

The WATCHTOWER

AUGUST 1, 1966

Semimonthly

Announcing
JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM

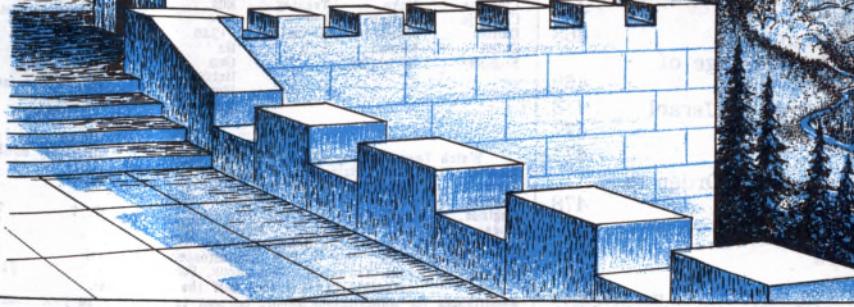
WHAT DO WE OWE GOD?

BAPTISM SHOWS FAITH

HANDLING FAMILY PROBLEMS
BEFORE THEY GROW

ARE YOU IRRITATED
BY THE MESSAGE
OF JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES?

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

THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER"

Every watchtower has its purpose. It serves as an elevated place for a wide-awake person with sharp vision. It enables him to see far ahead into the distance and tell those below for whom he is a watchman what is drawing near, whether it is a danger against which to prepare or it is something good over which to be glad with strong faith and hope.

Because of having the name "The Watchtower" this magazine justly has to render a similar useful service to the people of all nations. This is an international magazine and makes no racial distinctions, for we are all facing a common world danger; we are all hoping for a common good.

Ever since "The Watchtower" began to be published in July of 1879 it has looked ahead into the future, always striving to aid its readers to advance in knowledge and to gain a clearer picture of the glorious new order of things that is in store for righteous mankind. No, "The Watchtower" is no inspired prophet, but it follows and explains a Book of prophecy the predictions in which have proved to be unerring and unfailing till now. "The Watchtower" is therefore under safe guidance. It may be read with confidence, for its statements may be checked against that prophetic Book.

Among the many nations of today there are hundreds of differing religions. Which one does this magazine present? Not the confused religions of Christendom, but the religion of the oldest sacred Book on earth. Which Book? The Sacred Bible of the Holy Scriptures, written by inspiration in the name of the Creator of heaven and earth, the only living and true God.

The sacred, nonpolitical purpose of "The Watchtower" is accordingly to encourage and promote study of the Holy Bible and to give our many readers the needed unsectarian help to understand that Book of true religion and infallible prophecy. Thus this magazine will be helping them to prove worthy of perfect life and happiness in God's promised new order under His everlasting kingdom of righteousness.

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N. H. KNORR, President GRANT SUITER, Secretary
"They will all be taught by Jehovah."—John 6: 45; Isaiah 54: 13

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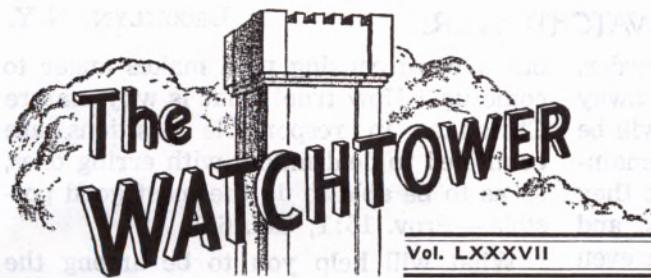
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Announcing
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"Happy ARE THE MILD-TEMPERED ONES"

WHAT food for thought is found in the "beatitudes" or felicities, the "happinesses" that Jesus Christ spoke in his Sermon on the Mount! We can study and ponder over them with much profit to mind and heart, for they are literally loaded with divine wisdom, inspired prophecy and right principles. All such is true, for example, of the third of these felicities, "Happy are the mild-tempered ones, since they will inherit the earth."—Matt. 5:5.

What does it mean to be mild-tempered, and who are the mild-tempered ones that will inherit the earth? To be mild-tempered is to exercise gentleness in conduct or action, not being harsh or unfeeling. The Greek word here rendered "mild-tempered" is *praús*. It has the meaning of gentleness coupled with power; strength under control. It is a word that is also used to describe a wild animal that has been tamed.

Who are the mild-tempered that will inherit the earth? Certainly they would include Jesus Christ himself, for, above all men that ever lived on this earth, he was mild-tempered. As he himself said: "Come

to me, . . . for I am mild-tempered." Concerning him and his triumphal ride into Jerusalem, it was written: "Look! Your King is coming to you, mild-tempered."—Matt. 11: 28, 29; 21:5.

That Jesus Christ, as the preeminent mild-tempered one, will inherit the earth other scriptures make clear. Jehovah God has appointed him to be "heir of all things," including this earth. In fact, 'the nations are to be his inheritance, and the ends of the earth his possession.'—Heb. 1:2; Ps. 2:7, 8.

This inheritance Jesus Christ shares, even as he does his Kingdom rule, with his anointed footstep followers, for they are to be "heirs indeed of God, but joint heirs with Christ." These are the ones the apostle John saw in vision standing upon heavenly Mount Zion and who number 144,000.—Rom. 8:17; Rev. 14:1.

While the statement "happy are the mild-tempered ones" is thus seen to have specific and primary application to Jesus Christ and his Kingdom associates, it, nevertheless, states a principle that has wider application. As the psalmist David wrote: "Just a little while longer, and the wicked one will be no more; and you will certainly give attention to his place, and he will not be. But the meek ones themselves will possess the earth."—Ps. 37: 10, 11.

Yes, in the foretold coming new order, after God the Almighty has done away with all wickedness on earth, there will be only mild-tempered or meek ones remaining. These will "possess" it, in that they will hold it in trust for Jesus Christ and his Kingdom associates. Why, then even the lower animals will all be mild-tempered, for then there will be no more vicious and ravenous wild beasts: "They will not do any harm or cause any ruin in all my holy mountain; because the earth will certainly be filled with the knowledge of Jehovah as the waters are covering the very sea."—Isa. 11:6-9.

There is still more meaning to Jesus' words, for they state a general principle, namely, that those who are mild-tempered will be happy. How so? For one thing, it makes it easier for them to accept instruction. That is why the disciple James wrote that Christians should be "swift about hearing, slow about speaking, slow about wrath" and that they should "accept with *mildness* the implanting of the word which is able to save your souls."—Jas. 1:19-21.

The mild-tempered person is calm under stress, which makes for better relations with others and which, in turn, is conducive to making him happy. He is inclined toward peace, which is a happy state, even as can be seen from the counsel for Christians "to speak injuriously of no one, not to be belligerent, to be reasonable, exhibiting *all mildness toward all men.*"—Titus 3:2.

Being mild-tempered also makes for happiness because it is just the opposite of being hot-tempered. The hot-tempered person is one who is unable to control himself under stress, with the result that he says and does things that he afterward may deeply regret, making him very unhappy. As the inspired proverb puts it: "An answer, when mild, turns away rage,

but a word causing pain makes anger to come up." How true! That is why mature Christians in responsible positions are counseled to deal mildly with erring ones, so as to be able to do the most good possible.—Prov. 15:1; Gal. 6:1.

What will help you to be among the happy ones who are mild-tempered? Knowledge of God's Word and having His spirit. (Gal. 5:22, 23) In particular will humility help you to be mild-tempered, for the two seem to go together. Thus Jesus said: "I am mild-tempered and lowly in heart," and the apostle Paul counseled: "Walk worthily . . . , with complete lowliness of mind and mildness." "Clothe yourselves with . . . kindness, lowliness of mind, mildness."—Matt. 11:29; Eph. 4:1, 2; Col. 3:12.

The modest person, who does not think more highly of himself than he ought to think, the humble person, who is of lowly mind, will not be as likely to take offense, will not be as easily annoyed at irritations as the haughty or proud person, and, therefore, will not be as likely to err by giving expression to hot temper. When one takes time to reflect one cannot but appreciate or understand that to give expression to angry words or deeds is actually to punish another, whether intended or not. Obviously, the humble and modest person is less likely to presume to do this than is the proud one. The archangel Michael set us a good example in this regard, for when contending with Satan the Devil about a certain matter he did not use abusive, angry, hot-tempered speech, but remained calm, mild-tempered, saying simply: "May Jehovah rebuke you."—Jude 9.

Truly there is much food for thought in Jesus' words: "Happy are the mild-tempered ones, since they will inherit the earth." They are inspired prophecy, contain divine wisdom and set out a right principle for all to follow.—Matt. 5:5.

HAVE you ever seen someone start to weed his garden late in the summer when the weeds are already taller than the plants? You know it means a great deal of backbreaking toil for him. Not only that, but in many cases the roots of the weeds and the legitimate plants have become so intertwined that it is practically impossible to remove the weeds without damaging the plants. Yet, if the weeds are not removed, the fruitfulness and beauty of the garden will be marred. Surely a frustrating predicament!

But, as you reflect on the matter, you realize he could have avoided such a situation by taking the job of weeding in hand at the proper time. During the vital growing days of late spring he could, with a minimum of labor, have kept the weeds out of the garden patch and so given the flowers and vegetables a chance to develop strong roots. At those earlier stages he could have covered the whole garden ten times with his hoe in the time it now takes to weed one row.

Yes, such a gardener has his problems, and they are now big ones. Do you know that, if you are a God-fearing parent with young children, this could apply right in your own backyard, so to speak? You have often heard it said that children grow like weeds. But they should properly be fruitful plants, and they need protection from the encroaching weeds of a wicked system of things. So, what kind of gardener are you? Do you put off dealing with the minor problems of your family until

Handling FAMILY PROBLEMS *before They Grow*

What is a source of frequent danger? How best can you protect your children?

they have assumed major proportions, until their solutions are beyond your ability?

DANGER FROM SHELVING PROBLEMS

All too often children go to father or mother with some small problem, only to be brushed aside by a parent who feels too busy to be bothered. It may be only a simple question the child has, or a request for guidance on some project, yet the attitude of the parent threatens to undermine that child's future.

To whom else can the youngster go? True, the question may be considered inconsequential by the parent, but to the child it may be quite important.

In the early teen years the boy who has often been treated this way may well have bigger problems to tackle, but he has been made to feel that his parents have no time for him, and, besides, they have not maintained that close family relationship that would have made it easy to go to them. The boy may have been keeping company with a group his own age and noticed them doing things that did not seem right. If only he could have felt free to approach his parents for advice! But no. Too late he has become involved in bigger trouble, and the parents are shocked by police inquiries involving him.

In the later teen years the boy begins to have dates with the girls. A strange new part of his life is now opening up before him, and, oh, how he could have benefited from parental counsel on many occasions! But somehow he has had to muddle along on his own. How could he talk

to his parents about such intimate matters anyway? By now they have become almost like strangers to him. Why should they be interested in his problems now, when they showed such little interest heretofore?

Can't you just see those worldly weeds growing up around him, their roots becoming entangled with his? He has listened to counsel from outsiders, from other young people with poor judgment, or from adults who get sentimentality mixed up with their judgment. His whole future is already endangered.

Finally the blow comes. Being underage, he now needs the signature of his father in order to wed a girl of another faith with whom he has been having sex relations. What are the parents to do? They hasten to seek counsel of mature fellow Christians. But what can be said to them now? Is it not now a matter for their own decision? They have surely allowed their problem to be compounded into a frustrating source of anxiety and grief.

THE BETTER WAY

How different the situation would now be had they handled the small problems of their son in his earlier years! Think of the many opportunities they missed when they could have cemented a warm, loving attachment to their boy, which, in turn, would have made them the respected confidants of both his pleasures and his troubles. In fact, it was their Christian responsibility to follow such a course, for the apostle Paul gave this instruction: "Fathers, do not be irritating your children, but go on bringing them up in the discipline and authoritative advice of Jehovah." (Eph. 6:4) Regular family Bible study sessions are, of course, essential if this advice is to be followed. When the children come with questions, however, parents have a wonderful opportunity to

work in a little more of Jehovah's instruction or discipline.

Christian parents have the same responsibility to teach godly principles to their children as the Hebrew parents had during the operation of the Mosaic law. The comprehensiveness of this teaching program is revealed in the command: "These words that I am commanding you today must prove to be on your heart; and you must inculcate them in your son and speak of them when you sit in your house and when you walk on the road and when you lie down and when you get up." (Deut. 6:6, 7) This divine counsel was calculated to prevent the onslaughts of weed-like worldly ways and ideas in the boy's life.

Note what could be said to one young man who, in his early years, received warm and loving help and counsel from his Christian mother and grandmother: "You, however, continue in the things that you learned and were persuaded to believe, knowing from what persons you learned them and that from infancy you have known the holy writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through the faith in connection with Christ Jesus." (2 Tim. 3:14, 15) Timothy did grow up to be a creditable fellow laborer of the apostle Paul. Because his father was not a dedicated Christian, the responsibility fell upon his mother to rear him in Jehovah's discipline.

Likewise, commencing at infancy, there is need to teach *your* child and to help him with his little problems. Timothy did not believe simply because his mother commanded him to do so. He was "persuaded to believe." That should be the case with children of Christians today. It can be accomplished only if there is an interchange of love and confidence between parent and child. When this proper relationship has been carefully built up

throughout his childhood years, your boy will not hesitate to come to you with his teen-age problems.

NO EVASION OF RESPONSIBILITY

There can be no evasion of responsibility. If you are a father, for example, you may be tempted to think that it is up to your wife to help the children with their problems. Besides, you have your own problems at work, and when you get home in the evenings you are tired out. But are these good reasons for sidestepping the counsel of the apostle, 'You fathers, go on bringing up your children in the discipline of Jehovah'? Surely not.

Even at your place of business you have learned by experience how important it is to tackle problems before they get out of hand. If you had failed in this you would not have been successful at your job. It is true that your salary and the material welfare of the family depend upon your making sure that business problems are handled before they become too big. But how far more important is the future spiritual welfare of your family! Lives are at stake, lives that have been committed into your stewardship by a just and loving God, who will, in due course, require an accounting.

So it is not altogether a matter of how you view your responsibility to your children, but how God views it. Faithfully expressing the heavenly Father's mind on the subject, we find Jesus voicing this principle to his disciples: "The person faithful in what is least is faithful also in much, and the person unrighteous in what is least is unrighteous also in much." (Luke 16:10) Thus it may seem a small thing to brush off your youngster when he wants to talk to you or show you something he has accomplished, but to him it is a great disappointment, and to God it

may be failure on your part to take hold of an opportunity to build up the child's faith and confidence in your Christian leadership.

Indeed, so seriously does God view the matter of family supervision that he inspired the apostle Paul to declare: "If indeed any man does not know how to preside over his own household, how will he take care of God's congregation?" If a Christian would have such a privileged responsibility he must have his "children in subjection with all seriousness." (1 Tim. 3:4, 5) This means he must take a serious view of the matter of presiding over his household and do his utmost to make a good job of it. He cannot achieve this simply by a heavy hand and a show of authority. Love and empathy must also be exercised.

No conscientious parents want to see their child become a lawbreaker and so spoil his chances for a happy life. They do not want to see him become a stranger to them. They know that one of the greatest forces for good or for bad in the future life of their child is the kind of marriage into which he enters. They know that the Word of God advises that his worshipers marry only those who see eye to eye with them in matters of faith or religion. (1 Cor. 7:39) So they would surely want to see their son or daughter find the right mate.

How wise, then, to start handling problems in the family while they are still small, while you can still solve them! In this way you can regularly weed out all undesirable things from the life of your child. You can, at the early stages, forestall the probability of his becoming a lawbreaker or joining in marriage with an unbeliever. You can, with God's help, develop a family relationship that can be likened to a beautiful and fruitful garden.

IS MAN under any obligation to give something to God? What do we owe God? Obviously the created intelligent man must consider himself indebted to his Creator, Jehovah God, in some way. But does the average person today give God what is due? In Christendom's leading nation one prominent religious leader lamented: "What has the life of the average Christian become, in the average church in our average society? It consists of attending church one service per Sunday . . . being a member of one or more of the church social clubs besides belonging to some 'lodge' or other, loyalty to which often conflicts with loyalty to the church. If he is a fairly conscientious church member he tries to keep abreast of his financial obligations to the church. He makes his children go to Sunday School. He does not pray other than during church services. He very rarely reads his Bible except in church . . . His family very rarely meets together to pray or to discuss Christian matters. He is tragically ignorant about his Christian beliefs." Meanwhile in western Europe the London *News Chronicle*

1, 2. (a) What conditions existing in Christendom indicate how the majority of the people feel about obligations to God? (b) What do those in official positions in Communistic countries think about God?

What DO WE OWE GOD?

reported: "The Gallup Poll discovered some time ago that on two Sundays in August and September not more than 12 per cent of the men in Britain and not more than 18 per cent of the women had gone to church." And some west European lands report a much lower percentage of church attendance than Britain's.

So the average person in Christendom's many lands may attend church at times or goes to a temple or synagogue occasionally, but he knows relatively little about his

religion and appears to be absorbed with business or social contacts and the pleasures of life. We hear people say, "I go to church." Often they feel their obligations end there, showing little or no concern for the Bible or studying it. Some say they live by the Ten Commandments or the "golden rule," but they seldom stop to pray or thank God for anything they have received. A good number do not bother about church or worship at all and feel they want to 'be free to do as they please.' In an apparent effort to justify their indifference to spiritual things men will raise questions as to whether there is a God at all. Some deny God exists. In this century Communism has come to dominate many lands and puts forth strong efforts to advance the theories of

atheism. In the Soviet Union, following the sending of the satellites and rockets a comparatively short distance into space, Soviet atheists have proclaimed their idea that "if supernatural beings really existed they would long since have been detected by powerful means of scientific research. The fact that satellites and rockets have not detected the All-Highest, angels and so on, bears testimony against religious convictions and strengthens disbelief in God." But are these the words of sensible men?

³ True science stands behind *the fact* that God exists. His creation is proof. This is acknowledged by men of science. The famed scientist Einstein, testifying to the existence of God, said: "It is enough for me to contemplate the mystery of conscious life perpetuating itself through all eternity; to reflect upon the marvelous structure of the universe, which we can dimly perceive, and to try humbly to comprehend even an infinitesimal part of the intelligence manifest in nature." "I cannot believe that God plays dice with the cosmos." The noted dean of American scientists, Dr. Robert A. Millikan, a Nobel Prize winner, in an address to a meeting of the American Physical Society at Washington, D.C., declared: "There's a Divinity that shapes our end . . . Just how we fit into the plans of the Great Architect and how much He has assigned us to do we do not know, . . . But fit in we certainly do somehow, else we would not have a sense of our own responsibility. A purely materialistic philosophy is to me the height of unintelligence. Wise men in all ages have always seen enough to at least make them reverent."

⁴ Not only honest, deep thinking and logic support the fact of God's existence. The Holy Bible proclaims it, saying at

Romans 1:20 that God's "invisible qualities are clearly seen from the world's creation onward, because they are perceived by the things made, even his eternal power and Godship." All the marvels of creation are God's proof to man of his supremacy and power. Whether man contemplates our mighty solar system and the galaxies of the universe or the small seed that, as it germinates, produces a tiny blade of grass that pushes aside heavy soil to reach sunlight, he is receiving evidence of the fact that God exists. Seasons come and go in a regular way as God ordained. What of the mystery of life itself? Yes, creation by God is the only sensible and satisfactory explanation to all we see about us. "The senseless one has said in his heart: 'There is no Jehovah.'" —Ps. 14:1.

⁵ The living God Jehovah has not left himself in the mysterious unknown. He has provided the accurate history of creation, including the origin of man, in the first two chapters of the Holy Bible. Of man it is recorded: "And Jehovah God proceeded to form the man out of dust from the ground and to blow into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man came to be a living soul." (Gen. 2:7) How was man made? To be a robot? Not so. He was created with a mind and free will to choose his course in life. The Bible says he was made in the image of God, being given some wisdom, justice, love and power. But the faculty of free will was a sacred trust to be used wisely by man.

⁶ Was man made just to live, to eat, to laugh, to cry, to sleep, to work, to reproduce after his kind? Animals live, take in food, reproduce and sleep. Man was made for a higher purpose. He was given reasoning, intelligence. Yet it would appear at times that some men do not do as well

3. What have some leading scientists said about God?
4, 5. (a) How can all men know God exists? (b) How was man made?

6. (a) Is there a difference between the positions of man and the animals? (b) Do men always take the intelligent position?

as the animals. In the history of the ancient nation of Israel there was a time when God spoke out about men, saying: "Sons I have brought up and raised, but they themselves have revolted against me. A bull well knows its buyer, and the ass the manger of its owner; Israel itself has not known, my own people have not behaved understandingly. . . . They have left Jehovah, they have treated the Holy One of Israel with disrespect, they have turned backwards." (Isa. 1:2-4) Yes, a man will call to his dog and have the dog respond, but how many men respond to the words of God? The men of that ancient nation did not remember their obligation to the One who created them. They did not have the good sense to obey God. Who today would want the Creator to speak of him as less sensible than a bull or an ass?



RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GOD AND MAN

⁷ What was and still is the true relationship of man and his God? The Bible illustrates it in this way: "The word that occurred to Jeremiah from Jehovah, saying: 'Rise up, and you must go down to the house of the potter, and there I shall cause you to hear my words.' And I proceeded to go down to the house of the potter, and there he was doing work upon the potter's wheels. And the vessel that he was making with the clay was spoiled by the potter's hand, and he turned back and went making it into another vessel, just as it looked right in the eyes of the potter

to make. And the word of Jehovah continued to occur to me, saying: "'Am I not able to do just like this potter to you people, O house of Israel?' is the utterance of Jehovah. 'Look! As the clay in the hand of the potter, so you are in my hand, O house of Israel.'" (Jer. 18:1-6) "O man, who, then, really are you to be answering back to God? Shall the thing molded say to him that molded it, 'Why did you make me this way?' What? Does not the potter have authority over the clay to make from the same lump one vessel for an honorable use, another for a dishonorable use?" (Rom. 9:20, 21) Every man's heart should be filled with gratitude to God for being alive.

⁸ God not only had the right to make man as he wished, but as Creator God had the perfect right to fix rules for the functions of man that result to the good of the man. No one disputes the right of an inventor or constructor to set down rules of operation for that which has been made. If a company produces airplanes, does it not provide instructions on operation and care that the owner of the airplane must follow carefully for safe and satisfactory operation of the aircraft? Who is there who will say the company does not know what it is doing when it issues the operating instructions? Yet man does not want sensibly to pay attention to instructions provided by the Maker of man for the good of man. Adam was the first man, a perfect man, and even he was induced to go contrary to the rules for man, with failure to consider the Maker's instructions resulting in his deterioration and death. Down to this day the majority of mankind fail to heed the instructions given by the Maker of man. What God set out in his Word to man was for the good of man, both physically and mentally.

7. How does the Bible describe the relationship between God and man?

8. Why is it reasonable for man to listen to God's instructions?

Abuses of the body and ignoring God have led man to added suffering, illness and unhappiness. Failure to follow God's way explains in part why there are now so many mental and emotional disturbances among the human family.—Gen. 2:16, 17; 3:17-19.

⁹ It pleased God to make man perfect, but with freedom to choose. The strongest natural drive God put in man is the desire to worship. It is man's duty always to choose to please and worship his Creator and to live within the rules set out by God. Adam and Eve thought they knew better than the Creator what was good for them. So they sinned. Thus death came to all mankind. Though this is well known, the majority of mankind still disobey the rules made by God for man's good.

¹⁰ What did God expect to see in Adam and Eve? What does he expect of all mankind? Man is not left in doubt by God, for God has said: "I Jehovah your God am a God exacting exclusive devotion." (Ex. 20:5) Jehovah gave man intellect and reasoning powers and he expects man to use these gifts correctly. Clear reasoning and wisdom will lead a man to dedicate himself voluntarily to the worship and service of Jehovah God, his Creator, because he knows it is right. Exclusive worship of Jehovah God is every man's duty toward his Maker. Duty is conduct due a superior; it implies respect and obedience. The study of ethics shows that a course of conduct is a duty if abstention from it is evil. It is morally incumbent upon man to serve God; so his conscience is involved. We hear people speak freely of the duty of father or children in the family relationship, and duty of servants, doctors or ministers. But should not consideration be given first to the duty of man toward God?

9, 10. (a) In contrast to what Adam and Eve did, what does God desire to see mankind do? (b) What is duty?

FAITH REQUIRED

¹¹ God expects his human creatures on earth to move about intelligently, to worship him through faith and not with images as aids. Creation proves his existence. Beyond that, God has provided the written guide, the Bible, giving adequate knowledge of God. Use of images, according to Romans 1:18-23, proves a man to be both empty-headed and unintelligent. By combining the knowledge available through observation of the creation and study of the Bible a man comes to have faith, and it is worship of God based on faith that God looks for in man. "Without faith it is impossible to please him well, for he that approaches God must believe that he is and that he becomes the rewarder of those earnestly seeking him." (Heb. 11:6) But how may a man know he has the faith that will please his Creator? Faith is not a hidden quality that has no manifestations. One can quite easily judge the strength of his faith by examining what he is doing with respect to God's things. Is he doing the will of God as instructed in God's written Word? In considering things done by Abraham and Rahab, James 2:14, 24, 26 puts it this way: "Of what benefit is it, my brothers, if a certain one says he has faith but he does not have works? That faith cannot save him, can it? You see that a man is to be declared righteous by works, and not by faith alone. Indeed, as the body without breath is dead, so also faith without works is dead."

¹² Jehovah God leaves no question about what he wishes to see his human creatures doing. It can be understood by reading a few texts from your Bible: "What is Jehovah your God asking of you but to fear

11. (a) What kind of worship does God want? (b) Who really has faith?

12, 13. (a) How do the Scriptures summarize man's obligations toward God? (b) How is it possible for men to do these things?

Jehovah your God, so as to walk in all his ways and to love him and to serve Jehovah your God with all your heart and all your soul; to keep the commandments of Jehovah and his statutes that I am commanding you today, for your good?" "And you must love Jehovah your God and keep your obligation to him and his statutes and his judicial decisions and his commandments always." (Deut. 10:12, 13; 11:1) "Only be very careful to carry out the commandment and the law that Moses the servant of Jehovah commanded you by loving Jehovah your God and by walking in all his ways and by keeping his commandments and by cleaving to him and by serving him with all your heart and with all your soul." (Josh. 22:5) "He has told you, O earthling man, what is good. And what is Jehovah asking back from you but to exercise justice and to love kindness and to be modest in walking with your God?" (Mic. 6:8) "My son, do give

your heart to me, and may those eyes of yours take pleasure in my own ways." —Prov. 23:26.

¹³ But how, you ask, is it possible for a man to do these things? Logically, to be able to keep God's commandments one must know them. This indicates the need for a careful reading of His Word the Bible. Knowledge is the basis of faith. It is man's duty to show faith in God. Faith will help one produce actions that please the Creator. Persons of faith in centuries past have kept their obligations toward God, so we may have confidence in our being able to do likewise, and give God what we owe to him. The outstanding example of one's giving God what is due him is found in God's first intelligent creation. Who? Not Adam. No, but the Word, who became a man on earth. (John 1:1; Col. 1:15; Rev. 3:14) Jesus Christ demonstrated to mankind how one pays what is owed to God. Please see the succeeding article.

BAPTISM SHOWS FAITH



JESUS CHRIST is man's finest example of a creature showing faith in his Creator. The record of what he did as a man on earth provides us with guidance so

1. Who is man's finest example of faith, and how did he start showing faith in his youth?

"Here I have come... To do your will, O my God, I have delighted, and your law is within my inward parts."

—Ps. 40:7, 8.

much needed in our effort to pay God what belongs to God. Jesus was born of a nation that had the written law of God and was under covenant obligation to obey it. Though many of the nation were not doing that, Jesus from his early years

demonstrated his strong faith in Jehovah by what he did. He chose a progressive course of life that would lead to favor with God. Of his youth it is written: "Now his parents were accustomed to go from year to year to Jerusalem for the festival of the passover. And when he became twelve years old, they went up according to the custom of the festival and completed the days. But when they were returning, the boy Jesus remained behind in Jerusalem . . . they returned to Jerusalem, making a diligent search for him. Well, after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers and listening to them and questioning them. But all those listening to him were in constant amazement at his understanding and his answers. . . . And Jesus went on progressing in wisdom and in physical growth and in favor with God and men." (Luke 2:41-47, 52) Even in youth he was seriously concerned about his relationship to God.

² By his exemplary course of progressing in knowledge and wisdom, Jesus grew in faith. He knew the will of God, and it was this knowledge plus faith and his strong desire to meet his obligations toward God that led him to present himself to Jehovah and do God's will. Prophetically it had been written of him at Psalm 40:7, 8: "Here I have come . . . To do your will, O my God, I have delighted, and your law is within my inward parts." He was about thirty years of age when by his own choice he was able to give up his former course of life and become a special servant of Jehovah. "Furthermore, Jesus himself, when he commenced his work, was about thirty years old." (Luke 3:23) This required faith. But how did Jesus let it be known that he was taking this course of faith and obedience to God's will?

³ "Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, in order to be baptized by him. But the latter tried to prevent him, saying, 'I am the one needing to be baptized by you, and are you coming to me?' In reply Jesus said to him: 'Let it be, this time, for in that way it is suitable for us to carry out all that is righteous.' Then he quit preventing him. After being baptized Jesus immediately came up from the water; and, look! the heavens were opened up, and he saw descending like a dove God's spirit coming upon him. Look! Also, there was a voice from the heavens that said: 'This is my Son, the beloved, whom I have approved.' "—Matt. 3:13-17.

⁴ Jesus was no sinner! His being submerged under water was not to take away sins. "He committed no sin," says 1 Peter 2:22. Christian baptism is, therefore, not for removing sins, but it is the way to give public evidence of a positive presentation of oneself to God in the midst of an alienated system of things. It was necessary for Jesus and it is required of those who wish to meet their obligations to God even now. Today dedication to God and baptism require faith and must be accompanied by prayer to God.—Luke 3:21.

⁵ Not only does proof of true faith come at the time of baptism but, as Jesus demonstrated, a course of action showing faith must follow continuously thereafter. Jesus Christ proved his faith by serving Jehovah. First of all, he was called upon to defend himself against pressures designed to break him away from his course of obedience to Jehovah. Here his accurate knowledge of the Bible accumulated through diligent study and meditation, plus his faith, gained him an important victory. Satan opposes those who desire to pay their obligations to God. In the case of Jesus, Satan tried to take advantage of

2, 3. (a) In fulfillment of Psalm 40:7, 8, what did Jesus do? (b) What is the proof that God was pleased by this show of faith?

4. What is the meaning of Christian baptism, and is it necessary?
5. How did Jesus prove his faith shortly after baptism?

the situation by placing temptations before the newly anointed Jesus. However, each time a tempting proposition was offered, Jesus answered in the most powerful way—with the Scriptures. The first answer was, "Man must live, not on bread alone, but on every utterance coming forth through Jehovah's mouth," quoted from Deuteronomy 8:3. The second answer was taken from Deuteronomy 6:16, when he said: "You must not put Jehovah your God to the test." The third and final answer was based upon Deuteronomy 5:9 and 6:13, as well as Joshua 24:14, when he declared: "It is Jehovah your God you must worship, and it is to him alone you must render sacred service."—Matt. 4:4-10.

⁶ Following the baptism and temptation, Jesus began his ministry. "From that time on Jesus commenced preaching and saying: 'Repent, for the kingdom of the heavens has drawn near!'" (Matt. 4:17) It was a kingdom message that should have been good news to the people, but it took strong faith to engage in this preaching work, because few of the listeners were ready to believe. The few who put faith in what he preached joined him as followers, eventually sharing in the preaching and teaching work. There was preaching in the mountains, at the seaside, in the synagogues, or at the homes, wherever people were to be found. The record tells how the principal work was praising the name of Jehovah and speaking of his kingdom; rather than begging for money and charitable giving of money or establishing orphanages, hospitals, universities, monasteries or social centers, it was a teaching work, done with kindness, compassion and understanding. Jesus knew that accumulated knowledge is the basis for stability in faith; the knowledge had to be taught. It

is noteworthy that Jesus and his apostles did not attend theological schools or seminaries to equip them for carrying out a life of service to the Creator; rather, it is the Christian way to study and teach the inspired Word of God.—John 7:14-18.

⁷ Jesus did not make pursuit of material things the first concern in his life, but with faith he put spiritual things first, and Jehovah saw to it that he was provided for adequately throughout his ministry. He urged a rich young man to come and be his follower, for Jesus knew that his own course was the one that was pleasing to God, meeting man's obligations toward God. But the young man did not have the faith to do it.—Matt. 6:20, 33; 8:20; 10:9, 10; 19:21; Luke 12:34.

⁸ Christ Jesus also demonstrated how to avoid entanglements with the false religions roundabout. He knew God's law and was not afraid to speak about it, though it made him a target for opposition and personal injury. His keen sense of righteousness was made known before the people as he denounced the traditions of false religion that make void the word of God. He spoke out against false teachings and hypocritical worshippers, showing his opposition to the practice of Babylonish religion. (Matt. 15: 1-9; 16: 6, 12; 23:16-36) Likewise, he explained to his followers the need to take a neutral position toward the affairs of this system of things, which included the immorality and politics of the day, even if this might lead to some Christians' being killed. (John 15:18-21; 16:1, 2, 33; 17:14-16) Faith plus obedience kept Jesus set apart in sanctification to Jehovah God. He knew death was ahead for him, but he had faith

7. What scriptures prove that Jesus had the faith to put spiritual things first in life?

8. (a) Explain the exemplary position of faith that Jesus took concerning the false religions and politics of his day. (b) After resurrection, how did Jesus continue to show that his sanctification to God was unending?

in Jehovah and the resurrection power of God. Even after his resurrection he gave proof of his unending sanctification to the Creator by continuing to teach God's purposes: "And commencing at Moses and all the Prophets he interpreted to them things pertaining to himself in all the Scriptures . . . Then he opened up their minds fully to grasp the meaning of the Scriptures." (Luke 24:27, 45) These are but a few of the outstanding works of faith done by Jesus Christ. By careful reading of the Bible accounts we may learn of many more acts of faith performed by Jesus as examples to those who would be Christians paying God what is due.—1 Pet. 2:21-25.

TO THOSE COMING AFTER JESUS

⁹ For those who would serve Jehovah God in dedication following Christ's ministry the command was given by Jesus at Matthew 28:19, 20: "Go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the holy spirit, teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you. And, look! I am with you all the days until the conclusion of the system of things." Why this command? No longer was God dealing with any earthly nation as his chosen people. A new system of things had arrived. Now it was up to the individuals, people of all the nations, to make their choice and come into harmony with God as dedicated men and women. What Jesus had said indicates that a number of things have to be taken into consideration before baptism is undergone properly.

¹⁰ First of all, there must be the making of disciples, a teaching program. Men must learn about Jehovah God, the Father of

Jesus Christ, gaining basic knowledge of his commandments, laws and principles. Beginning of God's worship must occur, with appreciation of his position as the Supreme One. Knowledge of God and faith precede Christian dedication and baptism. Hence, it becomes understandable that no one is born a Christian, and, therefore, infant sprinkling or baptism is not Christian baptism. One must become informed before baptism and make a choice of his course in life, which is obviously impossible for a newborn infant.

¹¹ Appreciation of the 'name . . . of the Son' or his position in relation to God's purposes is a requirement. One must come to recognize the need of Jehovah's provision through Christ for removal of sin, the ransom sacrifice. He sees himself in true light as a sinner, needing repentance. "Repent, therefore, and turn around so as to get your sins blotted out, that seasons of refreshing may come from the person of Jehovah . . . To you first God, after raising up his Servant, sent him forth to bless you by turning each one away from your wicked deeds." (Acts 3:19, 26) If one repents he shows faith in Jehovah's provision and acknowledges Jesus Christ as Jehovah's anointed King, willingly and joyfully submitting to Jehovah's arrangement of things and wanting to copy the example of the Son of God while living in accord with Jesus' teachings.

¹² Nor may we omit from consideration Jehovah's holy spirit. Holy spirit is not a person. Jehovah sends out his spirit or active force, as invisible to human eyes as the breeze itself, and it can fill men. (Acts 2:1-4) One studying God's Word comes to recognize how Jehovah's spirit operates upon his organization of creatures and how Jehovah uses his active

9. What kind of work was to follow the ministry of Jesus?

10. Before baptism, what is one of the necessary requirements?

11. What must one appreciate concerning God's provision through his Son?

12. What is holy spirit, and how does man properly show recognition of it?

force. It was by Jehovah's spirit that the Bible writing was inspired and through his spirit its understanding is made clear. So there would be no resisting of the operation of Jehovah's spirit or opposing his inspired Word.—Acts 7:51; 2 Pet. 1:21.

^{on}¹³ Is this all that might be required of one who wishes to put himself into proper relationship with God through dedication and immersion? No, a study of the inspired Scriptures indicates a need for further considerations. God's Word sets out standards for living as Christians, requiring men to clean themselves from certain practices often carried on in the world. Under the spirit's inspiration Paul wrote to the Corinthians for their guidance and ours: "What! Do you not know that unrighteous persons will not inherit God's kingdom? Do not be misled. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men kept for unnatural purposes, nor men who lie with men, nor thieves, nor greedy persons, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit God's kingdom. And yet that is what some of you were. But you have been washed clean . . . in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. 6:9-11) It is important to understand the meaning of the terms used here. Even if someone had been a practitioner of some of these things in the past, he must cleanse himself fully from such practices in order to qualify himself for dedication and baptism, even as some Corinthians had to do. He will show the effects of his strong faith if he does so.

¹⁴ There is more to consider also. Prophetically speaking of his servants, Jehovah caused the prophet Isaiah to record these words in Isaiah 2:2-4: "And it must occur in the final part of the days that the mountain of the house of Jehovah

will become firmly established above the top of the mountains, and it will certainly be lifted up above the hills; and to it all the nations must stream. And many peoples will certainly go and say: 'Come, you people, and let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will instruct us about his ways, and we will walk in his paths.' For out of Zion law will go forth, and the word of Jehovah out of Jerusalem. And he will certainly render judgment among the nations and set matters straight respecting many peoples. And they will have to beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning shears. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, neither will they learn war any more." This indicates peaceful activities for men who would serve God. The exemplary course of Jesus again lets us know what to do.—Matt. 26:52.

¹⁵ Is one carrying on any practices of false worship? He must examine himself and cut off all connections with worship similar to that practiced in ancient Babylon and now under auspices of the world empire of false religion described in Bible language as Babylon the Great in Revelation 18:2. A man who will fulfill his obligations toward the living God Jehovah must give attention to the heavenly advice: "And I heard another voice out of heaven say: 'Get out of her, my people, if you do not want to share with her in her sins, and if you do not want to receive part of her plagues. For her sins have massed together clear up to heaven, and God has called her acts of injustice to mind.'" (Rev. 18:4, 5) If one belongs to or works for organizations or bodies of worshipers connected with Babylon the Great he would properly submit his resignation, remembering how Jesus himself

13. What high personal standards must be met before one can make a valid dedication to Jehovah?

14. What other requirement does the Bible indicate is necessary for one to qualify as a servant of God?

15. Why must a person cut off all connections with false worship?

was in no way a false worshiper at the time of his presenting himself to God and baptism. Only in so doing can a person give Jehovah his exclusive devotion.—Ex. 20:5.

¹⁶ The Bible record of Cornelius, an army officer, reveals a man changing from a past course of life and becoming a Christian minister. Acts 10:30-32 tells how his earnest prayers to Jehovah brought angelic response and how Peter was directed to the home. Baptism is rightly performed by dedicated men; so Peter was sent. Of special interest to one wishing to make his dedication to God is the act of faith known as prayer. When one makes his dedication he prays to Jehovah in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son, the Mediator between God and man. Are you one who, desiring to make a dedication to serve God, has prayed to Jehovah to tell him so? Have you examined yourself to see if you are Scripturally qualified or clean from objectionable worldly practices so you might properly make a dedication to Jehovah to serve Him? Dedication is a solemn decision made unconditionally and is an act of faith. Are you able to answer "Yes" to the two questions regularly propounded when individuals present themselves for Christian baptism?

(1) Have you recognized yourself before Jehovah God as a sinner who needs salvation, and have you acknowledged to him that this salvation proceeds from him, the Father, through his Son Jesus Christ?

(2) On the basis of this faith in God and in his provision for salvation, have you dedicated yourself unreservedly to God to do his will henceforth as he reveals it to you through Jesus Christ and through the Bible under the enlightening power of the holy spirit?

If so, then we say: "And now why are you delaying? Rise, get baptized and wash

your sins away by your calling upon his name."—Acts 22:16.

REMEMBER WHAT FOLLOWS DEDICATION

¹⁷ Faith and works must continue following dedication. Not only is the baptism done in the name of the Father, the Son and holy spirit, but thereafter one must faithfully show appreciation for his relationship to the Father, the Son and holy spirit. The dedication and baptism might be called a good beginning; they must be followed up by endurance in continually doing Jehovah's will. It is a spiritually refreshing work in association with Christ Jesus. (Matt. 11:28-30) Jesus is our special example of faith and endurance following presenting oneself to God, at whom we are to look *intently*: "So, then, because we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also put off every weight and the sin that easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, as we look intently at the Chief Agent and Perfecter of our faith, Jesus. For the joy that was set before him he endured a torture stake, despising shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Indeed, consider closely the one who has endured such contrary talk by sinners against their own interests, that you may not get tired and give out in your souls."—Heb. 12:1-3.

¹⁸ Baptism is a part of beginning the race or course that leads to life. It is a race in which endurance is a primary factor. For the present God's will is the preaching of good news of the Kingdom, and it is not yet completed. (Matt. 24:14) Christians are obligated to God on account of their dedication, and their happiness comes as they observe the faith. At the end of his ministry the baptized apostle Paul was able to say with confidence: "I

16. (a) How does the record about Cornelius aid us to know how a proper dedication is made? (b) What are some important questions one must consider before dedicating oneself to God?

17, 18. (a) Why may dedication and baptism be termed "a good beginning"? (b) What is the goal of those who undertake God's service in association with Christ?

have fought the fine fight, I have run the course to the finish, I have observed the faith." (2 Tim. 4:7) One of the things required is to keep on preaching and teaching until that part of God's work is concluded. Later on other blessed privileges will be given to the faithful creatures serving Jehovah.—Isa. 32:1.

¹⁹ Other matters also require our vigilance. Dedicated servants must maintain their position clean from Babylon the Great and the rest of Satan's system of things. Prior to God's great battle of Har-Magedon it is important that God's servants be found scattered all over the earth for the purpose of telling out the good news of the Kingdom. Thus they cannot avoid contact with people of the world, but they do not allow themselves to become entangled again. Giving close attention to the truth, God's Word, keeps them fortified and alert against uncleanness. They recall to mind what Jesus prayed for prior to his death, saying to his heavenly Father: "I request you, not to take them out of the world, but to watch over them because of the wicked one. They are no part of the world, just as I am no part of the world. Sanctify them by means of the truth; your word is truth."—John 17:15-17.

²⁰ The best way to keep a strong hold on the truth is by regular consideration of the truth in association with others of faith in a congregation. It becomes even more vital as we near the end of Satan's rule. Bible study meetings in the congregation are Jehovah's provision for building up his servants as each one makes open declaration of truths from the Bible. So it becomes a duty of man toward his God unwaveringly to maintain regular as-

sociation with the Christian congregation, "not forsaking the gathering of ourselves together as some have the custom, but encouraging one another, and all the more so as you behold the day drawing near." (Heb. 10:23-25) There can be no end to taking in truth; it must be a continuous action if we are to gain everlasting life. Jesus put it this way in his prayer to Jehovah God: "This means everlasting life, their taking in knowledge of you, the only true God, and of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ."—John 17:3.

²¹ Through accurate knowledge strong faith can be maintained. A little knowledge will start a Christian in the way, but we must not be satisfied with what is learned up to the time of baptism. Baptism is but one of the primary doctrines. What the apostle Paul describes as solid spiritual food is to be taken hold of and used. To serve God well we must desire to broaden out our knowledge of his purposes, to progress toward maturity with the help of God. This we can do if we keep using God's Word, and it will put us in position to be able to guide ourselves in a life pleasing to God as we are able to choose the right things and reject the wrong. "Solid food belongs to mature people, to those who through use have their perceptive powers trained to distinguish both right and wrong. For this reason, now that we have left the primary doctrine about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying a foundation again, namely, repentance from dead works, and faith toward God, the teaching on baptisms and the laying on of the hands, the resurrection of the dead and everlasting judgment. And this we will do, if God indeed permits." (Heb. 5:14-6:3) Those who walk humbly with their God press on

19. With the aid of God's Word of truth, what course must be maintained following dedication and baptism?

20. How and why do dedicated servants of Jehovah study the truth?

21. (a) How do we press on to maturity? (b) What kind of fruit do mature ones produce?

to maturity from year to year, and this will equip them to serve well now and in the centuries to come if they are faithful. This wise course of life has a definite effect upon each servant of God. The more developed he becomes as a dedicated servant of God the more he will be found living in accord with God's spirit. It should be the heart's desire of each of us to show the fruitage of the spirit, which is "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, mildness, self-control," and at the same time impaling "the flesh together with its passions and desires."—Gal. 5:22-24.

²² This brief consideration of God's requirements connected with dedication and baptism and the course to be taken thereafter helps us to appreciate what Jesus Christ meant when he commanded the discipling and teaching work among people of all the nations so they could observe all the commandments. (Matt. 28:19, 20) We are called upon to use the intelligence and free will God put into man when we take the vow of dedication. Once we have done as God wants us to do and made a dedication, Jehovah expects us to continue serving him for as long as we may live, and that may be forever. (Eccl. 5:4) This takes faith. But we should have faith that Jehovah will help us to meet our obligations; the faithful apostles did so and were blessed with success. Turning to modern times, last year alone 64,393 individuals symbolized their dedication to God through water immersion, and Jehovah is helping them. Persons dedicated to God have the whole association of brothers to help and encourage them also. For Christians, baptism is a joyous step toward everlasting worship of Jehovah God.

22. How do dedication and baptism test our faith?



"Get something ready for me to have my evening meal."

DOING WHAT WE OUGHT TO DO

²³ Did you ever stop to think that man really owes God all these things? Is it reasonable for God to expect all this of mankind? Let us not forget where man got life; without it nothing can be enjoyed. But if we serve Jehovah we must not become boastful. Jesus used this illustration to make an important point for us: "Who of you is there that has a slave plowing or minding the flock who will say to him when he gets in from the field, 'Come here at once and recline at the table'? Rather, will he not say to him, 'Get something ready for me to have my evening meal, and put on an apron and minister to me until I am through eating and drinking, and afterward you can eat and drink'? He will not feel gratitude to the slave because he did the things assigned, will he? So you, also, when you have done all the things assigned to you, say, 'We are good-for-nothing slaves. What we have done is what we ought to have done.'"—Luke 17:7-10.

²⁴ The point is, when we serve God it is only what we ought to be doing. It is right. Jehovah God knows what is good for man. We are in the right position when serving Him. Multitudes of people in Noah's day took the opposite course and died disastrously. Ancient Israel went astray and it

23, 24. (a) What is it that every man ought to do?
(b) Is Jehovah indifferent toward man and the earth?

brought them only trouble. Jehovah God is not indifferent toward mankind or what is going on here upon the earth. Israel thought so: "For they are saying, 'Jehovah is not seeing us. Jehovah has left the land.'" (Ezek. 8:12) "Jehovah will not do good, and he will not do bad." (Zeph. 1:12) But men who feel that way are wrong. Jehovah is aware of all the violence, wickedness and evil, as well as the indifference and reproaches against His name, and he will take action against all wrongdoers.—Rev. 11:17, 18.

²⁵ Jehovah did not create man to be a violent destroyer of people or the earth itself. Above all, man is supposed to keep two great commandments. "'You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole mind.' This is the greatest and first commandment. The second, like it, is this, 'You must love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments the whole Law hangs, and the Prophets." (Matt. 22:37-40) Jehovah's way is the way of love. "Do not you people be owing anybody a single thing, except to love one another; for he that loves his fellow man has fulfilled the law. For the law code, 'You must not commit adultery, You must not murder, You must not steal, You must not covet,' and whatever other command-

25. What does God want us to do in proving our faith?

ment there is, is summed up in this word, namely, 'You must love your neighbor as yourself.' Love does not work evil to one's neighbor; therefore love is the law's fulfillment." (Rom. 13:8-10) The expression of love for God and neighbor is a positive action. Should any man become indifferent or careless, failing to endure in it whole-souled, he must expect rejection as unfit to serve God. (Rev. 3:16) While we keep the second of the great commandments by showing love for our brothers, our neighbors, we must always remember what comes first, and that is to keep on loving our Creator, Jehovah God. That is the proof of our faith, that it is real and is acceptable to God.

²⁶ If we are contemplating dedication and baptism, we now have a fine opportunity to examine our position and take steps that will lead us into harmony with Jehovah God. Or if we have already made a dedication, it is a good time to determine whether we are living up to our obligations and pressing on toward Christian maturity. Yes, after consideration of this subject dealing with the relationship of man to his Creator each one should know what he owes God. "The conclusion of the matter, everything having been heard, is: Fear the true God and keep his commandments. For this is the whole obligation of man."—Eccl. 12:13.

26. What is the obligation of man?

Things to Be Done by Sundown

While sunset marked the close of the daylight period among the Israelites, it marked the start of the new calendar day, which officially began at sunset, being counted from evening to evening. (Lev. 23:32) Because the day ended at sunset, the Mosaic Law required certain things to be done by sundown. A garment taken in pledge had to be returned to its owner "at the setting of the sun." (Ex. 22:26, 27) Also, wages had to be paid to hired laborers (Deut. 24:15); and a person who had been ceremonially unclean must bathe himself, and, following sunset, be considered clean again. (Deut. 23:11) The sunset's closing of one day and initiating a new one give added meaning to the apostle's exhortation not to let "the sun . . . set with you in a provoked state."—Eph. 4:26.

IN THESE times of stress and rising tensions there are a good many things that irritate. The news you get from newspapers and radio is unsettling and, added to your many problems of daily life, sometimes makes you "on edge." Then, perhaps, when one of Jehovah's witnesses knocks on your door and takes a little time to give you a personal message telling you that God is angry with the world and that you may be personally affected by it, you may be annoyed. You may wonder where he gets the temerity to say such a thing to you, as if he could tell you, who are equally intelligent, something about guiding your life.

Now, you read the newspapers about the many injustices in this world, the rising crime rate, the danger of being out on the streets after dusk, the threat of nuclear war, the moral breakdown and corruption in high government circles and all the other disturbing things, but you do not become angry at the newspaper for reporting these facts to you. The news is not something of the news channel's making. You are appreciative that the newspaper keeps you informed. It may enable you to act wisely to avoid trouble. But as to some of the things that take place in the news, you may be alarmed and indignant; then, again, you are glad when you read of instances where right wins out and where justice triumphs.

Are You **IRRITATED** by the *Message of Jehovah's Witnesses?*



Why, then, take a different view of the news brought by Jehovah's witnesses? They are really only reporting to you news that they have heard. It is true that the message they bring is different from that reported by the newspaper, but nonetheless it is news. It is good that it is different, for it is news from the highest source. It is information that explains the news that we read in the papers every day. It gives the meaning of it, the causes, as well as counsel from a higher source that shows you what to do. It

dwells much more on good things and prospects than on the bad news you generally hear. Jehovah's witnesses, therefore, are really only reporting news that they themselves have proved is from a true source, is the truth and is a safe guide. They call on you in love, feeling that you are a person who wants to see good things in harmony with the good news they bring and one who wants to see justice done in connection with the things you would like to correct but cannot. As to their saying that God is angry at the world, it may naturally be a little irritating to hear, but if he is truly angry it would be good to know why they make such a statement and why God is angry. Would you be fair enough to look into only four verses of the Bible to see? Then have a brief glance with us at a field of

information that no source other than the Bible can give.

A GLIMPSE OF A HEAVENLY SCENE

The apostle John is the original reporter of the news we will consider, as it was first given to him and he was told that it applied in the last days. He was shown that God would not forever be angry with the world but would get his anger expressed and over with and bring it to a finish. (Rev. 15:1) The glimpse that we want to take consists of the four verses of Revelation 15:5-8, and it helps us get the answers to the above questions:

"And after these things I saw, and the sanctuary of the tent of the witness was opened in heaven, and the seven angels with the seven plagues emerged from the sanctuary, clothed with clean, bright linen and girded about their breasts with golden girdles. And one of the four living creatures gave the seven angels seven golden bowls that were full of the anger of God, who lives forever and ever. And the sanctuary became filled with smoke because of the glory of God and because of his power, and no one was able to enter into the sanctuary until the seven plagues of the seven angels were finished."

It is important to get this glimpse into the heavenly realm, for heaven is a realm more powerful than the earth, and we can profit much from a view of what God and the holy angels think and are doing about things on the earth. Let us, then, analyze what is said here very carefully and see what news God has for us. Let us also see whether we may be involved or not and whether there is anything we can do about it or not.

John looked into the sanctuary of the tent of the witness opened up in heaven. A sanctuary is a holy place; it is a place where God dwells actually or representatively by spirit. In the days of Israel the

tent of worship or tabernacle in the wilderness was called a sanctuary. It had a compartment called the Most Holy, in which was the sacred ark of the covenant representing the presence of Jehovah himself. The high priest used to go into the Most Holy, as if into heaven itself, to sprinkle the blood of animals before the ark in the Most Holy on the Day of Atonement. What this meant was fulfilled after Jesus Christ's resurrection when he as the real, permanent High Priest for all mankind appeared before God in heaven to present the value of his human sacrifice.

We now see seven angels admitted into this sanctuary, into the temple of God's presence. As they emerge it is observed that they are clothed with clean, white linen. Linen symbolizes cleanness and righteousness. (Rev. 19:8) This is in keeping with the fact that they are granted admittance into the presence of God, who is holy and clean in the superlative degree. (Isa. 6:1-4; Rev. 1:12-17) The angels are girded about their breasts with girdles. Wearing girdles marks them as servants of God. The Scriptures use that symbolism. Jesus spoke of rendering a service to his followers at his return, and said that then he would gird himself. (Luke 12:37) Jesus girded himself with a towel, acting as servant to his apostles when he washed their feet. (John 13:4, 5) The high priest as well as the underpriests and Levites who served God in the tent of meeting in Israel wore sashes or girdles.—Lev. 8:7, 13; 1 Sam. 2:18.

The girdles seen on these seven angelic servants are of gold. Gold was used in Israel's tent of meeting to represent heavenly, divine things. (Ex. 25:10, 11, 17, 23, 24, 29, 31) So the angels represented by the "seven angels" are charged with a most precious, divine service. Consequently, the service these angels render is bound to be clean, righteous, in harmony with God's will. We can be sure they will get

the plagues completely poured out according to the divine will.

PLAGUES IN FULL HARMONY WITH JUSTICE

If you are interested in seeing wrong matters set straight you will enjoy the action that now takes place: "*One of the four living creatures gave the seven angels seven golden bowls that were full of the anger of God, who lives forever and ever.*" Of what are the four living creatures symbolic? and which one gave the angels the bowls? Revelation 4:6, 7 describes the four living creatures as being in the midst of the throne and around the throne of God. These symbolize an organization of God's creatures having the four prominent qualities or attributes that are found first in the Creator himself and that he put in creatures whom he made in his image and likeness. The Bible describes four principal qualities or attributes of God—justice, power, love and wisdom. These are live or living qualities embodied in God himself in perfect balance and harmony. They are likewise embodied in all his godlike creatures.

The understanding of what these living creatures represent is found in the Bible itself. The four creatures are respectively (1) like a lion, (2) like a young bull, (3) possessed with a face like a man and (4) like an eagle. The lion symbolizes justice. (1 Ki. 10:18-20; 2 Chron. 9:17-19) The young bull is used as a picture of strength or power. (Prov. 14:4) Man was made in God's image, and of man's Maker the Bible says: "God is love." (1 John 4:16) So the one with the face like a man would represent the attribute of love. The eagle represents or symbolizes heavenly wisdom.—Job 39:27-29.

The service the angels are to perform has to do with pouring out the anger of God in vindication of him and to prove his righteousness. It follows, therefore, that

it is the *first* living creature who hands the bowls to the angels. The pouring out of the plagues is done by the angels at the command of Jehovah's Crowned King, "the Lion that is of the tribe of Judah," the Root of David. (Rev. 5:5) It is good to know that the anger of God thus expressed will be under the control of perfect justice. We can be confident that none of the plagues works any injustice whatsoever.

GOD PERSONALLY CONCERNED WITH THE MESSAGE

A compelling reason for you to hear the news of this angelic activity is emphasized by the awesome thing that next occurs: "*The sanctuary became filled with smoke because of the glory of God and because of his power.*" The smoke betokens God's presence in the sanctuary. It is like the glorious event that took place at the inauguration of the temple built by Solomon. So overwhelming is the demonstration of God's glory that "*no one was able to enter into the sanctuary.*" This too is similar to the inauguration of Solomon's temple, for when the cloud filled the house of Jehovah, "the priests were not able to stand to minister because of the cloud; for the glory of Jehovah filled the house of the true God." (2 Chron. 5:13, 14) This assures us that Jehovah is there in his judicial presence in power and glory at his heavenly temple backing up the pouring out of his anger upon the world.

How concerned is the Creator with the matter? "*No one was able to enter into the sanctuary until the seven plagues of the seven angels were finished.*" This indicates that Jehovah is determined to remain in his sanctuary to see to it personally that the seven last plagues are poured out in completion. Report has to be made to him at the sanctuary that all the bowls have been obediently poured out. Then should you, one of God's creatures, not

give most earnest attention to learn what is reported?

Pouring out each one of the seven golden bowls filled with the anger of God symbolizes a revealing of information from God, a judicial decision rendered by him regarding men who are on judgment before him and who are awaiting the execution of his judgment. As we look later into the sixteenth chapter of Revelation we will see that the bowls are *now* being emptied out. We will see that it is really the *angels* who are pouring out the bowls and who are revealing the situation and enforcing the judgments expressed in connection with the plagues. True, there are human agents used in connection with the plagues, that is, in telling the people what the plagues mean—only that. But they have nothing to do with bringing about the conditions described, in executing God's anger upon those who are affected.

If you really hear the news God is having proclaimed about the plagues and see what each plague means you will readily understand why there is such anger on the part of God. When you see what the plagues accomplish you will know that it is for the good of those who really want to see justice done on the earth. It is true that they plague wicked men under the control of Satan who themselves have brought many plaguing things and distresses on this earth, and the situation is growing worse. If a person is irritated at hearing the news about the plagues that God tells us about in his Word, then he should examine himself to see whether he is in harmony with the things against which God has anger or not. It may be that he is wrong in his viewpoint. It may be he loves this world and its wicked ways. But we do not want to be found disagreeing with God our Creator in opinion, do we? If the state of affairs among men calls for a show of God's anger, there is some-

thing radically wrong; and if God is plaguing human society, then there is something wrong with this system of things and its practices.

-38 AVOID BEING HURT BY THE PLAGUES

God has given men ample opportunity to try to remedy the world situation, but they have failed. They have made it worse. Now he is expressing his attitude, bringing his anger to a finish so he can bring justice to those of mankind who really want to see the right things done. Jehovah's witnesses are glad to know this, to have this news, and as reporters of the news they must go to the people to help them know God's attitude and enable them to take the position that will protect them from the plagues. That is the very reason why God is having the work done. It is part of the declaration of this good news of the Kingdom in all the inhabited earth for the purpose of a witness, which includes the declaration of the day of vengeance of our God and the comforting of those who are mourning because of the detestable things they see going on in the earth. If Jehovah's witnesses did not do it, then the very stones would cry out, according to God's Word. (Luke 19:40) If it is that important, certainly rather than being irritated we should hear. Then we can make a decision as to what we think our position should be. It is no light matter.

Jehovah's witnesses are very serious about their commission and that is why they do the work even though some become irritated at it. They are not trying to irritate anyone but they do not soften down what God says, for it would be an unclear news report, censored or "slanted," as is the case with many reports we get through the secular news agencies and would be wrong and misleading. Jehovah's witnesses know the importance of

God's warning and they want people to hear the truth. There is no need for anyone to let himself be hurt by the plagues. He can act on God's warning. Jehovah's witnesses are ready to help honest per-

sons who want true, reliable news. Their preaching is not out of malice or fault-finding nor to get notoriety, but they love their neighbors. Hence, their diligence in calling personally on you.

Barak

JUDGE and DELIVERER OF ISRAEL

WHOMO was Judge Barak? When did he live, and by what means did he deliver his people Israel? Judge Barak was Israel's fourth judge and human deliverer after Joshua. He was a fearless fighter who led Israel to victory over tremendous odds, delivering Israel from the oppressive hand of King Jabin of Canaan, but his record is presented with true candor.

It is fitting that we consider what the Bible has to say about Judge Barak, for he is held out to us as a man of faith. Yes, he was one "who through faith defeated kingdoms in conflict, . . . became valiant in war, routed the armies of foreigners." However, a check of books dealing with Bible characters and personalities reveals that the writers of Christendom have generally ignored him, focusing their attention on the woman prophetess of his time, Deborah. This trend is even seen in the matter of naming children: one frequently hears of a daughter's being

named Deborah but rarely of a son called Barak.—Heb. 11:32-34.

Even as Moses had warned in his farewell speech, after his death—more particularly after the death of Joshua and the older men of his time—his people fell away to the worship of false gods, and that time and time again. (Deut. 31:29; Judg. 2:17-19) It was at such a time when Israel had again apostatized from the pure worship of Jehovah, when "they proceeded to choose new gods," that Jehovah permitted his people to suffer oppression under Jabin, the king of Canaan, and that for twenty years. This situation was so bad that the highways were deserted, the "pathways had no traffic," and the Israelite "travelers of roadways would travel by roundabout pathways."—Judg. 5:6, 8; 4:1, 2.*

Militarily, the situation seemed hopeless. On the side of their oppressor, King Jabin, there was a large army under General Sisera with a "panzer division," as it were, of 900 chariots with iron scythes that could literally mow down foot soldiers. On the side of the Israelites, why, there was not even one lance or spear and one shield among 40,000. The contrast could hardly have been greater.—Judg. 5:8.

Even as is often the case, adversity caused the Israelites to come to their spiritual senses, and so we read of their repenting and crying to Jehovah for help. Being ever merciful, Jehovah heard and answered their pleas for help. The two

* The historical record is twofold, in prose in chapter 4 and in poetry in chapter 5; the two complementing each other.

human instruments he primarily used to bring this about were the prophetess Deborah, who was judging Israel at the time, and Barak, the son of Abinoam.—Judg. 4:3-6.

THE PROPHETESS CALLS BARAK

When Jehovah's time came to answer the prayers of the repentant Israelites, he inspired Deborah to send word to Barak, both of whom were situated in the northern part of the land of Israel: "Has not Jehovah the God of Israel given the command? 'Go and you must spread yourself out on Mount Tabor, and you must take with you ten thousand men out of the sons of Naphtali and out of the sons of Zebulun. And I shall certainly draw to you at the torrent valley of Kishon Sisera the chief of Jabin's army and his war chariots and his crowd, and I shall indeed give him into your hand.' "—Judg. 4:6, 7.

Note how tactfully the prophetess Deborah presented matters to Barak. She did not put it as a command coming from her, a woman, but in the form of a question, as if merely reminding him of what God had commanded. Though judge and prophetess, Deborah kept her place, setting a fine example for all Christian women.

It may be that Barak had some doubts about being able to recruit 10,000 men for this undertaking; Deborah's being well known would help. Be that as it may, it does seem that he felt that he just had to have the presence of God's prophetess or mouthpiece, and so he replied to the prophetess Deborah: "If you will go with me, I also shall certainly go; but if you will not go with me, I shall not go." To this Deborah, evidently a little disappointed, replied: "Without fail I shall go with you. Just the same, the beautifying thing will not become yours on the way that you are going, for it will be into the hand of

a woman that Jehovah will sell Sisera." —Judg. 4:8, 9.

Appreciating the magnitude of the task ahead of him, Barak wanted God's representative, even though that one happened to be a woman, to go with him. He may also have reasoned that Deborah's presence would strengthen the morale of his men. However, it was an undue leaning on the arm of flesh. A slight flaw it was, but let us remember that, had he been a weakling, would the prophet Samuel have made a reference to Israel's deliverance from "Sisera the chief of the army of Hazor" by Barak? Would he have been held up to us as an example of faith by the writer of the book of Hebrews? Hardly!—1 Sam. 12:9-11, 1955 ed. ftn.; Heb. 11:32-34.

With the prophetess Deborah at his side Barak began to call for volunteers, and, it seems, not just from Zebulun and Naphtali, but from most of the other tribes as well. This is what Deborah's victory song seems to indicate, for those of Ephraim, Benjamin, Manasseh (Machir) and Issachar are also mentioned with approval for having shared in the fighting, while other tribes, such as Reuben, Dan and Asher, are censured for not having "come to the assistance of Jehovah." It took courage to follow Barak and Deborah, and fittingly Deborah later sang of such: "My heart is for the commanders of Israel, who were volunteers among the people. Bless Jehovah."—Judg. 5:9-18, 23.

When it was "reported to Sisera that Barak the son of Abinoam had gone up to Mount Tabor," then, even as Jehovah had stated, "Sisera called together all his war chariots, the nine hundred war chariots with iron scythes, and all the people that were with him, out of Harosheth of the nations to the torrent valley of Kishon," the general territory being known as the plain of Esdraelon and being near also to Megiddo.—Judg. 4:12, 13.

In the rainy season the Kishon becomes a veritable torrent, overflowing its banks, but it is often dry in the summertime. It was along this dry riverbed that Captain Sisera and his army marched against Barak and his men on Mount Tabor. How confident Sisera must have felt with his superior forces and equipment, no doubt much like Hitler's panzer divisions felt as they overran Poland and the Low Countries!

THE BATTLE

Barak and his forces, however, were not to wait until Sisera and his men attacked them. As these approached, Jehovah, by Deborah, gave the command to Barak: "Get up, for this is the day that Jehovah will certainly give Sisera into your hand. Is it not Jehovah that has gone out before you?" So "Barak went descending from Mount Tabor with ten thousand men behind him." This was indeed a test of faith, for an army with little more than homemade weapons to proceed against a fully armored enemy.—Judg. 4: 14.

But before Barak and his men could establish contact with the enemy, Jehovah himself had already weighted the battle in their favor. How so? By means of a sudden thunderstorm and cloudburst that changed the dry riverbed of Kishon to a raging torrent that overflowed its banks,

wholly immobilizing Sisera's nine hundred chariots with their iron scythes. As Deborah recounts it in her victory song: "From heaven did the stars fight, from their orbits they fought against Sisera. The torrent of Kishon washed them away, the torrent of ancient days, the torrent of Kishon. You went treading down strength, O my soul. It was then that the hoofs of horses pawed because of dashings upon dashings of his stallions."—Judg. 5:20-22.

What a turn of events! What dismay must have struck the hearts of Sisera and his men! Not that there was no fighting to do. Not at all. It was still a case of

Barak and his men facing a fully armored foe with only homemade weapons, and this took courage: "Zebulun was a people that scorned their souls to the point of death; Naphtali also, on the heights of the field." What was the outcome of the battle? "Jehovah

began to throw Sisera and all his war chariots and all the camp into confusion by the edge of the sword before Barak. . . . And Barak chased after the war chariots and the camp as far as Harosheth of the nations, so that all the camp of Sisera fell by the edge of the sword." None remained, except General Sisera who got down off the chariot and "fled on foot to the tent of Jael the wife of Heber the Kenite, for there was peace between Jabin the king of Hazor and the



household of Heber the Kenite." The rout was complete!—Judg. 5:18; 4:15-17. What a reversal for proud General Sisera! Instead of returning in triumph at the head of his nine hundred chariots, here he was on foot, soaked and smeared with mud. Exhausted and looking for a place to hide, he was only too glad to have Jael welcome him, as well as to accept her hospitality of curdled milk. Feeling secure because of Heber's peace with his king, Jabin, Sisera asked Jael to deny his presence and then went sound asleep.—Judg. 4:18-20.

But Jael had other ideas. True, her husband had found it expedient to enter into a covenant of peace with King Jabin, but her sympathies were with the Israelites. Why, had not Moses taken a wife from them? Were not these Israelites being oppressed by King Jabin? Now was the time to show where she stood, and so she made use of what might well be termed war strategy. She led her foe into a sense of security so that she could execute him, which she did by driving a tent pin through his temples. When Barak came along looking for General Sisera, she showed him the man he was looking for, but dead. True to Deborah's words, Jehovah did sell proud Sisera into the hand of a woman.—Judg. 4:9, 21, 22.

This may have aroused in Barak a certain admiration for Jael, for thereby did she not show just where her sympathies lay in the struggle between the Canaanites and the Israelites? What about her resourcefulness in finding the means with which to kill General Sisera? Barak's own men were largely dependent upon homemade weapons, and Jael showed how effective these could be! Yes, for, after all,

with Barak the main thing was victory for Jehovah's forces over the pagan Canaanites. He proved this by pressing the war to its limit, as we read: "The hand of the sons of Israel went on getting harder and harder against Jabin the king of Canaan, until they had cut off Jabin the king of Canaan. And the land had no further disturbance for forty years."—Judg. 4:23, 24; 5:31.

COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- The Christians' Possession of Peace.
- Maintaining Our Possession of Peace.
- Image Worship Brings Incurable Disease.
- Make Wise Use of Your Time.

"FOR OUR INSTRUCTION"

At Romans 15:4 we are told that "all

the things that were written aforetime were written for our instruction." This would, therefore, include the account of Israel's victory under Captain Barak. Fittingly, he is called to our attention as an example of faith, for he, together with those with him, was willing to risk his life in Jehovah's cause, and Jehovah gave him the victory against tremendous odds. Christians are likened to soldiers and might also be said to be facing tremendous odds, Satan and his demons, and all their visible agents and those under their control. But with strong faith Christians can overcome the world and successfully resist the Devil.—John 16:33; Eph. 6:12; 2 Tim. 2:3; Jas. 4:7; 1 John 5:4.

There is more to this inspired account; it is also of prophetic import. How can we be certain of this? Because the discomfiture and defeat of Sisera and his forces took place on the plains of Megiddo, the first of the battles to make that place famous and which battles have served as symbols of the battle of the great day of God the Almighty, Armageddon. (Rev. 16: 14, 16) This is further borne out by the prophetic prayer of the psalmist: "Do to them as to . . . Sisera, as to Jabin at the torrent valley of Kishon. They were anni-

hilated at Endor; they became manure for the ground.”—Ps. 83:9, 10, 18; Jer. 25:33.

Since the one successfully fighting the battle at Armageddon for Jehovah and his name will be Jesus Christ, together with his heavenly hosts, it follows that Barak pictures Jesus Christ. (Rev. 2:27; 19:11-21) King Jabin of Canaan, chief oppressor of Israel, would well picture Satan the Devil, the chief oppressor of God's people, while his agents on earth that do his bidding would well be pictured by General Sisera. What about Jael? Whom does she picture?

Not being of the nation of Israel, she

“Abba, Father”

The Gospel writer Mark records that Jesus Christ used the term “Abba” when praying to Jehovah God in Gethsemane shortly before his death, saying: “Abba, Father, all things are possible to you; remove this cup from me. Yet not what I want, but what you want.” (Mark 14:36) Here is the fervent appeal of a son to a beloved Father, followed quickly by an assurance that, in any event, he would remain obedient. The word *abba* in Aramaic means “father” and corresponds to the Hebrew *ab* (father) but is the emphatic form of *Ab*. It was the intimate name used by children for their fathers and combines some of the intimacy of the English word “papa” while retaining the dignity of the word “father,” being both informal and yet respectful. It was therefore a more endearing form of address than a title and was among the first words a child learned to speak. Two other occurrences of the use of the word are in the apostle Paul’s letters, at Romans 8:15 and Galatians 4:6. In both places the word is used in connection with Christians called to be spirit-begotten sons of God and indicates the intimacy of their relationship with their Father. While they are “slaves to God,” yet they are also sons in the house of a loving Father, and they are made positively aware of this status by holy spirit through their Lord Jesus.—Rom. 6:22; 8:15; Gal. 4:6.

would picture someone else than the spiritual Israelites. Logically she would picture the “great crowd” that the apostle John saw after he had seen the 144,000 of spiritual Israel, and which crowd came out of all nations, peoples and languages. These share in praising Jehovah God and show their loyalty to the greater Barak, Jesus Christ, and to spiritual Israel by treating Satan’s agents as dead.—Rev. 7:9-17.*

Truly, what was written aforetime does serve to strengthen our faith, encouraging us and throwing light on our pathway! —Ps. 119:105.

* See You May Survive Armageddon into God’s New World, pages 284-287.

A Portent

In the Holy Scriptures, at 2 Kings 20:8-11 and Isaiah 38:4-8, there is related the account of the portent God gave sick King Hezekiah in answer to Isaiah’s prayer. It consisted of causing a shadow that had gradually fallen to reverse its direction and to go back up ten steps. Some say this refers to the steps or degrees of a dial for measuring time, and it is not impossible that Hezekiah’s father had obtained such a sundial from Babylon, since the use of sundials extends back beyond the eighth century B.C.E. in both Babylon and Egypt. However, the Jewish historian Josephus in discussing the account speaks of these steps of Ahaz as being “in his house,” apparently indicating that they formed part of a stairway. There may have been a column placed alongside the stairs to receive the sun’s rays and cause a shadow to extend gradually along the steps and serve as a measurement of time. The miracle performed evidently had far-reaching effects, inasmuch as 2 Chronicles 32:24, 31 shows that messengers were sent from Babylon to Jerusalem to inquire “about the portent that had happened in the land.” That portent was a guarantee to Hezekiah that he would revive from his sickness and that Jehovah would add fifteen years to his life, also that Jerusalem would be delivered out of the hand of the king of Assyria. It came to pass as it had been foretold.

Becoming Mature Ministers in Order to Aid Others

EVEN as a little boy looks forward to growing up and becoming like his father, so each one starting out as a Christian should look forward to becoming spiritually mature. Why? Because maturity has so much to recommend itself. Then instead of wanting to lean on others, one will be able to realize the greater happiness that comes from aiding others to attain to maturity.—Acts 20:35.

As a mature minister of Jehovah, Jesus set the example in aiding others, and in particular did he instruct the apostle Peter to do the same. (John 21:15-17) One of the ways Peter did this was by counseling others, as when he wrote: "If anyone speaks, let him speak as it were the sacred pronouncements of God; if anyone ministers, let him minister as dependent on the strength that God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ."—1 Pet. 4:11.*

It takes spiritual maturity to demonstrate such reliance on God, and to attain spiritual maturity takes time. Its growth, however, is not wholly limited by time as is a child's growing to manhood; for no matter how hard a child may work or how much he may eat he cannot speed up the growing process. But spiritual growth to maturity can be slow or comparatively rapid, and so we find that some in a few months do make the progress it takes others many months to make. Two of the biggest factors in the rate of spiritual growth are the degree of one's appreciation of spiritual things and the completeness of one's devotion to Jehovah God.—Mark 12:30; Heb. 5:12-14.

All important in this regard is regularly partaking of the right kind of spiritual food, which can be obtained by a study of God's Word together with aids that help you to understand it. Essential also is your gathering together with other Christians where your knowledge, faith and love can be built up and where you can be incited to good works by the public declarations of others. (Heb. 10:23-25) Important also is prayer. "Persevere in prayer." (Rom. 12:12) Then when faced with temptations, such as to indulge in loose conduct, you will be able to resist them by thinking of such Scriptural counsel as: "Flee from fornication."—1 Cor. 6:18.

* For details see *The Watchtower*, May 1, 1965.

Even as a child needs to exercise if he would grow up healthy and strong, so the Christian needs the exercise of preaching to others if he would become spiritually healthy, strong and mature. A great help in this connection is the Theocratic Ministry School of Jehovah's witnesses. In each congregation there are also other opportunities from time to time, particularly for the males, to take part in the programs; such assignments should be eagerly accepted, diligently prepared and enthusiastically fulfilled, all of which will further aid in growing to maturity.—Heb. 6:1-3.

As you gain maturity and see your privilege of aiding others, bear in mind the importance of love and patience. You must be gentle with those whom you would aid, even as the apostle Paul was with the Thessalonians, 'as a nursing mother' with her babe. Consideration must also be shown to grievous personal problems; and, while you cannot tell another what to do in regard to these, you can show the Scriptural principles involved so that the other person can see his problems in a clear light and is able to make wise decisions in dealing with them.—1 Thess. 2:7; Gal. 6:5.

Even though conducting a Bible study in the home is an ideal way to aid another, do not let it go at that. Keep stressing the importance of taking in Bible knowledge through personal study also; keep building up appreciation for Jehovah's name and kingdom and make very clear the difference between Satan's organization with its Babylon the Great and Jehovah's organization.—Rev. 18:4.

As such a one makes progress you can encourage him to accompany you in making calls on still others; but do not push him into the ministry. By Scriptural examples and field experiences, your own or those found in the *Yearbook*, whet his appetite for the field ministry. Then gradually encourage him to share in the house-to-house ministry. As he makes progress be sure to give him encouragement, exercising care to limit constructive counsel generally to but one weakness at a time.—Acts 20:20.

Yes, particularly during the month of August let each Christian witness of Jehovah strive for maturity so that he can aid others, that these, in turn, can aid still others.—2 Tim. 2:2.

AID TO THE MENTALLY ILL

The truth from God's Word has great power. The psalmist realized this and entreated God, "Send out your light and your truth. May these themselves lead me." (Ps. 43:3) Many times the light and truth from the Bible has brought direction and purpose to the minds of distressed individuals, even those suffering from mental illnesses. An experience received from Michigan well exemplifies this:

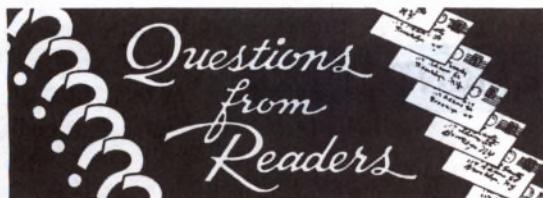
A woman had been a mental patient for over ten years. During that time she received regular psychiatric treatment, was given shock treatments and attended a school for the recovery of the mentally ill for a period of a year. Additionally, she took some \$5,000 worth of medication for her condition. In spite of all the costly treatment and medication, on a number of occasions she contemplated suicide.

However, one day her husband, who had some association with Jehovah's witnesses, asked her, "Whom are you praying to?" "To God," was the reply. Then he encouraged her to use God's name Jehovah in her prayer. That made her stop and think. In time one of Jehovah's witnesses began conducting a weekly Bible study in the home. On his invitation to the study, the woman accepted.

tation the couple attended a convention of Jehovah's witnesses. The woman writes, "I knew that this was what I had been searching for all my life."

She continues: "After returning home from the assembly I began attending congregation meetings regularly. I was then able to discontinue all medication. Also, up until that time I had been a heavy smoker, but I was able to break that habit. About that time I called my psychiatrist, and he wanted to know how I was progressing. I told him that I was feeling better than I had felt in all of my life. He asked if I was still on my medication. When I told him that I had quit, he inquired as to how I was able to do that so suddenly. My reply was that I was now associating with Jehovah's witnesses. He responded by saying that he wished that all the mentally ill could find a cure like that."

Since that time both she and her husband have received training in the congregation Theocratic Ministry School and they are serving as ministers of the good news of God's kingdom. Truly, it is the course of wisdom to look to Jehovah and his Word for light and truth.



- Proverbs 11:29 states that one bringing ostracism upon his house "will take possession of wind" and that "a foolish person will be a servant to the one wise in heart." What is meant by these statements?—I. M., U.S.A.

The words of Proverbs 11:29 were originally directed to Israel. This text warns against foolish action that results in bad consequences, in stating: "As for anyone bringing ostracism upon his own house, he will take possession of wind; and a foolish person will be a servant to the one wise in heart."

A figure of speech is being employed in saying that "anyone bringing ostracism upon his own house . . . will take possession of wind." Of course, it is not meant that a person can literally take the wind in his hands or gain possession of it in that manner. The apparent reference is to trying to acquire something lacking any real substance, something he cannot hold on to. In the book of Ecclesiastes there is frequent use of the expression "striving after wind." For instance, Ecclesiastes 1:14 reads: "I saw all the works that were done under the sun, and, look! everything was vanity and a striving after wind." In other words, vain works end up in futility. So, Proverbs 11:29 makes it clear that a man who brings ostracism upon his house will not fare well. He will gain nothing of value. It will be as though he were taking possession of the wind.

But, how does one bring ostracism upon his own house? Consider the case of Achan. When

the Israelites overthrew Jericho, everything of value in the city was to be devoted to Jehovah, to whom Jericho was the firstfruits of Canaan. But greedy Achan robbed God by appropriating to himself a good-looking garment from the land of Shinar, two hundred shekels of silver and a gold bar. Later, Israel suffered defeat at Ai. This prompted an investigation into the reason for such a setback. Eventually, Achan's wrongdoing was uncovered and he confessed. Thereupon Joshua and all Israel took Achan, his sons and daughters, the stolen articles and "everything that was his" to the low plain of Achor. Then Joshua said to Achan: "Why have you brought ostracism upon us? Jehovah will bring ostracism upon you on this day." "With that," the account relates, "all Israel went pelting him with stones, after which they burned them with fire. Thus they stoned them with stones." Certainly Achan brought ostracism upon himself and his own house.—Joshua, chapter 7.

In ancient Israel, household heads who failed to comply with Jehovah's righteous requirements and commands could bring ostracism upon their own houses. At times the consequences would be as serious as those that befell Achan and his household. But today a man who is the head of a Christian household may become unfaithful too. He and others in his family may get involved in practices that

result in disfellowshipping from the clean Christian congregation. (1 Cor. 6:9, 10) Truly, such a man who personally violates the Scriptures and winks at serious wrongdoing within his family brings ostracism upon his own house. He, and possibly others in his family, are justly ostracized by faithful Christians, being excluded from their association because of being unrepentant wrongdoers.—1 Cor. 5: 11-13.

Proverbs 11:29 also says: "A foolish person will be a servant to the one wise in heart." That frequently proves true. For one thing, a foolish person cannot be trusted with great responsibility. Often such an individual does become a servant to a person using better judgment than he does. Mismanagement of personal affairs may cause him to become obligated to another in some way. Due to the fact that he lacks practical wisdom, such an unwise one may well become "a servant to the one wise in heart."

The words of Proverbs 11:29 should therefore impress true Christians with the need to use good judgment, acting with practical wisdom in all their dealings. This proverb should also make them aware of the importance of avoiding wrong conduct that would bring upon them ostracism by faithful Christians and especially by Jehovah God.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FIELD MINISTRY

Jehovah's witnesses regularly attend meetings that are designed to train them to become mature ministers, able to aid others to understand the Bible. During August they will continue to share in that service, offering persons everywhere personal home Bible instruction free of charge. As an aid in such home study they will be glad to provide interested persons with the fine 416-page textbook "*Things in Which It Is Impossible for God to Lie*," and a Scriptural booklet, for 50c.

Aug 21: What Do We Owe God? 11-13, and Baptism Shows Faith, 11-6. Page 456. Songs to Be Used: 112, 110.

Aug 28: Baptism Shows Faith, 17-26. Page 462. Songs to Be Used: 106, 109.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

August 21: What Do We Owe God? 11-13, and Baptism Shows Faith, 11-6. Page 456. Songs to Be Used: 112, 110.

August 28: Baptism Shows Faith, 17-26. Page 462. Songs to Be Used: 106, 109.