Friars Rd.
SAN FRANCISCO, CA (Spanish only), Cow Palace, 2600 Geneva Ave.
TUCSON, AZ, Convention Center, 260 S. Church St.
WEST PALM BEACH, FL (Spanish only), Christian Convention Center of Jehovah's Witnesses, 1610 Palm Beach Lakes Blvd.

JUNE 24-26

AMHERST, MA, The Mullins Center, University of Massachusetts, Commonwealth Ave.
COLLEGE STATION, TX, Reed Arena, Texas A&M University, Olsen Blvd.
COLUMBIA, SC, The Colonial Center, 801 Lincoln St.
DE KALB, IL, Convocation Center, Northern Illinois University, 1525 W. Lincoln Hwy.
DULUTH, GA, The Arena at Gwinnett Center, 6400 Sugarloaf Pkwy.
GLENDALE, AZ, Glendale Arena, 6520 N. 91st Ave.
HUNTSVILLE, AL, Von Braun Center Arena, 700 Monroe St. SW
LONG BEACH, CA (Spanish only), Convention Center Arena, 300 E. Ocean Blvd.
LOVELAND, CO, Budweiser Events Center, The Ranch, 5290 Arena Cir.
READING, PA, Sovereign Center Arena, 700 Penn St.
RICHMOND, VA, Coliseum, 601 E. Leigh St.
SAN FRANCISCO, CA (Spanish only), Cow Palace, 2600 Geneva Ave.
TUCSON, AZ (Spanish only), Convention Center, 260 S. Church St.
WEST PALM BEACH, FL (Spanish only), Christian Convention Center of Jehovah's Witnesses, 1610 Palm Beach Lakes Blvd.

JULY 1-3

AMHERST, MA, The Mullins Center, University of Massachusetts, Commonwealth Ave.
BAKERSFIELD, CA, Centennial Garden Arena, 1001 Truxtun Ave.
BIRMINGHAM, AL, BJCC Arena, 19th St. & 9th Ave. N.
BISMARCK, ND, Civic Center Arena, 601 E. Sweet Ave.
BOSSIER CITY, LA, CenturyTel Center Arena, 2000 CenturyTel Center Dr.
COLLEGE STATION, TX, Reed Arena, Texas A&M University, Olsen Blvd.
COLUMBIA, SC, The Colonial Center, 801 Lincoln St.
COLUMBUS, GA, Civic Center Arena, 400 4th St.
DAYTON, OH, Ervin J. Nutter Center, Wright State University, 3640 Colonel Glenn Hwy.
DE KALB, IL, Convocation Center, Northern Illinois University, 1525 W. Lincoln Hwy.
FORT WORTH, TX, Convention Center, 1111 Houston St.
FREMONT, CA (Chinese only), Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 43400 Osgood Rd.
GAINEVILLE, FL, Stephen C. O'Connell Center Arena, University of Florida, North South Dr. & University Ave.
GLENDALE, AZ (Spanish only), Glendale Arena, 6520 N. 91st Ave.
HUNTSVILLE, AL, Von Braun Center Arena, 700 Monroe St. SW
JERSEY CITY, NJ (American Sign Language only), Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 2932 Kennedy Blvd.
KENNEWICK, WA (Spanish only), Three Rivers Coliseum, 7100 W. Quinault Ave.
LINCOLN, NE, Bob Devaney Sports Center, University of Nebraska, 16th St. & Military Rd.
LONG BEACH, CA, Convention Center Arena, 300 E. Ocean Blvd.
LOVELAND, CO, Budweiser Events Center, The Ranch, 5290 Arena Cir.
MOBILE, AL, Civic Center Arena, 401 Civic Center Dr.
NEWBURGH, NY (Greek only), Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 23 Unity Pl.
NORMAN, OK, Lloyd Noble Center Arena, University of Oklahoma, 2900 Jenkins Ave.
OGDEN, UT, Dee Events Center, 4450 S. Harrison Blvd.
RICHMOND, VA, Coliseum, 601 E. Leigh St.
ROANOKE, VA (Spanish only), Civic Center Coliseum, 710 Williamson Dr.
ROCHESTER, MN, Taylor Arena, Mayo Civic Center, 30 Civic Center Dr. SE
SAN FRANCISCO, CA, Cow Palace, 2600 Geneva Ave.
SPRINGFIELD, IL, Prairie Capital Convention Center Arena, 1 Convention Center Plaza
SUNNYSIDE, NY (Tagalog only), Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 2932 Greenpoint Ave.
TACOMA, WA, Tacoma Dome, 2727 East D St.
TOPEKA, KS (Spanish only), Landon Arena, Kansas Expocentre, One Expocentre Dr.
TUCSON, AZ (Spanish only), Convention Center, 260 S. Church St.
TULSA, OK, Convention Center, 100 Civic Center
UNIONDALE, NY, Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum, 2825 Hempstead Tpk.
WEST PALM BEACH, FL (Spanish only), Christian Convention Center of Jehovah's Witnesses, 1610 Palm Beach Lakes Blvd.
WINSTON-SALEM, NC, Lawrence Joel Veterans Memorial Coliseum, 2825 University Pkwy.

JULY 8-10

AMHERST, MA, The Mullins Center, University of Massachusetts, Commonwealth Ave.
COLLEGE STATION, TX, Reed Arena, Texas A&M University, Olsen Blvd.
COLUMBUS, GA, Civic Center Arena, 400 4th St.
DULUTH, GA (Spanish only), The Arena at Gwinnett Center, 6400 Sugarloaf Pkwy.
FORT WORTH, TX, Convention Center, 1111 Houston St.
FREMONT, CA (Vietnamese only), Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 43400 Osgood Rd.
HAMPTON, VA, Coliseum, 1000 Coliseum Dr.
JERSEY CITY, NJ (French only), Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 2932 Kennedy Blvd.
KENNEWICK, WA (Spanish only), Three Rivers Coliseum, 7100 W. Quinault Ave.
KISSIMMEE, FL, Silver Spurs Arena, 1875 Silver Spur Ln.
LONG BEACH, CA (Spanish only), Convention Center Arena, 300 E. Ocean Blvd.
LOVELAND, CO, Budweiser Events Center, The Ranch, 5290 Arena Cir.
READING, PA, Sovereign Center Arena, 700 Penn St.
RICHMOND, VA, Coliseum, 601 E. Leigh St.
SAN FRANCISCO, CA (Spanish only), Cow Palace, 2600 Geneva Ave.
TUCSON, AZ (Spanish only), Convention Center, 260 S. Church St.
WEST PALM BEACH, FL (Spanish only), Christian Convention Center of Jehovah's Witnesses, 1610 Palm Beach Lakes Blvd.

RICHMOND, VA, Coliseum, 601 E. Leigh St.

ROANOKE, VA, Civic Center Coliseum, 710 Williamson Rd. NE
ROCHESTER, MN, Taylor Arena, Mayo Civic Center, 30 Civic Center Dr. SE

ROCHESTER, NY, Blue Cross Arena, Broad & Exchange Sts.
ST. CHARLES, MO, The Family Arena, 2002 Arena Pkwy.

SAN ANGELO, TX (Spanish only), Convention Center Coliseum, 50 E. 43rd St.

SAN FRANCISCO, CA, Cow Palace, 2600 Geneva Ave.
SUNNYSIDE, NY (Russian only), Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 44-17 Greenpoint Ave.

TACOMA, WA, Tacoma Dome, 2727 East D St.
TOLEDO, OH, Seagate Convention Centre Arena, 401 Jefferson Ave.

TULSA, OK, Convention Center, 100 Civic Center

UNIONDALE, NY, Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum, 1255 Hempstead Tpk.

WEST PALM BEACH, FL (French only), Christian Convention Center of Jehovah's Witnesses, 1610 Palm Beach Lakes Blvd.
WINSTON-SALEM, NC (Spanish only), Lawrence Joel Veterans Memorial Coliseum, 2825 University Pkwy.

JULY 15-17

AMARILLO, TX, Cal Farley Coliseum, Civic Center, 401 S. Buchanan St.

BEAUMONT, TX (Spanish only), Civic Center Arena, 701 Main St.

BELTON, TX, Bell County Expo Center Arena, 301 W. Loop 121
FORT LAUDERDALE, FL (Portuguese only), Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 20850 Griffin Rd.

GLENDALE, AZ, Glendale Arena, 6520 N. 91st Ave.

HAMPTON, VA, Coliseum, 1000 Coliseum Dr.

JERSEY CITY, NJ (French only), Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 2932 Kennedy Blvd.

JOHNSON CITY, TN, Freedrom Hall Civic Center Arena, 1320 Pactolas Rd.

KENNEWICK, WA, Three Rivers Coliseum, 7100 W. Quinault Ave.

KISSIMMEE, FL, Silver Spurs Arena, 1875 Silver Spur Ln.

LITTLE ROCK, AR, Barton Coliseum, Roosevelt Rd. & Dennis St.

LONG BEACH, CA, Convention Center Arena, 300 E. Ocean Blvd.

LONG BEACH, CA (Japanese only), Convention Center Seaside Ballroom, 300 E. Ocean Blvd.

LOVELAND, CO (Spanish only), Budweiser Events Center, The Ranch, 5290 Arena Cir.

MIRA LOMA, CA (American Sign Language only), Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 3300 Cornerstone Dr.

PHILADELPHIA, PA, The Liacouras Center, Temple University, 1776 N. Broad St.

RICHMOND, VA, Coliseum, 601 E. Leigh St.

ROCHESTER, MN, Taylor Arena, Mayo Civic Center, 30 Civic Center Dr. SE

ROCHESTER, NY, Blue Cross Arena, Broad & Exchange Sts.

ST. CHARLES, MO, The Family Arena, 2002 Arena Pkwy.

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (Spanish only), Cow Palace, 2600 Geneva Ave.

TACOMA, WA, Tacoma Dome, 2727 East D St.

TOLEDO, OH, Seagate Convention Centre Arena, 401 Jefferson Ave.

UNIONDALE, NY (Spanish only), Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum, 1255 Hempstead Tpk.

WEST PALM BEACH, FL, Christian Convention Center of Jehovah's Witnesses, 1610 Palm Beach Lakes Blvd.

WINSTON-SALEM, NC, Lawrence Joel Veterans Memorial Coliseum, 2825 University Pkwy.

JULY 22-24

AMARILLO, TX, Cal Farley Coliseum, Civic Center, 401 S. Buchanan St.

AMHERST, MA, The Mullins Center, University of Massachusetts, Commonwealth Ave.

BAKERSFIELD, CA, Centennial Garden Arena, 1001 Truxtun Ave.

BELTON, TX, Bell County Expo Center Arena, 301 W. Loop 121

CLEVELAND, OH, Convocation Center Arena, Cleveland State University, Prospect Ave. & E. 21st St.

DAYTON, OH, Ervin J. Nutter Center, Wright State University, 3640 Colonel Glenn Hwy.

DE KALB, IL, Convocation Center, Northern Illinois University, 1525 W. Lincoln Hwy.

JERSEY CITY, NJ (Korean only), Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 2932 Kennedy Blvd.

JOHNSON CITY, TN, Freedrom Hall Civic Center Arena,

KENNEWICK, WA, Three Rivers Coliseum, 7100 W. Quinault Ave.

KISSIMMEE, FL (Spanish only), Silver Spurs Arena, 1875 Silver Spur Ln.
 LAKE CHARLES, LA, Burton Coliseum, McNeese State University, 7001 Gulf Hwy.
 LITTLE ROCK, AR, Barton Coliseum, Roosevelt Rd. & Dennisson St.
 MIRA LOMA, CA (Korean only), Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 3300 Cornerstone Dr.
 PHILADELPHIA, PA, The Liacouras Center, Temple University, 1776 N Broad St.
 PLANT CITY, FL (American Sign Language only), Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 1904 N. Frontage Rd.
 ROCHESTER, MN, Target Arena, Mayo Civic Center, 30 Civic Center Dr. SE
 ROCKFORD, IL, Metrocentre Arena, 300 Elm St.
 SAN FRANCISCO, CA (Portuguese sessions also), Cow Palace, 2600 Geneva Ave.
 SUNNYSIDE, NY (Japanese only), Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 44-17 Greenpoint Ave.
 TACOMA, WA, Tacoma Dome, 2727 East D St.
 TOLEDO, OH (Spanish only), Seagate Convention Centre Arena, 401 Jefferson Ave.
 WEST PALM BEACH, FL, Christian Convention Center of Jehovah's Witnesses, 1610 Palm Beach Lakes Blvd.

JULY 29-31

AMARILLO, TX (Spanish only), Cal Farley Coliseum, Civic Center, 401 S. Buchanan St.
 AMHERST, MA (Spanish only), The Mullins Center, University of Massachusetts, Commonwealth Ave.
 BELTON, TX (Spanish only), Bell County Expo Center Arena, 301 W. Loop 121
 CLEVELAND, OH, Convocation Center Arena, Cleveland State University, Prospect Ave. & E. 21st St.
 DE KALB, IL, Convocation Center, Northern Illinois University, 1525 W. Lincoln Hwy.
 DULUTH, GA, The Arena at Gwinnett Center, 6400 Sugarloaf Pkwy.
 JERSEY CITY, NJ (Portuguese only), Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 2932 Kennedy Blvd.
 KISSIMMEE, FL (Spanish only), Silver Spurs Arena, 1875 Silver Spur Ln.
 LAKE CHARLES, LA, Burton Coliseum, McNeese State University, 7001 Gulf Hwy.
 LONG BEACH, CA (Arabic sessions also), Convention Center Arena, 300 E. Ocean Blvd.
 NORCO, CA (Armenian only), Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 1001 Parkridge Ave.
 PHILADELPHIA, PA, The Liacouras Center, Temple University, 1776 N. Broad St.
 ROCKFORD, IL (Spanish only), Metrocentre Arena, 300 Elm St.
 SAN FRANCISCO, CA, Cow Palace, 2600 Geneva Ave.
 SUNNYSIDE, NY (Polish only), Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 44-17 Greenpoint Ave.
 TOLEDO, OH, Seagate Convention Centre Arena, 401 Jefferson Ave.
 UNIONDALE, NY, Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum, 1255 Hempstead Tpk.
 WEST PALM BEACH, FL, Christian Convention Center of Jehovah's Witnesses, 1610 Palm Beach Lakes Blvd.

AUGUST 5-7

AMHERST, MA, The Mullins Center, University of Massachusetts, Commonwealth Ave.
 BEAUMONT, TX (Spanish only), Civic Center Arena, 701 Main St.
 BELTON, TX (Spanish only), Bell County Expo Center Arena, 301 W. Loop 121
 BILOXI, MS, Mississippi Coast Coliseum, 2350 Beach Blvd.
 CLEVELAND, OH, Convocation Center Arena, Cleveland State University, Prospect Ave. & E. 21st St.
 DAYTON, OH, Ervin J. Nutter Center, Wright State University, 3640 Colonel Glenn Hwy.
 DE KALB, IL, Convocation Center, Northern Illinois University, 1525 W. Lincoln Hwy.
 HUNTSVILLE, AL (Spanish only), Von Braun Center Arena, 700 Monroe St. SW
 KENNEWICK, WA, Three Rivers Coliseum, 7100 W. Quinault Ave.
 KISSIMMEE, FL (Spanish only), Silver Spurs Arena, 1875 Silver Spur Ln.
 PHILADELPHIA, PA, The Liacouras Center, Temple University, 1776 N. Broad St.
 ROCHESTER, NY, Blue Cross Arena, Broad & Exchange Sts.
 ROCKFORD, IL (Spanish only), Metrocentre Arena, 300 Elm St.
 TOLEDO, OH, Seagate Convention Centre Arena, 401 Jefferson Ave.
 WEST PALM BEACH, FL (Spanish only), Christian Convention Center of Jehovah's Witnesses, 1610 Palm Beach Lakes Blvd.

AUGUST 12-14

BEAUMONT, TX (Spanish only), Civic Center Arena, 701 Main St.
 BELTON, TX, Bell County Expo Center Arena, 301 W. Loop 121
 BILOXI, MS, Mississippi Coast Coliseum, 2350 Beach Blvd.
 CLEVELAND, OH, Convocation Center Arena, Cleveland State University, Prospect Ave. & E. 21st St.
 KISSIMMEE, FL, Silver Spurs Arena, 1875 Silver Spur Ln.

READING, PA, Sovereign Center Arena, 700 Penn St.
 ROCKFORD, IL (Spanish only), Metrocentre Arena, 300 Elm St.
 ST. LOUIS, MO (Korean only), Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 953 Laredo Ave.
 TOLEDO, OH, Seagate Convention Centre Arena, 401 Jefferson Ave.
 UNIONDALE, NY (Spanish only), Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum, 1255 Hempstead Tpk.
 WEST PALM BEACH, FL (Spanish only), Christian Convention Center of Jehovah's Witnesses, 1610 Palm Beach Lakes Blvd.

AUGUST 19-21

BELTON, TX (Spanish only), Bell County Expo Center Arena, 301 W. Loop 121
 KISSIMMEE, FL, Silver Spurs Arena, 1875 Silver Spur Ln.
 LONG BEACH, CA (Spanish only), Convention Center Arena, 300 E. Ocean Blvd.
 READING, PA, Sovereign Center Arena, 700 Penn St.
 ROCKFORD, IL, Metrocentre Arena, 300 Elm St.
 UNIONDALE, NY (Spanish only), Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum, 1255 Hempstead Tpk.
 WEST PALM BEACH, FL (Spanish only), Christian Convention Center of Jehovah's Witnesses, 1610 Palm Beach Lakes Blvd.

AUGUST 26-28

BEAUMONT, TX (Spanish only), Civic Center Arena, 701 Main St.
 BELTON, TX (Spanish only), Bell County Expo Center Arena, 301 W. Loop 121
 GAINESVILLE, FL, Stephen C. O'Connell Center Arena, University of Florida, North South Dr. & University Ave.
 LONG BEACH, CA (Spanish only), Convention Center Arena, 300 E. Ocean Blvd.
 LOVELAND, CO, Budweiser Events Center, The Ranch, 5290 Arena Cir.
 TOLEDO, OH, Seagate Convention Centre Arena, 401 Jefferson Ave.
 UNIONDALE, NY, Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum, 1255 Hempstead Tpk.
 WEST PALM BEACH, FL (Spanish only), Christian Convention Center of Jehovah's Witnesses, 1610 Palm Beach Lakes Blvd.

SEPTEMBER 2-4

LONG BEACH, CA, Convention Center Arena, 300 E. Ocean Blvd.
 UNIONDALE, NY, Nassau Veterans Memorial Coliseum, 1255 Hempstead Tpk.

SEPTEMBER 9-11

LONG BEACH, CA, Convention Center Arena, 300 E. Ocean Blvd.

Britain

JUNE 10-12

GUERNSEY, C.I., Beau Sejour Leisure Centre, St. Peter Port

JUNE 17-19

BOURNEMOUTH, Bournemouth Athletic Football Club, Dean Court Ground

NEWCASTLE-UPON-TYNE, Newcastle Arena, Arena Way
 NOTTINGHAM, Nottingham Ice Rink, Lower Parliament St.

JUNE 24-26

COVENTRY, Coventry City Football Club, Highfield Road Stadium, King Richard St.

LEEDS, Leeds United Football Club, Elland Rd.

PLYMOUTH, Plymouth Argyle Football Club, Home Park

JULY 1-3

LONDON (Spanish only), North London Assembly Hall, 174 Bowes Rd.

MANCHESTER, Manchester Arena, Hunts Bank

STOKE, Britannia Stadium, Stanley Matthews Way

JULY 8-10

LONDON (Greek only), North London Assembly Hall, 174 Bowes Rd.

JULY 15-17

CARDIFF, Millennium Stadium, West Gate St.

LONDON (Italian only), North London Assembly Hall, 174 Bowes Rd.

NORWICH, Norwich City Football Club, Carrow Rd.

PERTH, ST. JOHNSTONE Football Club, McDiarmid Park, Crieff Rd.

JULY 22-24

BRIGHTON, The Brighton Centre, Kings Rd.

GILLINGHAM, Priestfield Stadium, Redfern Ave., Kent

LONDON (Portuguese only), North London Assembly Hall, 174 Bowes Rd.

JULY 29-31

LONDON (French only), North London Assembly Hall, 174 Bowes Rd.

JULY 30-31

DUDLEY (Mandarin only), Dudley Assembly Hall, 22 Castle Hill

AUGUST 5-7

TWICKENHAM (DATE TENTATIVE), Rugby Football Union, Whitton Rd.

AUGUST 19-21

DUDLEY (Punjabi only), Dudley Assembly Hall, 22 Castle Hill

AUGUST 26-28

DUDLEY (British Sign Language only), Dudley Assembly Hall, 22 Castle Hill

Malta

SEPTEMBER 9-11

ST. PAUL'S BAY, New Dolmen Hotel Conference Centre, Qawra

Ireland

JULY 8-10

SWORDS, National Show Centre, Co. Dublin

JULY 15-17

SWORDS, National Show Centre, Co. Dublin

JULY 22-24

SWORDS, National Show Centre, Co. Dublin

Canada

JUNE 10-12

BELLEVILLE, ON, The Belleville Yardmen Arena, 265 Canniford Rd.

CALGARY, AB, Pengrowth Saddledome, 555 Saddledome Rise SE

CORNWALL, ON, Ed Lumley Arena, Cornwall Civic Complex, 100 Water St. E.

DARTMOUTH, NS, Dartmouth Sportsplex, 110 Wyse Rd.

NANAIMO, BC, Frank Crane Arena, Beban Park Recreation Centre, 2300 Bowen Rd.

NORTH BAY, ON, Memorial Gardens Sports Arena, 100 Chipewyan St. E.

PRINCE GEORGE, BC, Prince George Multi-plex Arena, 2188 Oppikla Blvd.

SELKIRK, MB, Selkirk Recreation Complex, 180 Easton Dr.

JUNE 17-19

CORNWALL, ON, Ed Lumley Arena, Cornwall Civic Complex, 100 Water St. E.

GRANDE PRAIRIE, AB, Canada Games Arena, 10017 99th Ave.

KAMLOOPS, BC, Sport Mart Place, 300 Lorne St.

KITCHENER, ON, Kitchener Memorial Auditorium Complex, 400 East Ave.

MONCTON, NB, Coliseum Aagnra, 377 Killam Dr.

QUEBEC CITY, QC (French only), Colisee Pepsi, 250, boul. Wilfrid-Hamel

SELKIRK, MB, Selkirk Recreation Complex, 180 Easton Dr.

VICTORIA, BC, Esquimalt's Archie Browning Sports Centre (Arena), 1151 Esquimalt Rd.

JUNE 24-26

CHILLIWACK, BC, Prospera Centre, 45323 Hodgins Ave.

CORNWALL, ON (French only), Ed Lumley Arena, Cornwall Civic Complex, 100 Water St. E.

KAMLOOPS, BC, Sport Mart Place, 300 Lorne St.

KITCHENER, ON, Kitchener Memorial Auditorium Complex, 400 East Ave.

SASKATOON, SK (Sign language also), Credit Union Centre, 3515 Thatcher Ave.

JULY 1-3

CHILLIWACK, BC, Prospera Centre, 45323 Hodgins Ave.

EDMONTON, AB, Rexall Place, Northlands Park,

7424 118th Ave.

HAMILTON, ON, Copps Coliseum, 101 York Blvd.

KITCHENER, ON (Spanish only), Kitchener Memorial Auditorium Complex, 400 East Ave.

MONTREAL, QC (Arabic only), Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 12700, boul. Métropolitain Est, Pointe-aux-Trembles

JULY 15-17

BRAMPTON, ON (Italian only), Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 2594 Highway 7 W.

CHILLIWACK, BC, Prospera Centre, 45323 Hodgins Ave.

HAMILTON, ON, Copps Coliseum, 101 York Blvd.

MOUNT PEARL, NL, Mount Pearl Glacier, Olympic Dr.

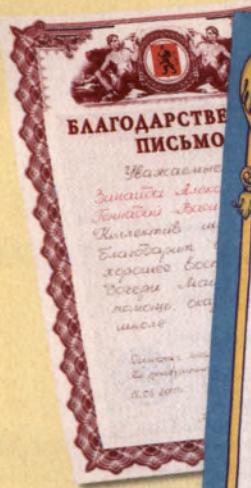
SHERBROOKE, QC (French only), Palais des sports, 360, rue du Parc

JULY 22-24

BRAMPTON, ON (Portuguese only), Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 2594 Highway 7 W.

SHERBROOKE, QC (French only), Palais des sports, 360, rue du Parc

SURRY, BC (Spanish only), Assembly Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 15577 82nd Ave.



Letter of appreciation and
certificate of merit



Maria and her parents
after her baptism

Good Conduct 'Adorns the Teaching of God'

YOUNG Maria in Kransnoyarsk, Russia, sings so well that her teacher put her in the school chorus. Soon thereafter, Maria respectfully approached one of her teachers to explain that she could not sing certain songs. Why? Because singing songs with religious connotations conflicted with her Bible-based convictions. Taken aback, the teacher wondered, 'What could be wrong with glorifying God in a song?'

To show why she would decline to sing a song about a Trinitarian God, Maria opened her Bible and explained that God and Jesus

Christ are not one God and that the holy spirit is God's active force. (Matthew 26:39; John 14:28; Acts 4:31) Maria relates: "My relationship with the teacher did not suffer. Overall, we have very good teachers in our school. They want us to be ourselves."

Throughout the school year, Maria's stand earned her the respect of teachers and classmates alike. Maria says: "Bible principles help me in my life. At the end of the school year, I received an award for honesty and orderliness, while my parents received an official thank-you letter from school for giving their daughter a good upbringing."

Maria was baptized on August 18, 2001. She says: "I am happy that I can serve such a wonderful God as Jehovah!" Young Witnesses of Jehovah worldwide live up to the words of Titus 2:10, where we read: "Adorn the teaching of our Savior, God, in all things."