

AUGUST 15, 2005

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



DEATH CAN WE UNDERSTAND IT?

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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Death's Devastating Effect

"SIX-YEAR-OLD COMMITS SUICIDE." This shocking headline referred to the tragic death of a little girl named Jackie. Her mother had recently died of a terminal illness. Before Jackie stepped in front of a train, she told her siblings that she wanted 'to become an angel and be with her mother.'

Ian was 18 when he pleaded with his priest to explain why Ian's father had died of cancer. The priest claimed that since Ian's father was a good man, God wanted him in heaven. After hearing that explanation, Ian concluded that he did not want to know such a cruel God. Since life appeared to be so meaningless, Ian decided to pursue a life of pleasure. To that end, he turned to alcohol, drugs, and immorality. His life was spinning out of control.

"The Living Are Conscious That They Will Die"

These two distressing incidents illustrate how death can devastate people's lives, especially if it strikes unexpectedly. Admittedly, all are aware of this fact stated in the Bible: "The living are conscious that they will die." (Ecclesiastes 9:5) But many prefer to ignore that harsh reality. What about you? Life makes so many demands on our time and attention that we may push to the back of our minds the seemingly distant prospect of death.

"Most people fear death and try to avoid thinking about it," notes *The World Book Encyclopedia*. Nevertheless, a serious accident



or a life-threatening illness may suddenly force us to look death in the face. Or perhaps the funeral of a friend or a relative provides us with a harsh reminder of the outcome that awaits all mankind.

Still, at funerals mourners often say something like, "Life must go on." And indeed it does. In fact, life may seem to pass by so quickly that all too soon the problems of old age must be faced. At that point, death is no longer such a remote prospect. There are too many funerals to attend, the loss of too many lifelong friends to endure. For many of the elderly, the disturbing question, "When will it be me?" often dominates.

The Great Question Mark

Although nobody denies the certainty of death, what occurs after death can be like a great question mark. The many contradictory explanations may lead the skeptic to see the whole matter as a futile debate about the unknown. The pragmatist may conclude that since "you live only once," you should enjoy the good things of life as best you can.

In contrast, others refuse to believe that death is the end of everything. Nevertheless,

they have no clear idea about what comes afterward. Some assume that life will continue in a place of eternal bliss, while others think that they will live again at some future time, perhaps as a different person.

Bereaved relatives invariably ask themselves, "Where are the dead?" Several years ago, members of a football club were en route to a sporting event when a truck suddenly plowed into their minibus, sending the bus cartwheeling off the road. Five members of the team died. Since the day her son was killed in that accident, the life of one mother has almost come to a halt. She grapples with the issue of where her son is.

She regularly visits his grave and talks to him out loud for hours. "I just can't believe that there is nothing after death," she laments, "but I am not sure."

Clearly, our attitude toward death can affect our lives now. In view of people's reactions to the tragedy of death, several questions arise. Consider how you would respond to them. Should we just forget about death and concentrate on living? Should we allow the menacing presence of death to spoil our life? Must a grieving relative be forever left to ponder the whereabouts of a dead loved one? Must death remain an enigma?

"Death Is Swallowed Up Forever"

IMAGINE reading a newspaper with the above headline instead of reading about a young girl who has taken her own life. Of course, no newspaper has ever been able to make such a statement. But the above words do appear in a book that is thousands of years old—the Bible.

In the Scriptures, death is clearly explained. Furthermore, the Bible not only reveals why we die but also explains the condition of the dead and offers hope for our deceased loved ones. Finally, it speaks of a momentous time when it will be possible to report: "Death is swallowed up forever." —1 Corinthians 15:54.

The Bible explains death in familiar rather than mysterious terms. For example, it re-

peatedly likens dying to 'falling asleep,' and it describes dead people as "sleeping in death." (Psalm 13:3; 1 Thessalonians 4:13; John 11:11-14) Death is also identified as an "enemy." (1 Corinthians 15:26) More important, the Bible enables us to understand why death is like a sleep, why death afflicts mankind, and how this enemy will finally be defeated.

Why Do We Die?

The first book of the Bible relates how God made the first man, Adam, and settled him into a paradise home. (Genesis 2:7, 15) When starting out in life, Adam received work assignments, along with one strict prohibition. Regarding a certain tree in the gar-

den of Eden, God told him: "You must not eat from it, for in the day you eat from it you will positively die."^{*} (Genesis 2:17) Hence, Adam understood that death was not inevitable. It was the direct result of violating a divine law.

Tragically, Adam and his wife, Eve, disobeyed. They chose to ignore the will of their Creator, and they reaped the consequences. "Dust you are and to dust you will return," God told them when he outlined the results of their sin. (Genesis 3:19) They became seriously defective—imperfect. Their imperfection, or sinfulness, would lead to their death.

This defect—sin—was also passed on to Adam and Eve's offspring, the entire human race. In a sense, it was like a hereditary disease. Not only did Adam lose the opportunity to live a life free from the scourge of death but he also transmitted imperfection to his offspring. The human family was taken hostage to sin. The Bible states: "That is why, just as through one man sin entered into the world and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men because they had all sinned."—Romans 5:12.

"Sin Entered Into the World"

This hereditary defect, or sin, cannot be seen under a microscope. "Sin" refers to a moral and spiritual deficiency that has been transmitted to us from our first parents, and it has physical consequences. However, the Bible reveals that God has provided a remedy. The apostle Paul ex-

plains: "The wages sin pays is death, but the gift God gives is everlasting life by Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 6:23) In his first letter to the Corinthians, Paul added an assurance that was very meaningful for him: "Just as in Adam all are dying, so also in the Christ all will be made alive."—1 Corinthians 15:22.

Clearly, Jesus Christ plays a key role in eliminating sin and death. He said that he came to earth "to give his soul a ransom in exchange for many." (Matthew 20:28) The situation is comparable to a kidnapping, in which release of the hostage can be obtained only by a specified payment. In this case, the ransom that can free us from sin and death is Jesus' perfect human life.*—Acts 10:39-43.

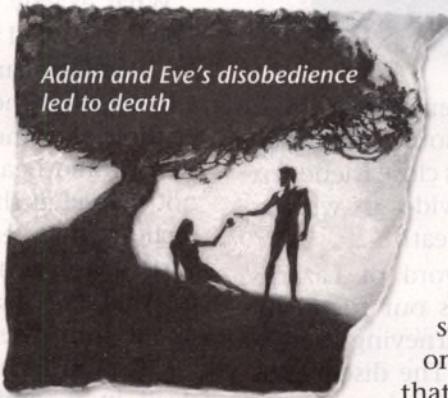
To provide the ransom, God sent Jesus to the earth to sacrifice his life. "God loved the world so much that he gave his only-begotten Son, in order that everyone exercising faith in him might . . . have everlasting life." (John 3:16) Before dying a sacrificial death, Christ 'bore witness to the truth.' (John 18:37) And during his public ministry, he took advantage of certain events to reveal the truth about death.

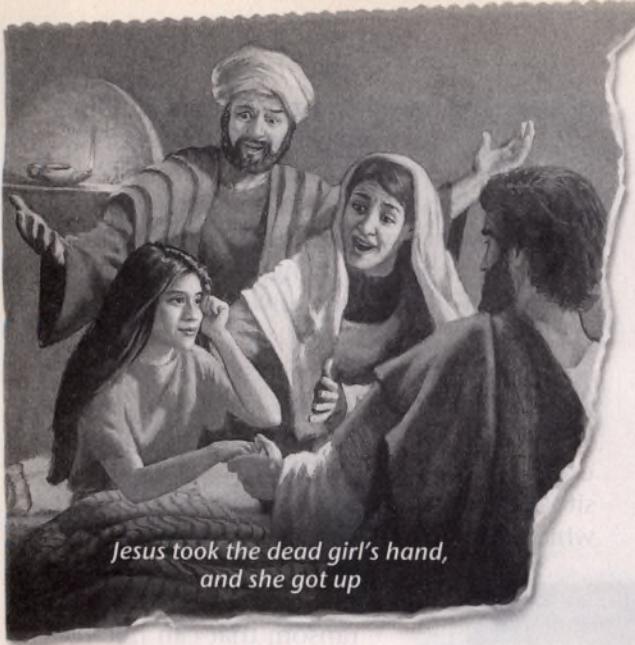
"The Little Girl . . . Is Sleeping"

Jesus was no stranger to death while he was on earth. He felt the grief of losing people around him, and he was fully aware that

* The ransom price was a perfect human life because that was what Adam had lost. Sin contaminated all humans, so no imperfect human could serve as a ransom. Thus, God sent his Son from heaven for that purpose. (Psalm 49:7-9) For more information on this subject, see chapter 7 of the book *Knowledge That Leads to Everlasting Life*, published by Jehovah's Witnesses.

* This is the first Bible reference to death.





*Jesus took the dead girl's hand,
and she got up*

he himself would die prematurely. (Matthew 17:22, 23) Evidently some months before Jesus was executed, his close friend Lazarus died. That event provides us with an insight into Jesus' view of death.

Soon after receiving word of Lazarus' death, Jesus said: "Lazarus our friend has gone to rest, but I am journeying there to awaken him from sleep." The disciples assumed that if Lazarus was merely resting, he would get better. So Jesus said plainly: "Lazarus has died." (John 11:11-14) Obviously, Jesus understood death to be like sleep. While death may be difficult for us to comprehend, we do understand sleep. During a good night's rest, we are unaware of the passage of time and what is going on around us because we are in a state of temporary unconsciousness. This is exactly how the Bible explains the condition of the dead. Ecclesiastes 9:5 states: "As for the dead, they are conscious of nothing at all."

Jesus also compared death to a sleep because people can be awakened from death, thanks to the power of God. On one occasion, Jesus visited the home of a distraught

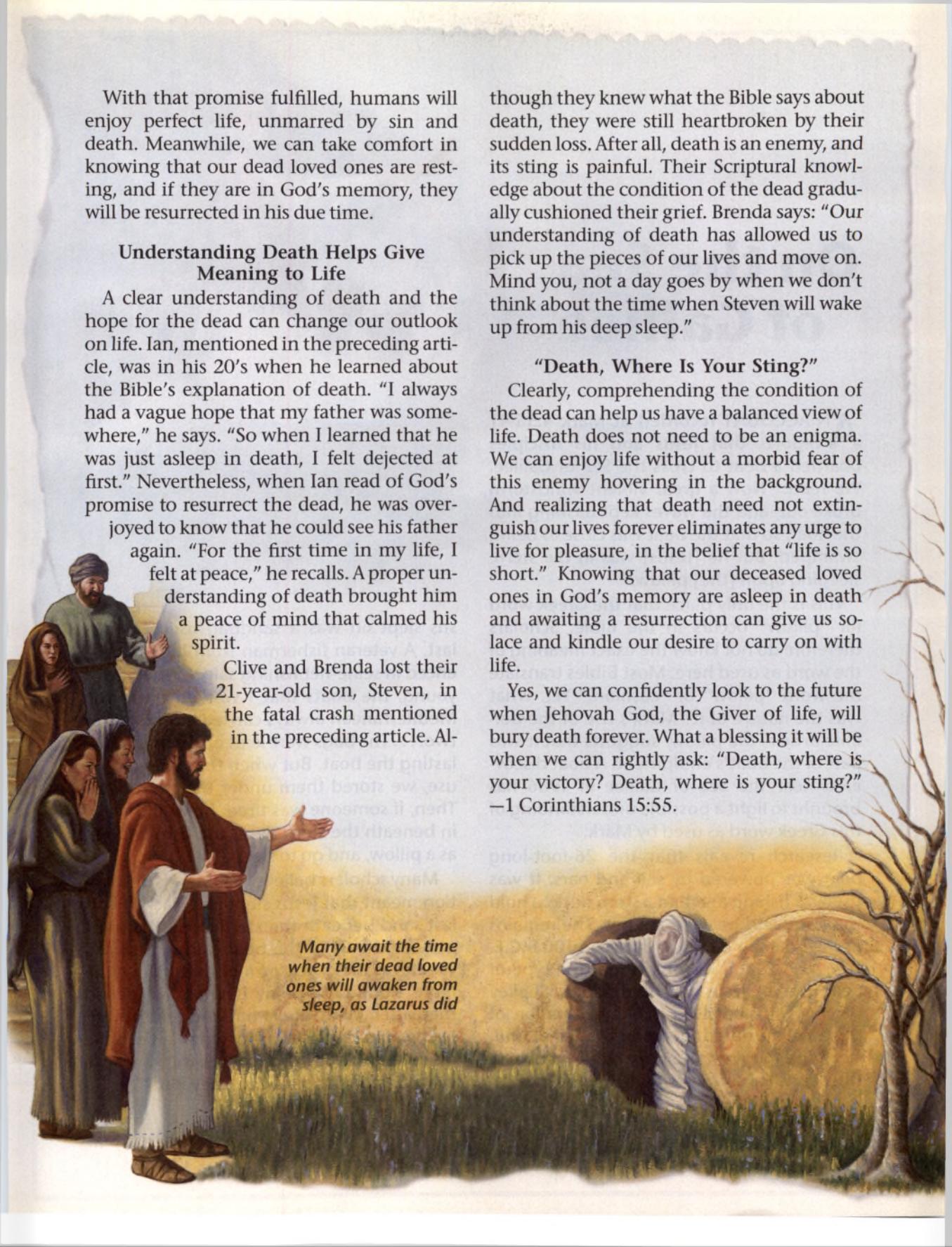
family whose little girl had just expired. "The little girl did not die, but she is sleeping," Jesus said. Then he approached the dead girl and took hold of her hand, and she "got up." In other words, she rose from the dead.—Matthew 9:24, 25.

Jesus likewise raised his friend Lazarus from death. But before performing that miracle, he consoled Martha, Lazarus' sister, by saying: "Your brother will rise." She confidently replied: "I know he will rise in the resurrection on the last day." (John 11:23, 24) She evidently expected all of God's servants to be resurrected at some point in the future.

What exactly does a resurrection imply? The Greek word for "resurrection" (*a-na'stasis*) literally means "standing up." It denotes a rising from the dead. This may sound incredible to some, yet after saying that the dead would hear his voice, Jesus said: "Do not marvel at this." (John 5:28) The resurrections that Jesus himself performed on earth give us confidence in the Bible's promise that the dead in God's memory will awake from their long "sleep." Revelation 20:13 prophesies: "The sea gave up those dead in it, and death and Hades [mankind's common grave] gave up those dead in them."

Will these dead ones be resurrected back to life only to grow old and die again, somewhat like Lazarus? That is not God's purpose. The Bible assures us that the time will come when "death will be no more," so no one will be growing old and then dying.—Revelation 21:4.

Death is an enemy. The human race has many other common enemies, such as sickness and old age, which likewise cause much suffering. God promises to vanquish them all, finally passing sentence on mankind's greatest foe. "As the last enemy, death is to be brought to nothing."—1 Corinthians 15:26.



With that promise fulfilled, humans will enjoy perfect life, unmarred by sin and death. Meanwhile, we can take comfort in knowing that our dead loved ones are resting, and if they are in God's memory, they will be resurrected in his due time.

Understanding Death Helps Give Meaning to Life

A clear understanding of death and the hope for the dead can change our outlook on life. Ian, mentioned in the preceding article, was in his 20's when he learned about the Bible's explanation of death. "I always had a vague hope that my father was somewhere," he says. "So when I learned that he was just asleep in death, I felt dejected at first." Nevertheless, when Ian read of God's promise to resurrect the dead, he was overjoyed to know that he could see his father again. "For the first time in my life, I felt at peace," he recalls. A proper understanding of death brought him a peace of mind that calmed his spirit.

Clive and Brenda lost their 21-year-old son, Steven, in the fatal crash mentioned in the preceding article. Al-

though they knew what the Bible says about death, they were still heartbroken by their sudden loss. After all, death is an enemy, and its sting is painful. Their Scriptural knowledge about the condition of the dead gradually cushioned their grief. Brenda says: "Our understanding of death has allowed us to pick up the pieces of our lives and move on. Mind you, not a day goes by when we don't think about the time when Steven will wake up from his deep sleep."

"Death, Where Is Your Sting?"

Clearly, comprehending the condition of the dead can help us have a balanced view of life. Death does not need to be an enigma. We can enjoy life without a morbid fear of this enemy hovering in the background. And realizing that death need not extinguish our lives forever eliminates any urge to live for pleasure, in the belief that "life is so short." Knowing that our deceased loved ones in God's memory are asleep in death and awaiting a resurrection can give us solace and kindle our desire to carry on with life.

Yes, we can confidently look to the future when Jehovah God, the Giver of life, will bury death forever. What a blessing it will be when we can rightly ask: "Death, where is your victory? Death, where is your sting?"
—1 Corinthians 15:55.

*Many await the time
when their dead loved
ones will awaken from
sleep, as Lazarus did*



Jesus calmed the storm-tossed sea. He did it with his words, but he also did it with his power. He did it with his love, but he also did it with his grace. He did it with his wisdom, but he also did it with his knowledge. He did it with his strength, but he also did it with his compassion. He did it with his faith, but he also did it with his trust.

On the Sea of Galilee

AN ACCOUNT recorded at Mark 4:35-41 reports that Jesus and his disciples boarded a boat to cross the Sea of Galilee. We read: "Now a great violent windstorm broke out, and the waves kept dashing into the boat, so that the boat was close to being swamped. But he [Jesus] was in the stern, sleeping upon [the] pillow."

This is the only place that the Greek word for "pillow" occurs in the Bible. Scholars therefore do not know the exact meaning of the word as used here. Most Bibles translate the word "pillow" or "cushion." Yet, what was the nature of it? Mark's use of the definite article, *the* pillow, suggests that it was part of the boat's equipment. A boat discovered near the Sea of Galilee in 1986 has brought to light a possible understanding of this Greek word as used by Mark.

Research reveals that the 26-foot-long boat was powered by sail and oars. It was used for fishing and had a stern deck to hold the large and heavy seine net. The remains of the boat are dated to between 100 B.C.E. and 70 C.E. and may represent the type of boat used by Jesus and his disciples. Shelley Wachsmann, involved in the excavation of the boat, authored the book *The Sea of Galilee Boat—An Extraordinary 2000 Year Old Discovery*. He suggests that the "pillow" Je-



sus slept on was a sandbag used for ballast. A veteran fisherman from Jaffa experienced in seine-net fishing said: "When I was young, the boats that I worked on in the Mediterranean always carried a sandbag or two.... The bags were kept on board for ballasting the boat. But when they were not in use, we stored them under the stern deck. Then, if someone was tired, he would crawl in beneath the stern deck, use the sandbag as a pillow, and go to sleep."

Many scholars believe that Mark's description meant that Jesus slept on a sack of ballast sand beneath the stern deck, the most protected part of the boat during a storm. Whatever the exact form of that pillow, the more significant point is what happened thereafter. With God's backing and power, Jesus calmed the storm-tossed sea. Even the disciples asked: "Who really is this, because even the wind and the sea obey him?"



Title page and Plantin: By courtesy of Museum Plantin-Moretus/Stedelijk Prentenkabinet Antwerpen

The Royal Bible

A Milestone in Scholarship

THE ship left Spain en route to the Italian peninsula in the early 16th century. Stored in its hold was a cargo of immense value—the bulk of the total production of the Complutensian Polyglot Bible printed between 1514 and 1517. Suddenly, a violent storm came up. The crew fought to save the ship, but their efforts proved futile. The ship sank with its priceless cargo.

That disaster led to the demand for a new edition of the Polyglot Bible. Finally, the master printer Christophe Plantin accepted the challenge. He needed a rich

sponsor to finance this monumental work, so he asked Philip II, king of Spain, to be the official patron. Before making his decision, the king consulted various Spanish scholars, among others the renowned Bible scholar Benito Arias Montano. He told King Philip: "Apart from rendering a service to God and benefiting the universal church, it will also bring great glory to the royal name of Your Majesty and esteem to your personal reputation."

A revised edition of the Complutensian Polyglot would be a notable cultural achievement, so Philip

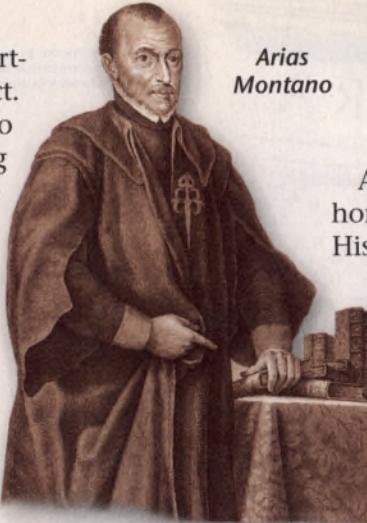


Philip II,
king of Spain

decided to give his wholehearted support to Plantin's project. He charged Arias Montano with the huge task of editing what came to be called the Royal Bible, or the Antwerp Polyglot.*

Philip was so interested in the progress of this Polyglot Bible that he asked to be sent a proof of each sheet. Naturally, Plantin was reluctant to wait until the sheet had gone from Antwerp to Spain, had been read and corrected by the monarch, and then returned. In the end, Philip got only the first sheet off the press and possibly some of the early pages. Meanwhile, Montano progressed on the real proofreading with the valuable aid of three

* It was called the Royal Bible because it was sponsored by King Philip, and the Antwerp Polyglot because it was printed in the city of Antwerp, which at the time was a part of the Spanish Empire.



Arias
Montano

professors of Louvain and the printer's teenage daughter.

A Lover of God's Word

Arias Montano made himself at home among Antwerp's scholars. His broad-minded approach endeared him to Plantin, and their friendship and cooperation were to last for the rest of their life. Montano stood out not only for his scholarship but also for his great love for God's Word.* As a young man, he had been anxious to complete his academic studies

in order to devote himself exclusively to the study of the Scriptures.

Arias Montano believed that a translation of the Bible should be as literal as possible. He sought to translate exactly what was

* He was accomplished in Arabic, Greek, Hebrew, Latin, and Syriac, the five principal languages employed in the Polyglot Bible. He was also well-versed in archaeology, medicine, the natural sciences, and theology, studies that he put to good use in preparing the appendix.

Original printing presses in Antwerp, Belgium





Title page and Plantin: By courtesy of Museum Plantin-Moretus/Stedelijk Prentenkabinet Antwerpen

written in the original text, thus allowing the reader access to the true Word of God. Montano followed the motto of Erasmus, who urged scholars "to preach about Christ from the original." The sense of the original languages of the Scriptures had been hidden from the people for centuries because of the difficulty of understanding the Latin translations.

Composition of the Work

All the manuscripts that Alfonso de Zamaña had prepared and revised for printing the Complutensian Polyglot came into the hands of Arias Montano, who used them for the Royal Bible.*

The Royal Bible was at first conceived as a second edition of the Complutensian Polyglot, but it became much more than a simple revision. The Hebrew text and the Greek

* For an explanation of the significance of the Complutensian Polyglot Bible, see *The Watchtower*, April 15, 2004.

Exodus 15:1-15 in four columns of text

Left: Christophe Plantin and the title page of the Antwerp Polyglot

Above: Exodus chapter 15 in four columns of text

text of the *Septuagint* were taken from the Complutensian Bible; then new texts were added along with an extensive appendix. The new Polyglot finally had eight volumes. The printing took five years, from 1568 until 1572—a very short time in view of the complex nature of the work. Finally, 1,213 copies were printed.

Whereas the Complutensian Polyglot of 1517 proved to be a "monument to typographical art," the new Antwerp Polyglot surpassed its predecessor in technical merit and in content. It was another milestone in the history of printing and, more important, in the preparation of refined master texts of the Bible.

Attacks From Enemies of God's Word

Not surprisingly, enemies of faithful Bible translation soon appeared on the scene. Although the Antwerp Polyglot had papal approval and Arias Montano had a well-deserved reputation as an honorable

scholar, he was denounced to the Inquisition. Opposers said that his work portrayed the new revised Latin text of Santes Pagninus as a more accurate translation of the Hebrew and Greek originals than the *Vulgate*, translated centuries earlier. They also accused Montano of consulting the original

languages in his desire to produce an accurate translation of the Bible—a procedure they viewed as heretical.

The Inquisition even asserted that “the King had not gained much honor by having put his royal name to the work.” They expressed regret that Montano had not given

THE POLYGLOT BIBLES

“A Polyglot Bible is one that contains the text in various languages,” explains Spanish scholar Federico Pérez Castro. “Traditionally, however, the term refers to Bibles that have the Scriptural text in the original languages. In this restricted sense of the term, the number of polyglot Bibles is very small.”

1. *The Complutensian Polyglot* (1514-17), sponsored by Cardinal Cisneros, was printed in Alcalá de Henares, Spain. Its six volumes contained the Bible text in four languages: Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic, and Latin. It provided 16th-century translators with a master text of the Hebrew-Aramaic Scriptures.

2. *The Antwerp Polyglot* (1568-72), edited by Benito Arias Montano, added to the Complutensian text the Syriac Peshitta version of the Christian Greek Scriptures and the Aramaic Targum of Jonathan. The Hebrew text, which contained vowel points and accent marks, was revised according to the received Hebrew text of Jacob ben Hayyim. It thus became a standard text of the Hebrew Scriptures for Bible translators.

3. *The Paris Polyglot* (1629-45) was sponsored by French lawyer Guy Michel le Jay. It was inspired by the Antwerp Polyglot, although it also contained some Samaritan and Arabic texts.

4. *The London Polyglot* (1655-57), edited by Brian Walton, was also based on the Antwerp Polyglot. This Polyglot included ancient translations of the Bible into Ethiopian and Persian, although these versions did not significantly add clarity to the Bible text.

sufficient authority to the official *Vulgate*. Despite these accusations, they could not find sufficient proof to condemn either Montano or his Polyglot Bible. In the end, the Royal Bible was well received, and it became a standard work in various universities.

A Useful Tool for Bible Translation

Though the Antwerp Polyglot was not a work conceived for the public at large, it soon became a useful tool for Bible translators. Like its predecessor, the Complutensian Polyglot, it contributed to the refining of the texts that were available of the Scriptures. It also helped translators to improve their understanding of the original languages. Translations of the Bible into several major European languages benefited from this work. For example, *The Cambridge History of the Bible* reports that translators of the famous *King James Version*, or *Authorized Version*, of 1611 used the Antwerp Polyglot as a valuable aid for translating the ancient languages. The Royal Bible also exercised a considerable influence on two important Polyglot Bibles published in the 17th century.—See the box “The Polyglot Bibles.”

One of the many merits of the Antwerp Polyglot was the fact that it made available to European scholars the Syriac version of

the Greek Scriptures for the first time. That Syriac text was set alongside a literal Latin translation. This was a very useful addition, since the Syriac was one of the oldest translations of the Christian Greek Scriptures. Dating from the fifth century C.E., the Syriac version was based on manuscripts dating back to the second century C.E. According to *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, “the value of the [Syriac] Peshitta for textual criticism is generally acknowledged.”

“As for the word of our God, it will last to time indefinite”

Biblioteca Histórica. Universidad Complutense de Madrid

It is one of the oldest and most important witnesses to the ancient traditions.”

Neither the raging sea nor the attacks of the Spanish Inquisition prevented an improved and amplified version of the Complutensian Polyglot from resurfacing in 1572 in the form of the Royal Bible. The history of the Polyglot Bible of Antwerp is another example of the efforts sincere men have made to defend the Word of God.

Whether they knew it or not, by their selfless labor, these dedicated men reflected the truth of the prophetic words of Isaiah. Almost three thousand years ago, he wrote: “The green grass has dried up, the blossom has withered; but as for the word of our God, it will last to time indefinite.”—Isaiah 40:8.

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

Does It Pay to Be Loyal?

Mennonites Search for Bible Truth

Let Jehovah’s “Saying” Safeguard You

WILL YOU REFLECT GOD'S GLORY?

"We . . . reflect like mirrors the glory of Jehovah."—2 CORINTHIANS 3:18.

IT WAS one of the most awe-inspiring visions any man had ever experienced. Alone, high up on Mount Sinai, Moses was granted an unusual request. He was allowed to see what no human had ever seen—the glory of Jehovah. Of course, Moses did not see Jehovah directly. So splendid is the appearance of God that no man may behold him and yet live. Instead, Jehovah put his "palm" over Moses as a protective screen until He had passed by, evidently using an angelic representative. Then Jehovah allowed Moses to see the afterglow of this divine manifestation of glory. Jehovah also spoke with Moses through an angel. The Bible describes what happened afterward: "Now it came about when Moses came down from Mount Sinai . . . that the skin of his face emitted rays because of his having spoken with [Jehovah]."—Exodus 33:18–34:7, 29.

² Imagine yourself on that mountain with Moses. How thrilling it would be to behold the dazzling splendor of the Almighty and to listen to his words! What a privilege it would be to walk down Mount Sinai alongside Moses, the mediator of the Law covenant! Did you know, though, that in some ways true Christians reflect God's glory in a way that surpasses even the way Moses reflected it? That thought-provoking fact is found in a letter written by the apostle Paul. He wrote that anointed Christians "reflect like mirrors the glory of Jehovah." (2 Corinthians 3:7, 8, 18)

1. What did Moses behold, and what happened afterward?
2. What did the apostle Paul write about the glory that Christians reflect?

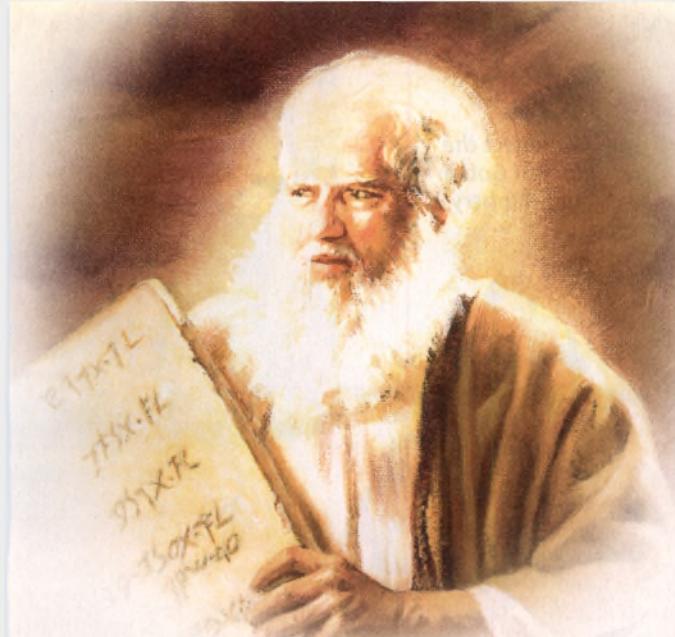
In a sense, Christians with an earthly hope also reflect God's glory.

How Christians Reflect God's Glory

³ How could we possibly reflect God's glory? We have not beheld or heard Jehovah in the way that Moses did. We have, however, come to know Jehovah in ways that Moses could not. Jesus did not appear as the Messiah until nearly 1,500 years after Moses died. Consequently, Moses could not have known how the Law would be fulfilled in Jesus, who died to redeem humans from the terrible oppression of sin and death. (Romans 5:20, 21; Galatians 3:19) Moreover, Moses could perceive only in a limited way the magnificence of Jehovah's purpose, centered on the Messianic Kingdom and the earthly Paradise it will bring. We thus perceive Jehovah's glory, not with our literal eyes, but with eyes of faith based on Bible teachings. Furthermore, we have heard Jehovah's voice, not by means of an angel, but through the Bible, particularly the Gospels, which so beautifully describe the teachings and the ministry of Jesus.

⁴ Though Christians do not reflect God's glory by means of rays that beam from their faces, their faces fairly beam as they tell others about Jehovah's glorious personality and purposes. Concerning our day, the prophet Isaiah foretold that God's people would "for certain tell about [Jehovah's] glory among

3. How have we come to know Jehovah in ways that Moses could not?
4. (a) How do anointed Christians reflect God's glory? (b) In what ways can those who have the earthly hope reflect God's glory?



Moses' face reflected glory

the nations." (Isaiah 66:19) Furthermore, at 2 Corinthians 4:1, 2, we read: "Since we have this ministry . . . , we have renounced the underhanded things of which to be ashamed, not walking with cunning, neither adulterating the word of God, but by making the truth manifest recommending ourselves to every human conscience in the sight of God." Paul was referring in particular to anointed Christians, who are "ministers of a new covenant." (2 Corinthians 3:6) But their ministry has had an effect on countless numbers who have gained the hope of everlasting life on earth. The ministry of both groups involves reflecting the glory of Jehovah not only in what they teach but also in how they live. It is our responsibility and our privilege to mirror the glory of the Most High God!

⁵ Today, the glorious good news of God's Kingdom is being preached in all the inhabited earth, as Jesus foretold. (Matthew 24:14) Individuals of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues have enthusiastically responded to the good news and have transformed their

5. Of what does our spiritual prosperity give evidence?

lives in order to do the will of God. (Romans 12:2; Revelation 7:9) Like the early Christians, they cannot stop speaking about the things they have seen and heard. (Acts 4:20) Over six million people, more than at any other time in human history, are reflecting God's glory today. Are you among them? The spiritual prosperity of God's people gives convincing evidence of Jehovah's blessing and protection. That Jehovah's spirit is upon us is all the more evident in view of the powerful forces arrayed against us. Let us now see why that is so.

God's People Will Not Be Silenced

⁶ Suppose you were called to testify in court against a ruthless criminal. You know that the criminal has a powerful organization and will use every means to prevent you from exposing him. For you to bear witness against such a criminal would require courage as well as confidence that the authorities would protect you from him. We are in a similar situation. In bearing witness to Jehovah and his purposes, we testify against Satan the Devil, exposing him as a manslayer and a liar who is misleading the entire inhabited earth. (John 8:44; Revelation 12:9) To take your stand for Jehovah and against the Devil requires both faith and courage.

⁷ Jehovah is, of course, the Supreme One. His power is infinitely superior to that of Satan. We may be sure that Jehovah is not only able but also eager to protect us as we serve him loyally. (2 Chronicles 16:9) Nevertheless, Satan is ruler of both the demons and the world of mankind alienated from God. (Matthew 12:24, 26; John 14:30) Confined to the vicinity of the earth and filled with "great anger," Satan bitterly opposes Jehovah's servants and uses the world under

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6. Why are faith and courage required in order to take a stand for Jehovah?
 7. How influential is Satan, and what does he try to do?

his control to try to shut the mouths of all who preach the good news. (Revelation 12:7-9, 12, 17) How does he do this? In at least three ways.

⁸ One way in which Satan tries to distract us is through the cares of life. People in these last days are lovers of money, lovers of themselves, and lovers of pleasures. They are not lovers of God. (2 Timothy 3:1-4) Preoccupied with the everyday affairs of life, most people ‘take no note’ of the good news we bring to them. They are simply not interested in learning Bible truth. (Matthew 24:37-39) Such an attitude can be contagious, lulling us into a state of spiritual lethargy. If we allow ourselves to cultivate love for material things and the pleasures of life, our love of God will grow cold.—Matthew 24:12.

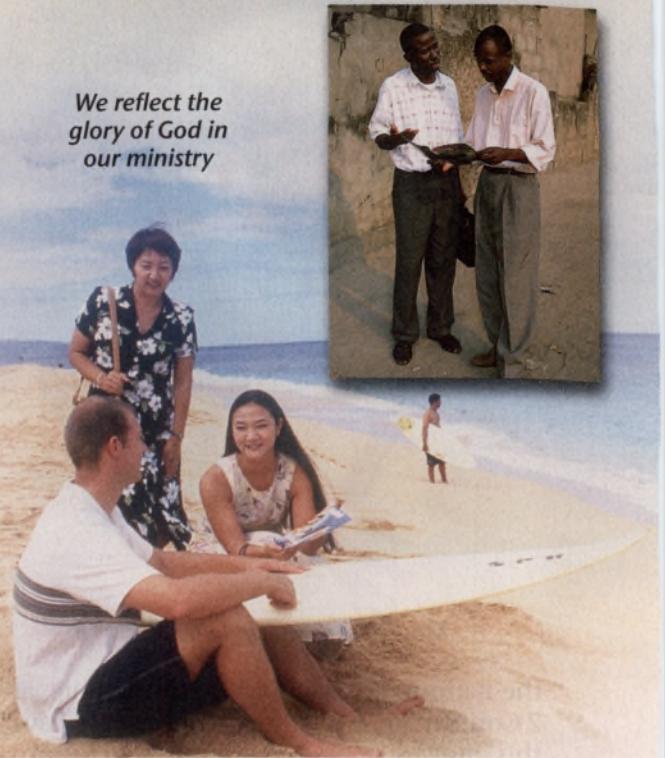
⁹ For this reason, Christians carefully choose those with whom they associate. “He that is walking with wise persons will become wise,” wrote King Solomon, “but he that is having dealings with the stupid ones will fare badly.” (Proverbs 13:20) May we ‘walk’ with those who reflect God’s glory. How pleasant it is to do so! As we gather together with our spiritual brothers and sisters at our meetings and at other times, we find encouragement in their love, their faith, their joy, and their wisdom. Such wholesome association strengthens our determination to persevere in our ministry.

¹⁰ A second way that Satan tries to stop all Christians from reflecting God’s glory is by ridicule. This tactic should come as no surprise. During his ministry on earth, Jesus Christ was ridiculed—laughed at, sneered at, made fun of, treated insolently, and even spit upon. (Mark 5:40; Luke 16:14; 18:32) Early Christians were also objects of mockery. (Acts 2:13; 17:32) Modern-day servants of Jehovah

8, 9. How does Satan use misguided love, and why should we choose our associates carefully?

10. In what ways has Satan used ridicule against those who reflect God’s glory?

We reflect the glory of God in our ministry



face similar abuse. According to the apostle Peter, they would, in effect, be labeled “false prophets.” “In the last days,” foretold Peter, “there will come ridiculers with their ridicule, proceeding according to their own desires and saying: ‘Where is this promised presence of his? Why, . . . all things are continuing exactly as from creation’s beginning.’” (2 Peter 3:3, 4) God’s people are ridiculed as being out of touch with reality. The Bible’s moral standards are viewed as old-fashioned. To many, the message that we preach is foolishness. (1 Corinthians 1:18, 19) As Christians, we may face ridicule at school, at work, and at times even in the family circle. Undeterred, we continue to reflect God’s glory through our preaching, knowing as did Jesus that God’s Word is truth.—John 17:17.

¹¹ A third tactic that the Devil uses in an attempt to silence us is opposition or persecu-

11. How has Satan used persecution to try to silence Christians?



tion. Jesus said to his followers: "People will deliver you up to tribulation and will kill you, and you will be objects of hatred by all the nations on account of my name." (Matthew 24:9) Indeed, as Jehovah's Witnesses, we have faced vicious persecution in many parts of the earth. We are aware that Jehovah long ago foretold that hatred, or enmity, would develop between those who serve God and those who serve Satan the Devil. (Genesis 3:15) We also know that by maintaining integrity under trial, we testify to the rightfulness of Jehovah's universal sovereignty. Knowing this can make us strong even under the most extreme circumstances. No persecution will ever permanently silence us if we remain determined to reflect the glory of God.

¹² Do you resist the allure of the world and prove faithful despite ridicule and opposition? Then you have reason to rejoice. Jesus assured those who would follow him: "Happy are you when people reproach you and persecute you and lyingly say every sort of wicked thing against you for my sake. Rejoice

12. Why should we rejoice as we remain faithful in the face of Satan's opposition?

and leap for joy, since your reward is great in the heavens; for in that way they persecuted the prophets prior to you." (Matthew 5:11, 12) Your endurance gives evidence that Jehovah's powerful holy spirit is upon you, empowering you to reflect his glory.—2 Corinthians 12:9.

Endurance Comes From Jehovah

¹³ A key reason why we endure in the ministry is that we love Jehovah and delight to reflect his glory. Humans tend to imitate those whom they love and respect, and no one is more worthy of imitation than Jehovah God. Because of his own great love, he sent his Son to the earth to bear witness to the truth and to redeem obedient mankind. (John 3:16; 18:37) Like God, we desire that people of all sorts attain to repentance and salvation; that is why we preach to them. (2 Peter 3:9) This desire, along with our determination to imitate God, moves us to persevere in reflecting his glory through our ministry.

¹⁴ Ultimately, though, our strength to endure in the Christian ministry comes from Jehovah. He sustains and fortifies us by means of his spirit, his organization, and his Word, the Bible. Jehovah "supplies endurance" to those who are willing to reflect his glory. He

13. What is a key reason why we endure in our Christian ministry?

14. How does Jehovah strengthen us to endure in our ministry?

answers our prayers and gives us the wisdom to deal with trials. (Romans 15:5; James 1:5) What is more, Jehovah does not allow us to be subjected to any trial that is impossible to bear. If we trust in Jehovah, he will make the way out so that we can continue to reflect his glory.—1 Corinthians 10:13.

¹⁵ Endurance in our ministry gives evidence that God's spirit is upon us. To illustrate: Suppose someone asked you to distribute a certain type of bread from door to door, free of charge. You are instructed to do this at your own expense and on your own time. Further, you soon learn that only a very few people actually want your bread; some will even oppose your efforts to distribute it. Do you think you would continue working at that task month after month, year after year? Probably not. Yet, you may have exerted yourself in declaring the good news on your own time and at your own expense for years, even decades. Why? Is it not because you love Jehovah and through his spirit he has blessed your efforts by helping you to endure? By all means!

A Work to Be Remembered

¹⁶ The ministry of the new covenant is a gift beyond compare. (2 Corinthians 4:7) Similarly, the Christian ministry carried on by the other sheep around the globe is a trea-

15. What helps us to endure?
16. Endurance in our ministry means what for us and for those who listen to us?

Can You Explain?

- How do Christians reflect the glory of God?
- What are some tactics that Satan uses in his attempt to silence God's people?
- What evidence is there that God's spirit is upon us?

sure. As you continue to endure *in your ministry*, you can, as Paul wrote to Timothy, "save both yourself and those who listen to you." (1 Timothy 4:16) Think of what that means. The good news that you preach offers to others the opportunity to live forever. You can forge a strong bond of friendship with those whom you help spiritually. Imagine what a joy it will be to live eternally in Paradise with those whom you have helped to learn about God! Surely they will never forget your efforts to help them. What a cause for satisfaction!

¹⁷ You live in a unique period in human history. Never again will the good news be preached amid a world alienated from God. Noah lived in such a world, and he saw it pass away. How he must have rejoiced to know that he faithfully carried out God's will in building an ark, which led to the preservation of him and his family! (Hebrews 11:7) You too can have such joy. Think of how you will feel in the new world as you look back on your activity during these last days, knowing that you did what you could to promote Kingdom interests.

¹⁸ Let us keep on, then, reflecting God's glory. Our doing so will be something that we will remember forever. Jehovah remembers our works too. The Bible provides this encouragement: "God is not unrighteous so as to forget your work and the love you showed for his name, in that you have ministered to the holy ones and continue ministering. But we desire each one of you to show the same industriousness so as to have the full assurance of the hope down to the end, in order that you may not become sluggish, but be imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises." —Hebrews 6:10-12.

17. Why is ours a unique period in human history?
18. What assurance and encouragement does Jehovah give his servants?

CHRISTIANS REFLECT THE GLORY OF JEHOVAH

"Happy are your eyes because they behold, and your ears because they hear."

—MATTHEW 13:16.

THE Israelites gathered at Mount Sinai had every reason to draw close to Jehovah. After all, he had delivered them from Egypt with a mighty hand. He cared for their needs, providing food and water in the wilderness. Next, he gave them victory over an attacking Amalekite army. (Exodus 14:26-31; 16:2-17:13) As they camped in the wilderness before Mount Sinai, the people were so frightened by thunders and lightnings that they trembled. Later, they saw Moses descend from Mount Sinai, his face reflecting the glory of Jehovah. Yet, instead of responding with wonderment and appreciation, they withdrew. "They grew afraid of

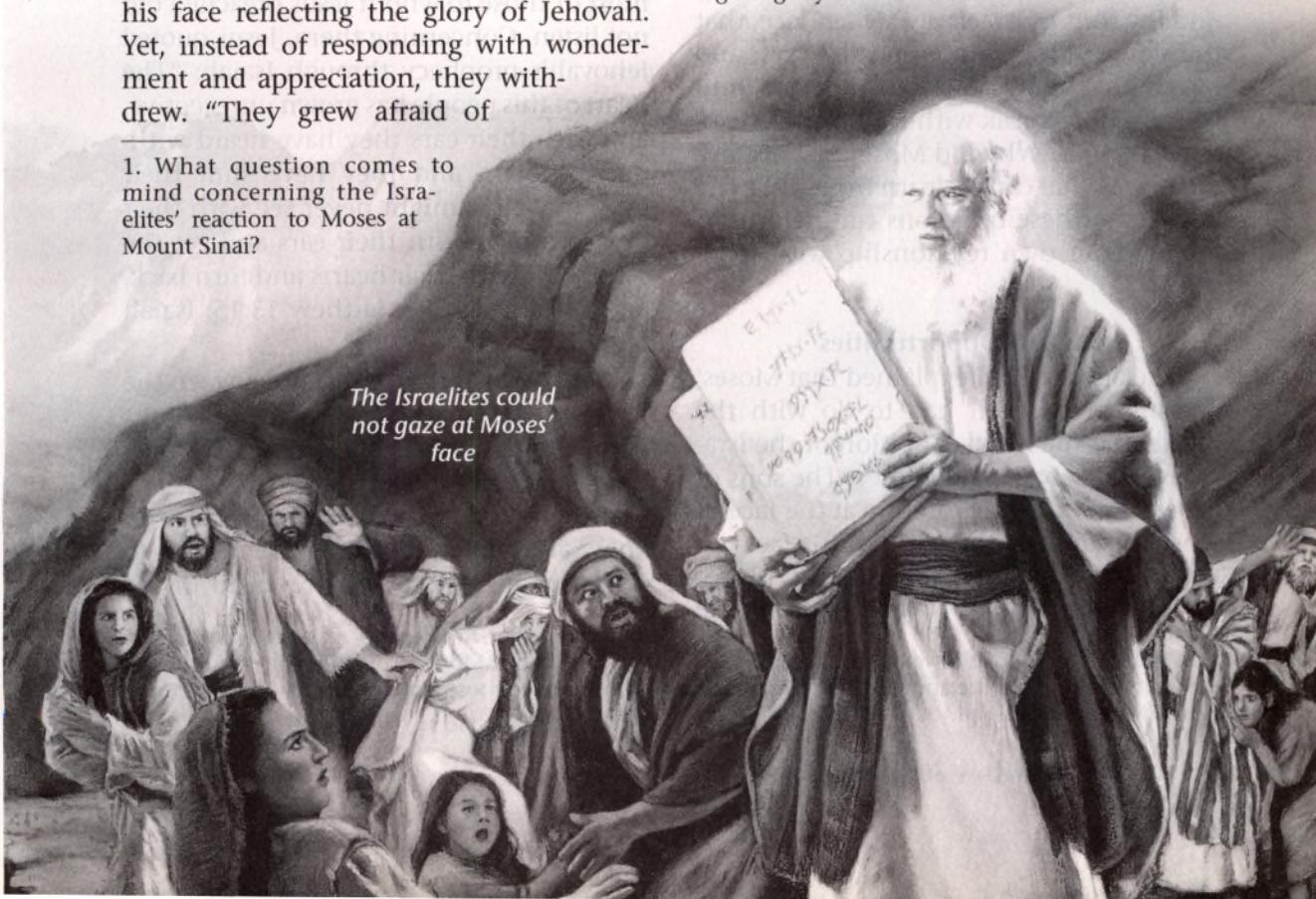
1. What question comes to mind concerning the Israelites' reaction to Moses at Mount Sinai?

coming near to [Moses]." (Exodus 19:10-19; 34:30) Why were they fearful of beholding a reflection of the glory of Jehovah, the one who had done so much for them?

² Likely, much of the Israelites' fear on this occasion had to do with what had happened earlier. When they deliberately disobeyed Jehovah by making a golden calf, he disciplined them. (Exodus 32:4, 35) Did

2. Why might the Israelites have been fearful at seeing the glory of God that Moses reflected?

The Israelites could not gaze at Moses' face



they learn from Jehovah's discipline and appreciate it? No, most did not. Toward the end of his life, Moses recalled the incident of the golden calf along with other instances of Israelite disobedience. He said to the people: "You behaved rebelliously against the order of Jehovah your God, and you did not exercise faith toward him and did not listen to his voice. You have proved yourselves rebellious in behavior with Jehovah from the day of my knowing you." —Deuteronomy 9:15-24.

³ Consider how Moses reacted to the fear shown by the Israelites. The account reads: "When Moses would finish speaking with them, he would put a veil over his face. But when Moses would go in [to the tabernacle] before Jehovah to speak with him, he would take away the veil until his going out. And he went out and spoke to the sons of Israel what he would be commanded. And the sons of Israel saw Moses' face, that the skin of Moses' face emitted rays; and Moses put the veil back over his face until he went in to speak with [Jehovah]." (Exodus 34:33-35) Why did Moses veil his face at times? What can we learn from this? The answers to these questions can help us to evaluate our own relationship with Jehovah.

Missed Opportunities

⁴ The apostle Paul explained that Moses' wearing of the veil had to do with the minds and the heart condition of the Israelites themselves. Paul wrote: "The sons of Israel could not gaze intently at the face of Moses because of the glory of his face . . . Their mental powers were dulled." (2 Corinthians 3:7, 14) What a sad situation! The

3. What did Moses do as to veiling his face?
4. What meaning did the apostle Paul reveal about Moses' wearing of the veil?

Israelites were Jehovah's chosen people, and he wanted them to draw close to him. (Exodus 19:4-6) Yet, they were reluctant to gaze intently on the reflection of God's glory. Instead of turning their hearts and minds toward Jehovah in loving devotion, they in a sense turned away from him.

⁵ In this, we find a parallel in the first century C.E. By the time of Paul's conversion to Christianity, the Law covenant had been replaced by the new covenant, mediated by Jesus Christ, the Greater Moses. In both word and deed, Jesus perfectly reflected the glory of Jehovah. Paul wrote concerning the resurrected Jesus: "He is the reflection of [God's] glory and the exact representation of his very being." (Hebrews 1:3) What a magnificent opportunity the Jews had! They could listen to the sayings of everlasting life from the Son of God himself! Sadly, most of those to whom Jesus preached did not listen. Concerning them, Jesus quoted Jehovah's prophecy through Isaiah: "The heart of this people has grown unreceptive, and with their ears they have heard without response, and they have shut their eyes; that they might never see with their eyes and hear with their ears and get the sense of it with their hearts and turn back, and I heal them."—Matthew 13:15; Isaiah 6:9, 10.

⁶ There was a sharp contrast between the Jews and Jesus' disciples, of whom Jesus said: "Happy are your eyes because they behold, and your ears because they hear." (Matthew 13:16) True Christians yearn to know and serve Jehovah. They delight to carry out his will, as it is revealed in the

5, 6. (a) What first-century parallel was there to the Israelites of Moses' day? (b) What contrast was there between those who listened to Jesus and those who did not?

pages of the Bible. In turn, anointed Christians reflect Jehovah's glory in their ministry of the new covenant, and those of the other sheep do similarly.—2 Corinthians 3:6, 18.

Why the Good News Is Veiled

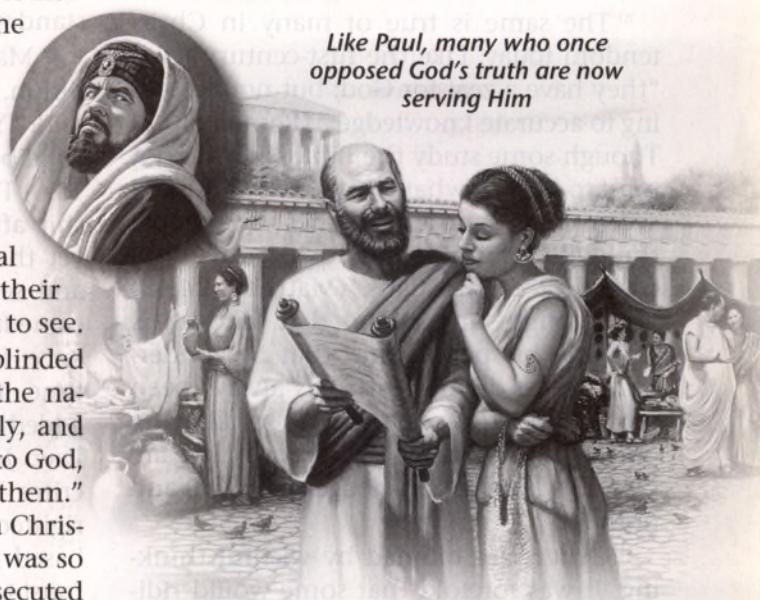
⁷ As we have seen, both in Jesus' day and in Moses' day, most Israelites rejected the unique opportunity open to them. It is similar in our time. Most people reject the good news that we preach. This does not surprise us. Paul wrote: "If, now, the good news we declare is in fact veiled, it is veiled among those who are perishing, among whom the god of this system of things has blinded the minds of the unbelievers." (2 Corinthians 4:3, 4) In addition to Satan's efforts to conceal the good news, many people veil their own faces because they do not want to see.

⁸ The figurative eyes of many are blinded by ignorance. The Bible speaks of the nations as being "in darkness mentally, and alienated from the life that belongs to God, because of the ignorance that is in them." (Ephesians 4:18) Before he became a Christian, Paul, a man versed in the Law, was so blinded by ignorance that he persecuted the congregation of God. (1 Corinthians 15:9) Yet, Jehovah revealed the truth to him. Explains Paul: "The reason why I was shown mercy was that by means of me as the foremost case Christ Jesus might demonstrate all his long-suffering for a sample of those who are going to rest their faith on him for everlasting life." (1 Timothy 1:16) Like Paul, many who once opposed God's

truth are now serving Him. This is a good reason for continuing to bear witness even to those who oppose us. Meanwhile, by regularly studying God's Word and getting the sense of it, we are protected from acting in ignorance in a way that brings Jehovah's displeasure.

⁹ For many, spiritual vision is obstructed because they are unteachable and rigid in their views. Many Jews rejected Jesus and his teachings because they doggedly clung

Like Paul, many who once opposed God's truth are now serving Him



to the Mosaic Law. There were, of course, exceptions. For example, after Jesus was resurrected, "a great crowd of priests began to be obedient to the faith." (Acts 6:7) Nevertheless, concerning the majority of the Jews, Paul wrote: "Down till today whenever Moses is read, a veil lies upon their hearts." (2 Corinthians 3:15) Paul

7. Why is it not surprising that most reject the good news?

8. In what way are many blinded by ignorance, and how can we avoid being similarly affected?

9, 10. (a) How did first-century Jews show themselves unteachable and rigid in their views? (b) Is there a parallel in Christendom today? Explain.

likely knew what Jesus had previously said to the Jewish religious leaders: "You are searching the Scriptures, because you think that by means of them you will have everlasting life; and these are the very ones that bear witness about me." (John 5:39) The Scriptures they so carefully searched should have helped them discern that Jesus was the Messiah. However, the Jews had their own ideas, and not even the miracle-working Son of God could persuade them otherwise.

¹⁰ The same is true of many in Christendom today. Like the first-century Jews, "they have a zeal for God; but not according to accurate knowledge." (Romans 10:2) Though some study the Bible, they do not want to believe what it says. They refuse to accept that Jehovah teaches his people through his faithful and discreet slave class of anointed Christians. (Matthew 24:45) We, though, understand that Jehovah is teaching his people and that the understanding of divine truth has always been progressive. (Proverbs 4:18) By allowing ourselves to be taught by Jehovah, we are blessed with the knowledge of his will and purpose.

¹¹ Others are blinded by wishful thinking. It was foretold that some would

11. What role has wishful thinking played in hiding the truth?

Do You Remember?

- Why were the Israelites afraid to behold the glory of God that Moses reflected?
- In what ways was the good news "veiled" in the first century? in our day?
- How do we reflect God's glory?

clude God's people and the message they proclaim concerning Jesus' presence. The apostle Peter wrote: "According to their wish, this fact escapes their notice," namely that God brought a deluge upon the world of Noah's time. (2 Peter 3:3-6) Similarly, many professed Christians readily acknowledge that Jehovah displays mercy, kindness, and forgiveness; yet they ignore or reject the fact that he does not give exemption from punishment. (Exodus 34:6, 7) True Christians take care to understand what the Bible really teaches.

¹² Many churchgoers are blinded by tradition. To religious leaders in his day, Jesus said: "You have made the word of God invalid because of your tradition." (Matthew 15:6) The Jews zealously restored pure worship after returning from exile in Babylon, yet the priests themselves became proud and self-righteous. Religious festivals became formalistic, devoid of genuine reverence for God. (Malachi 1:6-8) By Jesus' time, the scribes and the Pharisees had added countless traditions to the Mosaic Law. Jesus exposed those men as hypocrites because they had lost sight of the righteous principles on which the Law was based. (Matthew 23:23, 24) True Christians must take care not to allow man-made religious traditions to sidetrack them from pure worship.

"Seeing the One Who Is Invisible"

¹³ Moses asked to see God's glory in the mountain, and he did see the afterglow of Jehovah's glory. When he went into the tabernacle, he did not wear a veil. Moses was a man of deep faith who desired to do God's will. Though he was blessed with

12. How have people been blinded by tradition?
13. In what two ways did Moses behold some of God's glory?



Jehovah's servants delight to reflect God's glory

seeing some of Jehovah's glory in vision, in a sense he had already beheld God with eyes of faith. The Bible says that Moses "continued steadfast as seeing the One who is invisible." (Hebrews 11:27; Exodus 34:5-7) And he reflected God's glory not merely by those rays that emanated from his face for a time but also through his efforts to assist the Israelites to come to know and serve Jehovah.

¹⁴ In heaven, Jesus directly beheld the glory of God for untold ages, even since before the universe was created. (Proverbs 8:22, 30) During all that time, a deeply loving and affectionate relationship developed. Jehovah God expressed the most tender love and affection for this firstborn of all creation. Jesus reciprocated in expressing his deep love and affection for his divine Life-Giver. (John 14:31; 17:24) Theirs was a perfect love between Father and Son. Jesus, like Moses, delighted in reflecting Jehovah's glory in the things he taught.

14. How did Jesus behold God's glory, and in what did he delight?

¹⁵ Like Moses and Jesus, God's present-day Witnesses on earth are eager to contemplate Jehovah's glory. They have not turned away from the glorious good news. The apostle Paul wrote: "When there is a turning to Jehovah [to do his will], the veil is taken away." (2 Corinthians 3:16) We study the Scriptures because we want to do God's will. We admire the glory reflected in the face of Jehovah's Son and anointed King, Jesus Christ, and we imitate his example. Like Moses and like Jesus, we have been blessed with a ministry, teaching others about the glorious God whom we worship.

¹⁶ Jesus prayed: "I publicly praise you, Father, . . . because you have hidden these things from the wise and intellectual ones and have revealed them to babes." (Matthew 11:25) Jehovah gives an understanding of his purposes and personality to those who are sincere and humble in heart. (1 Corinthians 1:26-28) We have come

15. In what way do Christians contemplate God's glory?

16. Why are we blessed to know the truth?

under his protective care, and he teaches us to benefit ourselves—to get the most out of life. May we take advantage of every opportunity to draw close to Jehovah, appreciating his many provisions to come to know him more intimately.

¹⁷ Paul wrote to anointed Christians: “We with unveiled faces reflect like mirrors the glory of Jehovah [and] are transformed

17. How do we come to know Jehovah's qualities more fully?

into the same image from glory to glory.” (2 Corinthians 3:18) Whether our hope is heavenly or earthly, the more we come to know Jehovah—his qualities and personality as revealed in the Bible—the more we become like him. If we appreciatively contemplate the life, the ministry, and the teachings of Jesus Christ, we will reflect Jehovah’s qualities more fully. What a joy to know that we bring praise to our God, whose glory we seek to reflect!

A LAW OF LOVE IN HEARTS

“I will put my law within them, and in their heart I shall write it.”—JEREMIAH 31:33.

IN THE preceding two articles, we learned that when Moses came down from Mount Sinai, his face emanated rays that reflected Jehovah’s glory. We also discussed the veil Moses wore. Let us now consider a related matter that has meaning for Christians today.

² When Moses was up on the mountain, he received instructions from Jehovah. Assembled before Mount Sinai, the Israelites witnessed a stunning manifestation of God himself. “Thunders and lightnings began occurring, and a heavy cloud upon the mountain and a very loud sound of a horn, so that all the people who were in the camp began to tremble. . . . And Mount Sinai smoked all over, due to the fact that Jehovah came down upon it in fire; and its smoke kept ascending like the

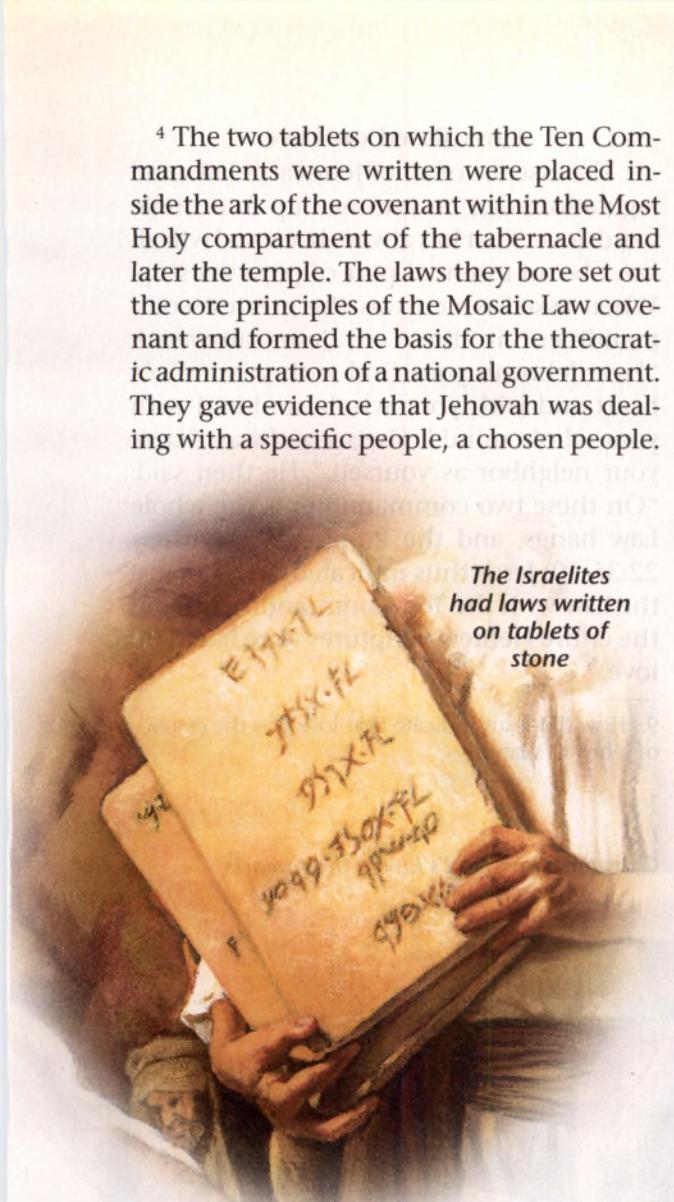
1, 2. (a) What will we now consider? (b) How did Jehovah manifest himself at Mount Sinai?

smoke of a kiln, and the whole mountain was trembling very much.”—Exodus 19:16-18.

³ Jehovah spoke to the people through an angel, providing what has come to be known as the Ten Commandments. (Exodus 20:1-17) Hence, there could be no doubt that these laws were from the Almighty. Jehovah wrote those commandments upon stone tablets—tablets that Moses shattered when he saw the Israelites worshipping a golden calf. Jehovah again wrote the commandments upon stone. This time, when Moses came down carrying the tablets, his face emitted rays. By then, all would understand that those laws had enormous significance.—Exodus 32:15-19; 34:1, 4, 29, 30.

3. By what means did Jehovah give the Ten Commandments to Israel, and what did that nation come to understand?

⁴ The two tablets on which the Ten Commandments were written were placed inside the ark of the covenant within the Most Holy compartment of the tabernacle and later the temple. The laws they bore set out the core principles of the Mosaic Law covenant and formed the basis for the theocratic administration of a national government. They gave evidence that Jehovah was dealing with a specific people, a chosen people.



The Israelites had laws written on tablets of stone

An illustration showing Moses holding the two stone tablets with the Ten Commandments inscribed on them. He is wearing a white robe and a turban. The tablets are inscribed in Hebrew characters. A small text box to the right of the tablets contains the caption "The Israelites had laws written on tablets of stone".

⁵ Those laws revealed much about Jehovah, particularly his love for his people. What a precious gift they proved to be to those who obeyed them! One scholar wrote: "No moral system ever humanly formulated before or since . . . can approach,

4. Why were the Ten Commandments of great importance?

5. In what ways did God's laws to Israel reflect his love?

much less equal, or excel, these ten words of God." Concerning the Mosaic Law as a whole, Jehovah said: "If you will strictly obey my voice and will indeed keep my covenant, then you will certainly become my special property out of all other peoples, because the whole earth belongs to me. And you yourselves will become to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation."—Exodus 19:5, 6.

A Law Written in the Heart

⁶ Yes, those divine laws had great value. Did you know, though, that anointed Christians possess something far more valuable than laws written on stone? Jehovah foretold the making of a new covenant unlike the Law covenant made with the nation of Israel. "I will put my law within them, and in their heart I shall write it." (Jeremiah 31:31-34) Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, did not personally impart a written code of law to his followers. He sounded down Jehovah's law into the minds and hearts of his disciples by the things he said and did.

⁷ This law is called "the law of the Christ." It was first given, not to the nation of natural Israel, who were the descendants of Jacob, but to a spiritual nation, "the Israel of God." (Galatians 6:2, 16; Romans 2:28, 29) The Israel of God is made up of spirit-anointed Christians. In time, they were joined by "a great crowd" from all nations who also seek to worship Jehovah. (Revelation 7:9, 10; Zechariah 8:23) As "one flock" under "one shepherd," both groups embrace "the law of the Christ," allowing it to govern all that they do.—John 10:16.

6. What law has proved to be of more value than laws written on stone?

7. To whom was "the law of the Christ" first given, and who later embraced it?

⁸ Unlike the natural Israelites, who were bound to the Mosaic Law by birth, Christians remain under the law of the Christ by choice, factors such as race and place of birth being irrelevant. They learn about Jehovah and his ways and yearn to do his will. Having God's law "within them," written, as it were, "in their heart," anointed Christians do not obey God merely because he can punish those who disobey; nor do they obey him solely out of a sense of duty. Their obedience is rooted in something more fundamental and vastly more powerful, and those of the other sheep are similarly obedient because of having God's law in their hearts.

8. What was a difference between the Mosaic Law and the law of the Christ?

Laws Based on Love

⁹ The essence of all of Jehovah's laws and regulations can be summed up in a single word: love. That has always been and will always be an essential part of pure worship. When asked which was the greatest commandment in the Law, Jesus answered: "Love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole mind." The second was: "Love your neighbor as yourself." He then said: "On these two commandments the whole Law hangs, and the Prophets." (Matthew 22:35-40) Jesus thus indicated that, not just the Law with the Ten Commandments, but the entire Hebrew Scriptures were based on love.

9. How did Jesus indicate that love was the essence of Jehovah's laws?

Christians have God's law in their hearts



¹⁰ Is love of God and neighbor also central to the law in the hearts of Christians? Absolutely! The law of the Christ involves a heartfelt love of God and includes a new command—Christians are to have self-sacrificing love for one another. They are to love as Jesus did, and he willingly laid down his life in behalf of his friends. He taught his disciples to love God and to love one another, just as he loved them. The outstanding love they show toward one another is the main identifying quality by which true Christians can be recognized. (John 13:34, 35; 15:12, 13) Jesus even instructed them to love their enemies.—Matthew 5:44.

¹¹ Jesus set the perfect example in showing love. As a mighty spirit creature in heaven, he welcomed the opportunity to advance his Father's interests on earth. Apart from giving his human life that others might live eternally, he showed people how they should live. He was humble, kind, and considerate, helping those burdened down and oppressed. He also imparted "sayings of everlasting life," tirelessly helping others to come to know Jehovah.—John 6:68.

¹² Love of God and neighbor, in fact, are inextricably linked. The apostle John stated: "Love is from God . . . If anyone makes the statement: 'I love God,' and yet is hating his brother, he is a liar. For he who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot be loving God, whom he has not seen." (1 John 4:7, 20) Jehovah is both the source and the very personification of love. Everything he does is influenced by love. We love because we are made in his image. (Genesis

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10. How do we know that love is central to the law of the Christ?
 11. How did Jesus demonstrate love for both God and mankind?
 12. Why can it be said that love of God and neighbor are inextricably linked?

1:27) By showing love to our neighbor, we demonstrate our love of God.

To Love Means to Obey

¹³ How can we love God, whom we cannot see? The crucial first step is to get to know him. We cannot truly love or trust a stranger. Thus, God's Word encourages us to get to know God by reading the Bible, by praying, and by associating with those who already know and love him. (Psalm 1:1, 2; Philippians 4:6; Hebrews 10:25) The four Gospels are especially valuable, for they reveal the personality of Jehovah as reflected in the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. Our desire to obey God and to imitate his personality grows ever stronger as we come to know him and appreciate the love he showed for us. Yes, love of God involves obedience.

¹⁴ When we love individuals, we are in tune with what they like and dislike, and we conduct ourselves accordingly. We do not wish to displease those whom we love. "This is what the love of God means," wrote the apostle John, "that we observe his commandments; and yet his commandments are not burdensome." (1 John 5:3) They are not burdensome, nor are they numerous. Love guides our way. We do not need to memorize an extensive code of rules to direct our every act; our love for God guides us. If we love God, it is a pleasure to do his will. We thus gain God's approval, and we benefit ourselves, his direction always working for our good.—Isaiah 48:17.

¹⁵ Love of God moves us to imitate his qualities. When we love a person, we admire his qualities and seek to be like him.

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13. If we are to love God, what must we first do?
 14. Why can it be said that God's laws are not burdensome?
 15. What will move us to imitate Jehovah? Explain.

Consider the relationship between Jehovah and Jesus. They were together in heaven for perhaps billions of years. Deep, pure love existed between them. So perfectly did Jesus resemble his heavenly Father that he could say to his disciples: "He that has seen me has seen the Father." (John 14:9) As we gain knowledge and appreciation for Jehovah and his Son, we are moved to be like them. Our love for Jehovah, along with the help of his holy spirit, will enable us to "strip off the old personality with its practices, and clothe [ourselves] with the new personality."—Colossians 3:9, 10; Galatians 5:22, 23.

Love in Action

¹⁶ As Christians, we allow our love for God and neighbor to motivate us to share in the Kingdom-preaching and disciple-making work. In so doing, we please Jehovah God, "whose will is that all sorts of men should be saved and come to an accurate

16. How is love for God and neighbor demonstrated by our preaching and teaching activity?

knowledge of truth." (1 Timothy 2:3, 4) We can thus find joy in helping others to have the law of the Christ written in their hearts. And we delight to observe as their personalities are transformed to reflect the divine qualities of Jehovah. (2 Corinthians 3:18) Really, to help others to come to know God is the most precious gift we can give them. Those who accept Jehovah's friendship can enjoy it throughout eternity.

¹⁷ We live in a world where material things are greatly valued, even loved. Yet, material things are not everlasting. They

17. Why is it wise to cultivate love for God and neighbor rather than for material things?

*Sonia with a
Senegalese girl at
the 2004 district
convention*



can be stolen or consumed by decay. (Matthew 6:19) The Bible warns us: "The world is passing away and so is its desire, but he that does the will of God remains forever." (1 John 2:16, 17) Yes, Jehovah will remain forever, and so will those who love and serve him. Consequently, does it not make more sense to cultivate love for God and for people than it does to pursue the things of the world, which are at best only temporary?

¹⁸ Those who pursue love bring praise to Jehovah. Consider Sonia, a missionary in Senegal. She studied the Bible with a woman named Heidi, who contracted HIV from her unbelieving husband. After her husband died, Heidi was baptized, but soon her health failed, and she was hospitalized with AIDS. Sonia relates: "The hospital staff did their best, but they were few in number. Volunteers from the congregation were called on to take care of her needs at the hospital. The second night, I stayed on a mat next to her bed and helped to care for her until her death. The doctor in charge said: 'Our biggest problem is that even relatives often abandon family members when they know they have AIDS. Why do you, who are not related, not from the same country, not even the same color, agree to put yourself at risk?' I explained that to me, Heidi was really my sister, as close as if we had the same mother and father. Having come to know this new sister of mine, I found it a pleasure to take care of her." Incidentally, Sonia suffered no ill effects from her loving efforts to care for Heidi.

¹⁹ Many examples of self-sacrificing love may be found among Jehovah's servants.

18. How did one missionary demonstrate self-sacrificing love?

19. Having God's law in our hearts, of what should we take advantage?

No written law code identifies God's people today. Instead, we see the fulfillment of what is written at Hebrews 8:10: "'This is the covenant that I shall covenant with the house of Israel after those days,' says Jehovah. 'I will put my laws in their mind, and in their hearts I shall write them. And I will become their God, and they themselves will become my people.'" May we ever cherish the law of love that Jehovah has written in our hearts, taking advantage of every opportunity to demonstrate love.

²⁰ What a joy it is to serve God along with a worldwide brotherhood that displays such love! Those who have the law of the Christ in their heart enjoy a priceless possession in this loveless world. Not only do they enjoy Jehovah's love but they also delight in the strong bond of love in the brotherhood. "Look! How good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity!" Though Jehovah's Witnesses reside in many nations, speak many tongues, and represent many cultures, they enjoy religious unity that is without equal. This unity brings Jehovah's favor. Wrote the psalmist: "There [amid a people united in love] Jehovah commanded the blessing to be, even life to time indefinite."—Psalm 133:1-3.

20. Why is the law of the Christ a priceless possession?

Can You Answer?

- How important were the Ten Commandments?
- What is the law written in hearts?
- What role does love play in "the law of the Christ"?
- In what ways may we display our love for God and neighbor?

"They Could Have Been Immediately Freed"



GENEVIÈVE DE GAULLE, niece of Charles de Gaulle, former president of France, got to know Jehovah's Witnesses personally in the Nazi concentration camp at Ravensbrück, northern Germany. She wrote the above words in a letter in August 1945.

The concentration camp at Auschwitz, Poland, was liberated on January 27, 1945. Ever since 1996, this date has been a memorial day in Germany for victims of Hitler's Third Reich.

During an official memorial speech on January 27, 2003, the president of the State Parliament of Baden-Württemberg, Peter Straub, commented: "All those who suffered persecution because of their religious or political beliefs and who were willing to accept death rather than submit deserve our great respect, such respect as is hard to express in words. Jehovah's Witnesses were the only religion that completely refused to accede to the demands of the Hitler regime: They did not raise their hand to give the Hitler salute. They refused to swear allegiance to 'Führer and State,' just as they refused to perform military and labor service. And their children did not join the Hitler Youth Movement."

Konzentrationslager
Abteilung II

Erklärung.

Ich, der - die _____ geboren am: _____ gebe hiermit folgende Erklärung ab:

1. Ich habe erkannt, dass die Internationale Bibelforschervereinigung eine Irrehe verbreitet und unter dem Deckmantel religiöser Bestätigung lediglich staatstrechende Ziele verfolgt.
2. Ich habe mich deshalb voll und ganz von dieser Organisation abgewandt, und mich auch innerlich von dieser Sekte freigemacht.
3. Ich versichere hiermit, dass ich mich nie wieder für die Internationale Bibelforschervereinigung betätigen werde. Personen, die für die Irrehe der Bibelforscher an mich werbend herantrafen oder in anderer Weise ihre Einstellung als Bibelforscher bekunden, werde ich unverzüglich zur Anzeige bringen. Sollten mir Bibelforscherschriften zugesandt werden, so werde ich diese ungehend bei der nächsten Polizeidienststelle abgeben.
4. Ich will künftig die Gesetze des Staates achten, insbesondere im Palte eines Krieges mein Vaterland mit der Waffe in der Hand verteidigen und mich voll und ganz in die Volksgemeinschaft eingliedern.
5. Mir ist eröffnet worden, dass ich mit meiner erneuten Inschlußhaftnahmre zu rechnen habe, wenn ich meiner heut abgegebenen Erklärung zuwiderhande.

, den _____ Unterzeichnet:

KL/47/4, 43 5600

Jesus Christ said of his followers: "They are no part of the world, just as I am no part of the world." (John 17:16) Hence, the stand of Jehovah's Witnesses was purely on religious grounds. Straub continued: "Jehovah's Witnesses, who had to wear a purple triangle on their clothes as concentration camp prisoners, were the only ones who could themselves have put an end to their own martyrdom. Signing a declaration denying their faith would have been sufficient."

For the vast majority of the Witnesses, denying their faith was out of the question. Thus, about 1,200 of them died during the Nazi period. Two hundred and seventy were executed as conscientious objectors. They paid much more than just lip service to the statement: "We must obey God as ruler rather than men."—Acts 5:29.

Jehovah's Witnesses were not extraordinary people, as noted by Ulrich Schmidt, president of the State Parliament of North Rhine-Westphalia. Referring to his speech, the brochure *Landtag Intern* called them "ordinary people who, following their conscience, stood firm for their religious beliefs, showed civil courage, and offered ideological opposition out of Christian conviction." We can be sure that Jehovah God rejoices over all who stick loyally to him under difficult circumstances. At Proverbs 27:11, we read: "Be wise, my son, and make my heart rejoice, that I may make a reply to him that is taunting me."

Courtesy of United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Questions From Readers

In ancient Israel, what was signified by the miraculous light sometimes called Shechinah that appeared in the Most Holy of the tabernacle and the temple?

Jehovah, the loving Father and Protector of his people, made his presence distinctly felt in Israel. One way he accomplished that was through a resplendent cloud that was intimately related to his place of worship.

That striking light represented Jehovah's invisible presence. It appeared in the Most Holy both of the tabernacle and of the temple that Solomon built. That miraculous light did not signify that Jehovah was physically present there. God cannot be confined in any building made by humans. (2 Chronicles 6:18; Acts 17:24) This supernatural effulgence in God's sanctuary could give confidence to the high priest and through him to all the Israelites that Jehovah's protective presence attended to them and their needs.

In postbiblical Aramaic, this light was called Shechinah (*shekhi-nah'*), a word meaning "that which dwells" or "the dwelling." This term does not occur in the Bible but is found in Aramaic translations of the Hebrew Scriptures, also known as the Targums.

When giving instructions for constructing the tabernacle, Jehovah said to Moses: "You must place the cover above upon the Ark, and in the Ark you will place the testimony that I shall give you. And I will present myself to you there and speak with you from above the cover, from between the two cherubs that are

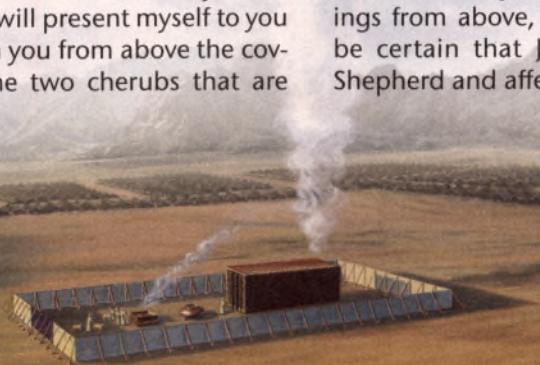
upon the ark." (Exodus 25:21, 22) The Ark mentioned was a gold-covered chest in the Most Holy. There were two golden cherubs on the lid of the Ark.

From where would Jehovah speak? He provided the answer when he said to Moses: "In a cloud I shall appear over the cover." (Leviticus 16:2) This cloud hovered over the sacred Ark between the two golden cherubs. The Bible does not reveal how high that cloud was or how far above the cherubs it extended.

This luminous cloud lit up the Most Holy. In fact, it was the only source of illumination in that compartment. The high priest would benefit from such lighting when he entered that innermost chamber on Atonement Day. He was standing in the presence of Jehovah.

Does this miraculous light have any significance for Christians? The apostle John saw in vision a city in which "night will not exist." The city is New Jerusalem, made up of anointed Christians resurrected to rule with Jesus. The light of this symbolic city is not from the sun or the moon. Jehovah God's glory directly lights up this organization, just as the Shechinah cloud illuminated the Most Holy. Also, the Lamb, Jesus Christ, is the city's "lamp." In turn, this "city" sheds its spiritual light and favor down upon redeemed people out of all the nations for their guidance.—Revelation 21:22-25.

Because they receive such abundant blessings from above, Jehovah's worshippers can be certain that Jehovah is their protective Shepherd and affectionate Father.



Interest in the Bible Appreciated



MARIANNA, one of Jehovah's Witnesses in the south of Italy, is 18 years old and in her last year of high school. She attends the same school as some other young Witnesses.

"For a few years now," writes Marianna, "some of us have been reading the Bible text for the day from *Examining the Scriptures Daily* during our break. The only place we could do so was in one of the corridors near the staff room. It was not very quiet. Most of the teachers saw us as they passed, and some stopped to see what we were doing. This has often given us the opportunity to answer their questions. On an average, one teacher stopped every day. Several have stayed to listen to our discussion of the Bible text and have expressed appreciation for the interest we Witnesses have in spiritual things. Once, the assistant principal invited us to have our conversation in the staff room.

"After seeing where we were considering the text, my teacher asked the principal if we could discuss it in one of the classrooms, where it would be quieter. The principal gave permission, and my teacher praised us before the whole class for the good example we set. We are all very happy for the great privilege Jehovah has granted us."