



THE WATCHTOWER
ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

AUGUST 1, 2010

IS THE END NEAR?

THE PURPOSE OF THIS MAGAZINE, *The Watchtower*, is to honor Jehovah God, the Supreme Ruler of the universe. Just as watchtowers in ancient times enabled a person to observe developments from afar, so this magazine shows us the significance of world events in the light of Bible prophecies. It comforts people with the good news that God's Kingdom, which is a real government in heaven, will soon bring an end to all wickedness and transform the earth into a paradise. It promotes faith in Jesus Christ, who died so that we might gain everlasting life and who is now ruling as King of God's Kingdom. This magazine has been published by Jehovah's Witnesses continuously since 1879 and is nonpolitical. It adheres to the Bible as its authority.

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What Do Many Fear?

"You don't have to be a religious believer to think that we're headed for disaster."—STEPHEN O'LEARY, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA.*

DO YOU agree with the above statement? This series of articles will review some of the reasons why people fear the future. But it will also show why you can be confident that life on earth will not end. There is good reason for optimism, despite the sobering facts you are about to read.

The threat of nuclear war remains high. In 2007, the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* warned: "Not since the first atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki has the world faced such perilous choices." Why the concern? The *Bulletin* reported that in 2007, some 27,000 nuclear weapons still remained and that 2,000 of those were "ready to launch within minutes." If even a small percentage of those weapons were detonated, the effect would be catastrophic!

Has the threat of nuclear war decreased since then? The five most prominent nuclear

powers—China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States—are all "either deploying new nuclear weapon systems or have announced their intention to do so," says the *SIPRI Yearbook 2009*.** But the yearbook claims that those countries are not the only ones to own nuclear weapons. Researchers estimate that India, Pakistan, and Israel each own from 60 to 80 nuclear bombs. They also state that, worldwide, a total of 8,392 nuclear weapons are now deployed, just waiting to be launched!

Climate change may bring disaster. "The dangers posed by climate change," states the above-mentioned *Bulletin of the Atomic*

* SIPRI stands for Stockholm International Peace Research Institute.

** The report in *SIPRI Yearbook 2009* was written by Shannon N. Kile, senior researcher and head of the nuclear weapons project of the SIPRI Arms Control and Non-proliferation Programme; Vitaly Fedchenko, a researcher with the SIPRI Arms Control and Non-proliferation Programme; and Hans M. Kristensen, director of the nuclear information project at the Federation of American Scientists.

* From the article "Disasters Fuel Doomsday Predictions," published on the MSNBC Web site, October 19, 2005.



Mushroom cloud: U.S. National Archives photo; hurricane photos: WHO/League of Red Cross and U.S. National Archives photo

Scientists, “are nearly as dire as those posed by nuclear weapons.” Respected scientists, such as Stephen Hawking, professor emeritus at the University of Cambridge, and Sir Martin Rees, Master of Trinity College at the University of Cambridge, echo those stark warnings. They feel that mismanagement of technology and the human impact on the environment may irreversibly change life on earth or even end civilization.

Predictions of doom worry millions. Type the phrase “end of the world” and the year “2012” into one popular Internet search engine, and you will discover hundreds of pages of speculation about the end coming in that year. Why so? An ancient Maya calendar, known as “the Long Count,” is calculated to end in the year 2012. Many fear that this somehow signals the end of civilization as we know it.

Many religious people believe that the Bible teaches that the literal earth will be destroyed. They feel that all faithful believers will be taken to heaven, while the rest of mankind will be left to suffer on a chaotic earth or be thrown into hell.

Does the Bible, in fact, say that the earth will be completely ruined or destroyed? “Do not believe every inspired expression,” warned the apostle John, “but test the inspired expressions to see whether they originate with God.” (1 John 4:1) Rather than merely accepting what others say, why not open a copy of the Bible and see for yourself what it says about the end of the world? What it teaches may surprise you.



Would you welcome more information or a free home Bible study? Please send your request to Jehovah's Witnesses, using one of the addresses below. For a complete list of addresses, see www.watchtower.org/address.

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Four Questions About the End Answered

JESUS CHRIST foretold that at a future date, ‘the end would come.’ Describing that time, he said: “Then there will be great tribulation such as has not occurred since the world’s beginning until now, no, nor will occur again.”—Matthew 24:14, 21.

Jesus’ statements about the end, along with other Bible passages on this topic, raise a number of important questions. Why not open your Bible and read what it says in answer to those questions?

1 What Will End?

The Bible does not teach that the literal earth will be destroyed. “[God] has founded the earth upon its established places,” wrote the psalmist. “It will not be made to totter to time indefinite, or forever.” (Psalm 104:5) Nor does the Bible teach that all life will be annihilated in a global conflagration. (Isaiah 45:18) Jesus himself indicated that some people will survive the end. (Matthew

24:21, 22) What, then, does the Bible say will end?

Failing human governments will end. God inspired the prophet Daniel to write: “The God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be brought to ruin. And the kingdom itself will not be passed on to any other people. It will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, and it itself will stand to times indefinite.”—Daniel 2:44.

War and pollution will end. Describing what God will do, Psalm 46:9 states: “He is making wars to cease to the extremity of the earth. The bow he breaks apart and does cut the spear in pieces; the wagons he burns in the fire.” The Bible also teaches that God will “bring to ruin those ruining the earth.”—Revelation 11:18.

Crime and injustice will end. God’s Word promises: “The upright are the ones that will reside in the earth, and the blameless are the ones that will be left over in it. As regards the wicked, they will be cut off from the very

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⁺ CD also available.

^o MP3 CD-ROM also available.

⁺⁺ Audio recordings also available at www.jw.org.

earth; and as for the treacherous, they will be torn away from it.”*—Proverbs 2:21, 22.

2 When Will the End Come?

Jehovah God has set an “appointed time” to bring an end to wickedness and to install his Kingdom government. (Mark 13:33) But the Bible clearly indicates that we cannot calculate the specific date for the end. Jesus said: “Concerning that day and hour nobody knows, neither the angels of the heavens nor the Son, but only the Father.” (Matthew 24:36) Jesus and his disciples did, however, foretell what conditions on earth would be like just before God brings the end. The end is imminent when *all* the following events are happening at the same time and on a global scale.

Political, environmental, and social upheaval is occurring to an extent unprecedented in history. In answer to the disciples’ questions about the end, Jesus said: “Nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom, there will be earthquakes in one place after another, there will be food shortages. These are a beginning of pangs of distress.” (Mark 13:8) The apostle Paul wrote: “In the last days critical times hard to deal with will be here. For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, self-assuming, haughty, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, disloyal, having no natural affection, not open to any agreement, slanderers, without self-control, fierce, without love of goodness, betrayers, headstrong, puffed up with pride, lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God.”—2 Timothy 3:1-5.

A worldwide, multilanguage preaching campaign is under way. Jesus said: “This

good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come.”—Matthew 24:14.

3 What Will Follow the End?

The Bible does not teach that all good people will be taken from the earth to live forever in heavenly bliss. Instead, Jesus taught that God’s original purpose for mankind will be fulfilled. “Happy are the mild-tempered ones, since they will inherit the earth,” said Jesus. (Matthew 5:5; 6:9, 10) For those who die before the end comes, the Bible holds out the promise of a future resurrection. (Job 14:14, 15; John 5:28, 29) What will follow the end?

From heaven, Jesus will rule as King of God’s Kingdom. “I kept on beholding in the visions of the night,” wrote the prophet Daniel, “and, see there! with the clouds of the heavens someone like a son of man [the resurrected Jesus] happened to be coming; and to the Ancient of Days [Jehovah God] he gained access, and they brought him up close even before that One. And to him [Jesus] there were given rulership and dignity and kingdom, that the peoples, national groups and languages should all serve even him. His rulership is an indefinitely lasting rulership that will not pass away, and his kingdom one that will not be brought to ruin.”—Daniel 7:13, 14; Luke 1:31, 32; John 3:13-16.

Subjects of God’s Kingdom will enjoy perfect health, lasting security, and eternal life. “They will certainly build houses and have occupancy,” wrote the prophet Isaiah. “And they will certainly plant vineyards and eat their fruitage. They will not build and someone else have occupancy; they will not plant and someone else do the eating.” (Isaiah

* See also the article “Do All Have an Equal Opportunity to Come to Know God?” on page 22 of this issue.

65:21-23) The apostle John wrote of that time: “Look! The tent of God is with mankind, and he will reside with them, and they will be his peoples. And God himself will be with them. And he will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away.”—Revelation 21:3, 4.

4 What Must You Do to Survive the End?

The apostle Peter acknowledged that some of those living in the time of the end would scoff at the idea that God would ever intervene in human affairs and end wickedness on earth. (2 Peter 3:3, 4) Even so, Peter urges those living in our day to take the following action.

Learn from history. God “did not hold back from punishing an ancient world, but kept Noah, a preacher of righteousness, safe with seven others when he brought a deluge upon a world of ungodly people,” wrote Peter. (2 Peter 2:5) Regarding those who scoff, Peter said: “According to their wish, this fact escapes their notice, that there were heavens from of old and an earth standing compactly out of water and in the midst of water by the word of God; and by those means the world of that time suffered



The earth will not end, but those who ruin it will



destruction when it was deluged with water. But by the same word the heavens and the earth* that are now are stored up for fire and are being reserved to the day of judgment and of destruction of the ungodly men.” —2 Peter 3:5-7.

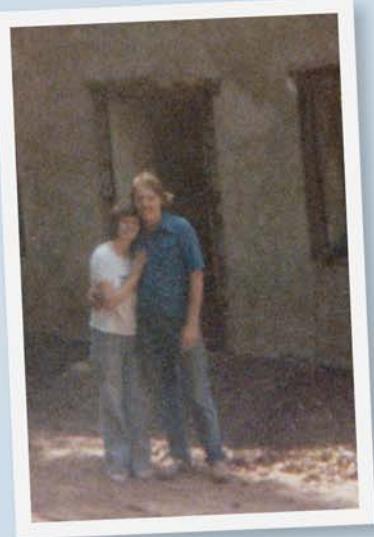
Live by God’s moral standards. Those who wish to survive the end will perform “holy acts of conduct and deeds of godly devo-

* Peter is here making a symbolic reference to the earth. The Bible writer Moses similarly referred to the earth in a symbolic way. He wrote: “All the earth continued to be of one language.” (Genesis 11:1) Just as the literal earth does not speak “one language,” it is not the literal earth that will be destroyed. Rather, as Peter states, it is ungodly men who will suffer destruction.

tion,” wrote Peter. (2 Peter 3:11) Notice that Peter emphasizes “holy *acts of conduct*” and “*deeds of godly devotion*.” More is involved, therefore, than a superficial confession of faith or a last-minute effort to put things right with God.

What specific acts and deeds does God find acceptable? Why not compare what you know with what the Bible teaches on this subject? Jehovah’s Witnesses would be happy to assist you. Ask them to show you from your Bible the basis for their answers. Doing so may well help you face the future with courage and confidence, despite the causes of fear that now surround us.

They No Longer Fear the End



IN THE late 1970’s, Gary and Karen became convinced that the end of the world was near. So they moved out of the city into the country and decided to become completely self-sufficient. They wanted to survive.

To get the skills they would need, they bought books, attended classes and seminars, and spoke to as many people as possible. They planted a garden and 50 dwarf fruit trees. They stockpiled seeds and tools. They learned to grow and preserve food. A friend taught them to butcher and cure meat. Karen learned to identify plants and roots in the forest so that they could eat them if provisions ran out. Gary learned to make fuel out of corn, build a metal wood-burning stove, and construct a self-sufficient house.

“Because of the terrible world conditions at that time,” says Karen, “I felt that civilization would soon end.” Gary explains: “Like other young people, I was active in trying to fix racism, the Vietnam War, and corruption. But I quickly became disillusioned. It seemed to me that mankind was on a path to self-destruction.”

“One night,” Gary says, “I had some time on my hands, so I picked up a Bible and read from Matthew

to Revelation. Over the next four nights, I read it again. On the fifth morning, I told Karen: ‘We are living in the last days. God is going to act soon to clean the earth. We need to find those who will survive.’” Gary and Karen started going from religion to religion, looking for those people who wanted to prepare for the end.

Soon, one of Jehovah’s Witnesses called at their door, and a Bible study was started. “I was very excited,” Karen remembers, “because the Scriptures were really being explained to me. The truth about the time of the end was what I had been looking for, and I had finally found it. There was a sure hope for the future. But even better, I began to form a friendship with my heavenly Father, the Creator and God of the universe.”

Gary says: “My life took on real meaning. Once I started studying the Bible, I could not get enough. I read Bible prophecy, examined the proof that it was coming true, and became convinced that God is going to act soon. I thought, ‘People should be preparing, not for disaster, but for the life that God wants for us.’” Gary and Karen gained a positive view of the future. Instead of worrying about the end of the world, they became confident that God will remove the problems plaguing mankind and will restore the earth to a paradise.

What are Gary and Karen doing now, some 25 years later? Karen says: “I keep building my love for Jehovah God and my faith in him, and I try to help others to do the same. Gary and I support each other as we keep our family strong and united in worship of God. We try to stay organized, and we endeavor to keep our lifestyle simple so that we can focus on others and their needs.”

Gary adds: “I regularly pray for God’s Kingdom to come and bring relief to millions. Each time I share the good news of God’s Kingdom with others, I pray that I can impart at least some hope from the Bible to at least one person. For over 25 years, Jehovah has kindly answered that prayer. Karen and I believe that Jehovah will soon bring great changes to the earth, but we no longer fear the end.”—Matthew 6:9, 10; 2 Peter 3:11, 12.



Gary and Karen now enjoy helping others gain hope from the Bible’s message



KEYS TO FAMILY HAPPINESS

Surviving the First Year of Marriage

He says: "I am surprised to find that my wife and I are so different! For example, I like to get up early, but she likes to stay up late. As for her changes of mood, those baffle me! And another thing—when I cook, she becomes so critical, especially of the way I clean my hands on the dishcloth."

She says: "My husband is a man of few words. But I'm used to my family. They talk a lot, particularly at mealtimes. And when my husband cooks, he uses the same cloth to dry the dishes and to clean his hands! That irritates me! Why are men so difficult to understand? How do people make a marriage succeed?"

If YOU are newly married, have you faced similar challenges? Does it seem that your mate suddenly has acquired faults and foibles that were absent when you were dating? How can you reduce the impact of the "everyday troubles that married people will have"?—1 Corinthians 7:28, *Today's English Version*.

First, do not expect that just because you exchanged wedding vows, you and your spouse become instant experts at married life. You might have acquired valuable social skills when you were single, and they might have improved while you were dating. However, marriage will test those skills in new ways and will likely require that you gain new ones. Will you make mistakes? Certainly. Can you gain the skills you need? Absolutely!

The best way to improve any skill is to consult an expert on the subject and then to apply the advice he gives. The foremost expert on marriage is Jehovah God. After all, he is



the One who created us with the desire to marry. (Genesis 2:22-24) Note how his Word, the Bible, can help you overcome challenges and acquire the skills you need to make your marriage last beyond the first year.

SKILL 1. LEARN TO CONSULT TOGETHER

What are the challenges? Keiji,* a husband who lives in Japan, sometimes forgot

* Some names have been changed.

that his decisions affected his spouse. "I would accept invitations without consulting my wife," he says. "Later, I would discover that it was not convenient for her to keep those appointments." Allen, a husband in Australia, says: "I felt that it was unmanly to consult my wife about things." He faced a challenge because of his background. It was similar with Dianne, who lives in Britain. She says: "I was used to asking my family for advice. So at first I would consult them and not my husband when making decisions."

What is the solution? Remember that Jehovah God views a married couple as being "one flesh." (Matthew 19:3-6) In his eyes, no other human relationship is more important than the one that exists between husband and wife! To keep that bond strong, good communication is vital.

A husband and wife can learn much by examining the way Jehovah God communicated with Abraham. For example, please read the discussion recorded at Genesis 18:17-33. Note that God honored Abraham in three ways. (1) Jehovah explained what he intended to do. (2) He listened while Abraham explained his views. (3) To the extent possible, Jehovah adapted his course of action to accommodate Abraham. How could you follow the same pattern when you consult with your spouse?

TRY THIS: When discussing matters that will affect your marriage partner, (1) explain how you would like to handle the situation, but present your thoughts as suggestions, not final decisions or ultimatums; (2) ask your spouse to express his or her opinion, and acknowledge your spouse's right to hold a different viewpoint; and (3) "let your reasonableness become known" by adopting your mate's preferences whenever possible.
—Philippians 4:5.

SKILL 2. LEARN TO BE TACTFUL

What is the challenge? Depending on your family or cultural background, you might be in the habit of expressing your opinion firmly, even bluntly. For example, Liam, who lives in Europe, says: "Where I come from, people tend to be tactless. My blunt way of expressing myself often upset my wife. I had to learn to be more gentle."

What is the solution? Do not assume that your mate wants to be spoken to in the same

The Bible Saved Our Marriage

Toru and Akiko were in love when they were first married. But only eight months later, this Japanese couple decided to divorce. They relate what happened.



Toru: "I discovered that my wife and I were less compatible than I thought. For example, when we watched TV, I liked sports, but she liked dramas. I liked going out, but she liked staying home."

Akiko: "Toru did whatever his family asked, but he did not consult with me. I asked him, 'Who is more important to you, your mother or me?' Also, I was shocked at how Toru would stretch the truth. I told him that one lie leads to another and that if he didn't stop, our marriage could not continue."

Toru: "I became frustrated and asked a senior colleague for advice on how to deal with my wife. 'Just tell her to shut up,' he said. 'If she complains, knock her down.' One time, I slapped Akiko's face and turned over the table. There was a big fight, and she left. I had to bring her back from a hotel in Tokyo. Finally, we decided to divorce. As I left home

for the office that morning, my wife began packing her things."

Akiko: "The doorbell rang as I was carrying my bags to the front door. A woman was standing there. She was one of Jehovah's Witnesses. I invited her in."

Toru: "When I arrived at my office, I was having second thoughts about divorce, so I hurried back home. When I arrived, I found Akiko talking to this lady. The lady said to me: 'You need something that the two of you can do together. Would you like to study the Bible?' 'Yes,' I said, 'anything that might save our marriage!'"

Akiko: "The lady made arrangements for us to study the Bible. A turning point came when we read the Bible's description of the marriage arrangement. It says: 'That is why a man will leave his father and his mother and he must stick to his wife and they must become one flesh.'"
—Genesis 2:24.

Toru: "I got the point right away. I told my parents, 'From now on, I am going to discuss things with *my wife* before making decisions.' I also stopped drinking too much. And when I learned that God hates lies, I tried to speak only the truth."

Akiko: "I too changed. For example, I used to defy Toru. But when I saw how he was applying Bible principles, I became more supportive of him. (Ephesians 5:22-24) We have been happily married now for over 28 years. We were able to overcome our problems by getting to know each other better and by applying the wise counsel found in the Bible."

manner that you are used to. (Philippians 2:3, 4) The counsel that the apostle Paul gave a missionary is also helpful for newlyweds. He wrote: "A slave of the Lord does not need to fight, but needs to be gentle." In the original Greek, the word that is translated "gentle" can also be rendered "tactful." (2 Timothy 2:24; footnote) Tact is the ability to discern the delicacy of a situation and to deal with the matter kindly, without causing offense.

TRY THIS: When you are annoyed with your mate, imagine that instead of talking to your spouse, you are conversing with a good friend or with your employer. Would you still use the same tone of voice or choice of words? Then think of reasons why your spouse deserves to be spoken to with even more respect and tact than does your friend or employer.—Colossians 4:6.

SKILL 3. LEARN TO ADAPT TO YOUR NEW ROLES

What is the challenge? A husband may at first exercise his headship clumsily, or a wife may be unaccustomed to making tactful suggestions. For example, Antonio, a husband in Italy, says: "My father hardly ever consulted my mother about family decisions. So at first, I ruled my family as if I were a monarch." Debbie, a wife in Canada, says: "I demanded that my husband be tidier. But my bossy approach only seemed to make him more stubborn."

What is the solution for a husband? Some husbands confuse what the Bible says about wifely subjection with what it says about the obedience of a child to his parent. (Colossians 3:20; 1 Peter 3:1) However, the Bible says that a husband is to "stick to his wife, and the two will be one flesh"; it does not say the same about a parent and a child. (Matthew 19:5) Jehovah describes a wife as a com-



plement, or counterpart, of her husband. (Genesis 2:18) He never refers to a child as being a complement, or counterpart, of a parent. What do you think—if a husband treats his wife like a child, is he honoring the marriage arrangement?

In fact, God's Word urges you to treat your wife in the same manner that Jesus treats the Christian congregation. You can make it easier for your wife to view you as her head if (1) you do not expect her immediately and flawlessly to express her subjection to you and (2) you love her as you do your own body, even when difficulties arise.—Ephesians 5:25-29.

What is the solution for a wife? Acknowledge that your husband is now your God-appointed head. (1 Corinthians 11:3) If you honor your husband, you honor God. If you reject his headship, you reveal how you feel not only about your husband but also about God and his requirements.—Colossians 3:18.

When discussing challenging issues, learn to attack the problem—not your husband's character. Queen Esther, for example, wanted her husband, King Ahasuerus, to correct an injustice. Rather than attack him person-

ally, she expressed herself tactfully. Her husband accepted her suggestion and eventually did the right thing. (Esther 7:1-4; 8:3-8) Your husband is more likely to learn to love you deeply if (1) you allow him time to master his new role as head of a family and (2) you treat him with respect, even when he makes mistakes.—Ephesians 5:33.

TRY THIS: Rather than taking note of ways in which you feel your spouse ought to change, keep a changes-I-need-to-make list. **Husbands:** When you upset your wife by the way you exercise or fail to exercise your headship, ask her how you can improve, and then write the suggestion down. **Wives:** When your husband feels that he is not being shown respect, ask him how you can improve, and take note of the suggestion.

Maintain Reasonable Expectations

Learning to maintain a happy, balanced marriage relationship is like learning to ride a bicycle. You expect some tumbles as you gain confidence as a cyclist. Likewise, you should expect to make some embarrassing mistakes as you gain experience in marriage.

Maintain a sense of humor. Take your mate's concerns seriously, but learn to laugh at your own blunders. Seize opportunities to make your mate rejoice during your first year of marriage. (Deuteronomy 24:5) Above all, allow God's Word to guide your relationship. If you do, your marriage will grow stronger year after year.

ASK YOURSELF . . .

- *Have I made my spouse my closest confidant, or do I prefer to consult with others?*
- *Within the last 24 hours, specifically what have I done that shows that I love and respect my spouse?*





TEACH YOUR CHILDREN

Why Jesus Did Not Hurry

JESUS has learned that his good friend Lazarus is very sick. A messenger from Mary and Martha, sisters of Lazarus, has brought Jesus the news. The messenger came from Bethany, where Lazarus and his sisters live. The sisters believe that Jesus can heal their brother, even though they live far away on the other side of the Jordan River. They know that he

has healed people from a distance before.—Matthew 8:5-13; John 11:1-3.

When the messenger reaches Jesus and tells him the sad news, Jesus doesn't do anything about it. The Bible says: "He actually remained two days in the place where he was." (John 11:6) Do you know why Jesus does not hurry to help Lazarus?—* Let us talk about this.

Jesus knows that Lazarus has died from his sickness. Therefore, he tells his apostles: "Let us go into Judea again." They object: "Just lately the Judeans were seeking to stone you, and are you going there again?" Jesus explains: "Lazarus our friend has gone to rest,

but I am journeying there to awaken him from sleep."

"Lord, if he has gone to rest," the apostles reply, "he will get well." Now Jesus explains: "Lazarus has died." Then he says something that must have surprised them: "I rejoice on your account that I was not there . . . But let us go to him."

Thomas speaks up courageously: 'Let us go that we may die with Jesus.' Thomas knows that enemies will again try to kill Jesus, and the apostles may be killed too. But they all go anyway. After two days or so, they arrive in Bethany, Lazarus' hometown. It is about two miles from Jerusalem.—John 11:7-18.

Do you know why Jesus is glad that he did not arrive earlier?— Well, Jesus had resurrected other people before, but those individuals had been dead only a few hours when Jesus brought them back to life. (Luke 7:11-17, 22; 8:49-56) Lazarus' body, though, has been in the tomb for days. No one can question that he *really is dead!*

When Lazarus' sister Martha hears that Jesus is near Bethany, she runs out to meet him. "Lord, if you had been here my brother would not have died," she says. "Your brother will rise," Jesus assures her. Martha runs back and in secret tells her sister, Mary: "The Teacher is present and is calling you."

* If you are reading with a child, the dash provides a reminder to pause and encourage the child to express himself.



Mary leaves right away to go to Jesus. The crowd, though, think that she is going to the tomb, so they follow. When Jesus sees Mary and the crowd with her weeping, he too gives way "to tears." Soon they all arrive at the tomb, which is sealed with a big stone. Jesus commands: "Take the stone away." But Martha objects, saying: "Lord, by now he must smell, for it is *four days*."

The people obey Jesus and remove the stone. Then he prays, thanking God in advance for the power he knows God will give him to resurrect Lazarus. Jesus cries out "with a loud voice: 'Lazarus, come on out!'" And Lazarus walks out, "bound with wrappings." So Jesus commands: "Loose him and let him go."

—John 11:19-44.

Can you understand now why Jesus

did not hurry?— He knew that by waiting he could give a better witness about his Father, Jehovah. And because he chose the best time, many became believers in God. (John 11:45) Can you see what we can learn from Jesus' example?—

You too may be able to choose a good time to give a witness about the wonderful things God has done and yet will do. Perhaps you can speak to fellow students or to your teachers about them. Even during class, some youths have taken the opportunity to tell about the grand blessings that God's Kingdom will bring to mankind. Of course, you cannot resurrect the dead, but you can help others to come to know the God who can and will bring our loved ones back to life.

QUESTIONS:

- Why does Jesus not hurry to go to help Lazarus?
- Why does Thomas say: 'Let us go that we may die with Jesus'?
- How was Jesus able to resurrect Lazarus?
- What can you do to show that you have learned from Jesus' example?



WHAT WE LEARN FROM JESUS

How to Find Happiness

What is the key to happiness?

■ Jesus mentioned happiness in the very first words of his most famous sermon. He said: "Happy are those conscious of their spiritual need." (Matthew 5:3) What did he mean? What is our spiritual need?

To survive, we need to breathe, drink, and eat, just as animals do. But to be happy, we have a need that animals do not have—the need for understanding the purpose of life. Only the Creator of life can fill that need. Thus, Jesus said: "Man must live, not on bread alone, but on every utterance coming forth through Jehovah's mouth." (Matthew 4:4) Those who are conscious of their spiritual need are happy because they draw close to Jehovah, "the happy God," and he gives them something vital for happiness—hope.—1 Timothy 1:11.



True happiness comes from satisfying our need to understand the purpose of life



How did Jesus give hope?

■ "Happy are the mild-tempered ones, since they will inherit the earth," said Jesus. (Matthew 5:5) Jesus gave hope to mankind by curing sick people and raising dead people back to life on earth. He also came with a message of hope. He explained: "God loved the world so much that he gave his only-begotten Son, in order that everyone exercising faith in him might not be destroyed but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) People who obey God will enjoy everlasting life on earth. Can you imagine living among mild-tempered people and never growing old? No wonder God's Word says: "Rejoice in the hope." (Romans 12:12) Jesus also discussed how to find happiness now.



What happy way of life did Jesus teach?

■ Jesus gave practical counsel on such matters as personal relationships, marriage, humility, and the appropriate view of material things. (Matthew 5:21-32; 6:1-5, 19-34) Following Jesus' advice will help you to find happiness.

Generosity brings happiness. (Acts 20:35) For example, Jesus said: "When you spread a feast, invite poor people, crippled, lame, blind; and you will be *happy*, because they have nothing with which to repay you." (Luke 14:13, 14) Happiness comes, not to those who seek it for themselves, but to those who seek it for others.

What is the greatest source of happiness?

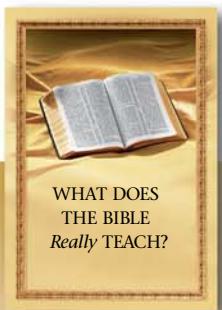
■ Doing things for other people can make you happy, but doing things for God can make you happier. Even the happiness of proud parents who love their children cannot compare with it. This is clear from what took place on one occasion while Jesus was teaching publicly. "A certain woman out of the crowd raised her voice and said to him: 'Happy is the womb that carried you and the breasts that you sucked!' But he said: 'No, rather, Happy are those hearing the word of God and keeping it!'"—Luke 11:27, 28.

Jesus himself found satisfaction and happiness doing his heavenly Father's will. God's will is that people hear about the hope of everlasting life. Once, after explaining this hope to an interested person, Jesus said: "My food is for me to do the will of him that sent me." (John 4:13, 14, 34) You too can experience the happiness of doing something that pleases God by sharing Bible truth with others.



For more information,
see chapter 1 of
this book, published by
Jehovah's Witnesses.

WHAT DOES
THE BIBLE
Really Teach?



THE BIBLE CHANGES LIVES

HOW was a single parent in Russia who was addicted to drugs able to break the habit and improve her relationship with her children? How did a homeless man who lived in Kyoto, Japan, find the strength and courage to overcome the personal weaknesses that led to his poverty? What enabled an Australian drover (cowboy) to give up binge drinking? Consider what these people have to say.



"I learned that I have an obligation to support myself."

—NELLY BAYMATOVA

AGE: 45

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: RUSSIA

HISTORY: DRUG ADDICT



MY PAST: I grew up in Vladikavkaz, the capital of the Republic of North Ossetia (now Alania). My family was relatively wealthy. But despite having material advantages, my life was not a happy one. By the time I turned 34, I had already been through two failed marriages. I had a ten-year-long drug habit, for which I twice underwent treatment in a clinic. Although I had two children, I didn't at that time feel any affection for them; nor did I have a normal relationship with my friends or family.

My mother had become one of Jehovah's Witnesses, and I often heard her crying about me and praying to Jehovah to help me. I thought: 'How naive my mother is! How can Jehovah help me?' I did try to give up drugs.

But I didn't have the strength to break the habit on my own. On one occasion, I had gone two days drug free. I then decided that I needed to get out of the house, and I jumped out the window. Unfortunately, I was on the second floor. The fall broke my arm and leg and injured my back. I was bedridden for over a month.

During my recovery, my mother looked after me and did not reproach me. She understood that I was in a fragile emotional and mental state.

However, she did leave some *Awake!* magazines* next to my bed. I read one after another and found them to be very interesting and informative. I then decided to study the Bible with the Witnesses.

HOW THE BIBLE CHANGED MY LIFE: One thing the Bible taught me was responsibility. Rather than expecting my mother to support me, I learned that I have an obligation to support myself and my children financially. After doing just as I pleased for so long, getting used to the idea of steady work was not easy.

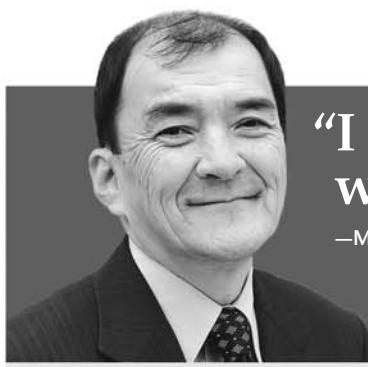
* Published by Jehovah's Witnesses.

I also was really helped by the counsel at Deuteronomy 6:5-7, which tells parents to teach their children about God. I realized that I was answerable to God for how I raised my two children. That fact motivated me to begin spending time with them and to cultivate a proper love for them.

I felt a deep inner gratitude that Jehovah had permitted me to learn the truth about him. So I dedicated my life to him and was baptized as one of Jehovah's Witnesses.

HOW I HAVE BENEFITED: Because I learned to control my explosive temper, my relationship with my mother improved. My relationship with my children is also better.

Since I have developed a hatred for ungodly things, many of the problems caused by my former lifestyle have disappeared. I now find great happiness in helping others learn the truth about our loving God, Jehovah.



"I feel that my life was literally saved."

—MINORU TAKEDA

AGE: 54

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: JAPAN

HISTORY: LIVED ON THE STREET



MY PAST: I grew up in the city of Yamaguchi with my father and my grandmother. I never knew my mother. When I was 19, my grandmother died, and I continued living with my father. I was working as a cook, and my father too was employed in the food industry. Our work shifts were different, so we hardly saw each other. I fell into a rut of working long hours and drinking with my friends.

As time passed, I grew bored with my work. I fought with my boss and began drinking more heavily. Eventually, when I was in my late 20's, I decided to leave home and travel.

When my money ran out, I began working in a pachinko (gambling) parlor. I met a girl, and we got married. But we broke up after only two and a half years.

I was depressed and weak-willed and ended up deep in debt to money lenders. I ran away from the debt collectors and lived for a while in my hometown with my father, but I lied to him and damaged our relationship. I took money from his home and lived off my gambling for a while.

Eventually, I fell into poverty and lived in a train station for a period of time. I moved to Hakata, then to Himeji, and eventually to the city of Kyoto. I lived on the streets for a couple of years.

HOW THE BIBLE CHANGED MY LIFE: In 1999, I was in a park near the Kamogawa River in Kyoto when two women approached me. One of them asked, "Would you be interested in studying the Bible?" I accepted the offer. Mature Christians from the local congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses studied

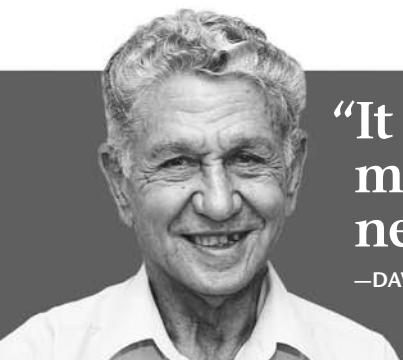
the Bible with me and helped me to see the importance of applying its principles. They suggested that I try to find work and a place to live. To please them, I went on a couple of job interviews, but at first I did not try very hard. Later, though, I began praying for help and tried seriously to find work, and eventually I got a job.

Prayer also helped me through a very difficult test. The money lenders I ran away from tracked me down and demanded payment. I became very stressed. Then in my daily reading of the Bible, I found the text at Isaiah 41:10. In that verse, God promised his faithful servants: "I will really help you." That promise gave me strength and courage. I diligently applied myself and eventually resolved my money problems. In 2000, I qualified to be baptized as one of Jehovah's Witnesses.

HOW I HAVE BENEFITED:

What I learned from the Bible prompted me to try to repair my relationship with my father, and he forgave me for my past conduct. He was so happy that I had learned to live by Bible standards. I feel that my life was literally saved because I began to live by Bible principles.

In addition, I am able to work to provide for myself materially. (Ephesians 4:28; 2 Thessalonians 3:12) I have also found true friends inside the Christian congregation. (Mark 10:29, 30) I am thankful from the bottom of my heart for what Jehovah has taught me.



"It was not easy for me to make the needed changes."

—DAVID HUDSON

AGE: 72

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN: AUSTRALIA
HISTORY: BINGE DRINKER

MY PAST: I was the 11th child born to my parents, Willie and Lucy. My family lived in an Aboriginal community named Aurukun, located in the far northern part of Queensland. Aurukun was built on the banks



of the picturesque Archer River and close to the sea. My parents taught us children to hunt and fish to survive. At the time, we Aboriginals were under a government regulation that prohibited us from handling money, and we were restricted to living only in a designated area.

My parents did their best to instill in me good qualities and taught all their children to respect the elderly in the community and to share what little we had. As a result, we viewed all the elderly as our mums and dads and aunts and uncles.

My father died when I was seven, and we moved to an Aboriginal mission at Mapoon,

which is about 90 miles north of Aurukun. When I was 12, I began learning to handle horses and cattle, and until my late 40's, I worked on many cattle stations as a drover (cowboy). The lifestyle was rough. I drank heavily and often. That led to many headaches and hardships.

During one of my binge-drinking sessions, I staggered out of a hotel and into the path of a speeding car. I spent the next two years in rehabilitation and physiotherapy—and my droving days were over.

HOW THE BIBLE CHANGED MY LIFE: During my time in rehabilitation, a lady friend of mine brought me some *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines to read. However, I did not have much schooling, so I could not read well. Then one day, an 83-year-old gentleman called on me during a very hot day. I invited him in for a drink of cold water. He gave me some Bible literature and asked if he could return and explain its contents to me. Eventually, we began studying the Bible together regularly. I began to see that I needed to make some changes in my personality and lifestyle if I was to please God.

It was not easy for me to make the needed changes. However, because of my mother's teachings, I had deep respect for the elderly man who studied the Bible with me and for the spiritual understanding he shared. Even so, I hesitated to dedicate my life to God. I felt that I had to know everything that was written in the Bible.

As it turned out, a coworker helped me to correct my thinking on this matter. He was one of Jehovah's Witnesses, and he referred me to the encouragement found at Colossians 1:9, 10. That passage says that we need to go on "increasing in the accurate knowledge of God." My coworker helped me appre-

ciate that I would always be learning new things, so I really had no reason to let my limited knowledge hold me back.

I was particularly impressed when I began associating with Jehovah's Witnesses. I saw for myself people of all walks of life at unity in worshipping God. That unity convinced me beyond a doubt that I had found the true religion, so in 1985, I was baptized as one of Jehovah's Witnesses.

HOW I HAVE BENEFITED: My reading skills have improved, and I now spend many hours each week helping others learn to read and study the Bible. In addition, the lady friend who first brought me the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines to read also studied with the Witnesses, got baptized, and is now my loving wife. Together, we find real joy in helping others in the Aboriginal community learn about Jehovah God.



My wife and I find real joy in helping others in the Aboriginal community learn about God



OUR READERS ASK . . .

Do all have an equal opportunity to come to know God?

■ When asked which was the greatest commandment, Jesus said: "You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole mind." (Matthew 22:37) However, before people can love God, they need to acquire accurate knowledge of him. (John 17:3) Will all have an equal opportunity to gain this knowledge?

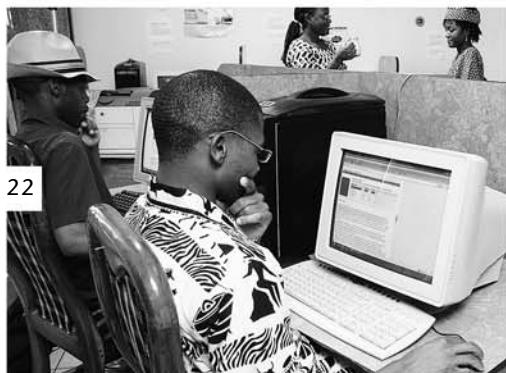
The primary source of knowledge of God is the Bible. (2 Timothy 3:16) Many live in communities where the Bible is readily available. Those same individuals might also receive repeated invitations to gain accurate knowledge of God by means of a personal Bible study. (Matthew 28:19) Some are raised by their loving Christian parents, who daily give them the opportunity to learn about God.—Deuteronomy 6:6, 7; Ephesians 6:4.

Others, however, live under less favorable circumstances. Some individuals come from abusive families in which parents have shown no natural affection for their offspring. (2 Timothy 3:1-5) Those raised in such an environment might find it difficult to view God as a loving heavenly Father. Many have not had access to adequate schooling, which hampers their ability to read the Bible. Still others have had their minds blinded by false religious teachings, or they live in families, communities, or countries where the teaching of Bible truth is not tolerated. (2 Corinthians 4:4) Do the circumstances of such individuals deny them the opportunity to learn about God and come to love him?

Jesus acknowledged that the challenges some people face will make it difficult for them to love and obey God. (Matthew 19:23, 24) However, Jesus reminded his disciples that even though some obstacles seem insurmountable to men, "with God all things are possible." —Matthew 19:25, 26.

Consider the following facts: Jehovah God has ensured that his Word, the Bible, is the most widely distributed book of all time. The Bible foretold that the good news about God and his purpose for the earth would be preached in "all the inhabited earth." (Matthew 24:14) Today, Jehovah's Witnesses preach that good news in over 230 lands and produce Bible-based literature in some 500 languages. Even those who have no access to the Bible can still learn much about the true God by observing the things he has made. —Romans 1:20.

Additionally, God's Word states: "All hearts Jehovah is searching, and every inclination of the thoughts he is discerning. If you search for him, he will let himself be found by you." (1 Chronicles 28:9) So although Jehovah does not promise that every individual will receive exactly the same opportunity, he does make sure that an opportunity is held out to all honesthearted ones. He will even make sure that those who have never had the occasion to learn about him will be given an opportunity by means of a resurrection to life in a righteous new world.—Acts 24:15.





DID YOU KNOW?

What did the apostle Paul have in mind when he spoke of “a triumphal procession”?



A SECTION OF A RELIEF DEPICTING A ROMAN TRIUMPHAL PROCESSION, SECOND CENTURY C.E.

Photograph taken by courtesy of the British Museum

■ Paul wrote: “God . . . leads us in a triumphal procession in company with the Christ and makes the odor of the knowledge of him perceptible through us in every place! For to God we are a sweet odor of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing; to the latter ones an odor issuing from death to death, to the former ones an odor issuing from life to life.”—2 Corinthians 2:14-16.

The apostle was referring to the Roman practice of holding a celebratory procession to honor a general for his victory over enemies of the State. At such events, both the spoils and the prisoners of war were put on display and bulls were led to the sacrifice while

the victorious general and his army received public acclaim. At the end of the procession, the bulls were sacrificed and many of the prisoners were likely executed.

The metaphor of the “sweet odor of Christ” signifying life for some and death for others is “probably drawn from the Roman practice of burning incense along the way of the procession,” says *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*. “The fragrance that signified triumph to the victors reminded the captives of the execution that likely awaited them.”*

* For an explanation of the spiritual meaning behind Paul’s illustration, see *The Watchtower*, November 15, 1990, page 27.

What were the “high places” frequently mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures?



THE REMAINS OF SACRED PILLARS, GEZER

■ When the Israelites were about to enter the Promised Land, Jehovah told them to eliminate all the places of worship of the Canaanites who lived there. “You must . . . destroy all their stone figures, and all their images of molten metal you should destroy, and all their sacred high places you should annihilate,” God commanded. (Numbers 33:52) Those centers of false worship may have been either open-air hilltop sites or constructed platforms in other locations, such as under trees or in cities. (1 Kings 14:23; 2 Kings 17:29; Ezekiel 6:3) They could be equipped with altars, sacred pillars or poles, images,

incense stands, and other paraphernalia for worship.

Prior to the construction of the temple in Jerusalem, the Israelites worshipped Jehovah at approved sites that the Scriptures call high places. God’s prophet Samuel offered sacrifices at “the high place” in an unnamed city in the land of Zuph. (1 Samuel 9:11-14) Once the temple was built, however, a number of kings who were faithful to Jehovah attempted to rid the land of its “high places.”—2 Kings 21:3; 23:5-8, 15-20; 2 Chronicles 17:1, 6.

“The Carpenter”

“Is this not the carpenter’s son?”—MATTHEW 13:55.

JESUS was known not only as “the carpenter’s son” but also as “the carpenter.” (Mark 6:3) He likely learned this trade from his adoptive father, Joseph.

What skills and tools did Jesus need to master when he worked as a carpenter? What products and services might he have provided to the inhabitants of Nazareth?

And how might his early training as a woodworking artisan have influenced him later in life?

A Family Business The picture below shows a father instructing his eldest son in the efficient and safe use of the bow drill. A younger son listens and watches attentively.

Boys often began their formal apprenticeship at about 12 to 15 years of age. They usually learned the trade from their father. Training stretched over many years, and the boys would have to put forth intense effort if they wanted to develop the necessary skills to become a master carpenter. Imagine



the many pleasant hours Joseph must have spent with Jesus—working with him, conversing with him, passing on his expertise to him. How Joseph must have watched with pride as Jesus mastered the craft!

Knowledge, Strength, and Skill Required A carpenter needed to know the characteristics of the wood he worked with. He could choose from locally grown timber, such as cypress, oak, cedar, sycamore, and olive. However, a first-century carpenter could not visit a lumber yard or a building supply store and pick up lumber cut to his specifications. Rather, he would travel to the forest, select the appropriate trees, fell them, and then haul the heavy logs back to his workshop.

What would a carpenter produce from the lumber he gathered? He might spend many hours outdoors, helping to build houses. He would mill rafters for the roof, manufacture stairs for the interior, and make doors, windows, and frames for the walls.

A carpenter would also produce furniture. The accompanying illustrations show some of these products—storage cabinets with drawers, shelves, or doors (1); stools (2), chairs (3), and tables (4) of various sizes and shapes; and cradles for daytime infant care. To decorate some furniture, he might inlay it with attractive wood carved to form intricate patterns. To protect and beautify the items, he might coat them with beeswax, varnish, or oil.

A carpenter also made products for the local farmers—yokes (5) shaped from heavy wood as well as forks, rakes, and shovels (6). The plows (7) he made had to be sturdy, for their iron points would be gouging furrows through rocky soil. He made wooden carts (8) and wagons and crafted the solid or spoked wheels upon which those vehi-

cles rode. His occupation might also include repairing and maintaining the furniture, tools, and vehicles he made.

Can you imagine how Jesus' work as a carpenter influenced his appearance? Think of Jesus' skin bronzed by the Middle Eastern sun, his muscles strengthened by years of physical labor, and his hands hardened from gripping rough wood and wielding axes, hammers, and saws.

A Source of Illustrations Jesus masterfully used simple, familiar objects to teach deep spiritual truths. Did he draw on his background as a carpenter for some of his illustrations? Consider a few possibilities. "Why, then, do you look at the straw in your brother's eye, but do not consider the rafter in your own eye?" he told one crowd. A carpenter would know how massive a rafter was. (Matthew 7:3) Later, Jesus said to another group: "No man that has put his hand to a plow and looks at the things behind is well fitted for the kingdom of God." He would



also likely have made his share of plows. (Luke 9:62) One of Jesus' warmest invitations involved a piece of equipment manufactured by a carpenter. "Take my yoke upon you and learn from me," said Jesus. "My yoke is kindly and my load is light." (Matthew 11:29, 30) Jesus no doubt knew how to

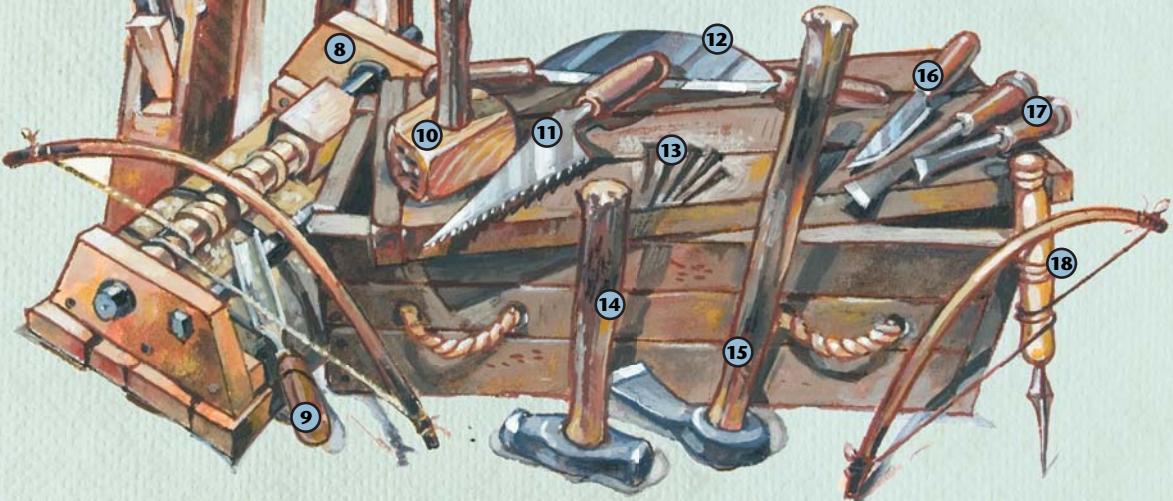
make a yoke that did not chafe but was "kindly," or well-fitted.

Jesus' opposers might disparagingly have referred to him as "the carpenter's son." Even so, as in the first century, Christians today consider it an honor to follow this humble former carpenter.

The Carpenter's Toolbox

A first-century carpenter like Jesus would need to know how to handle the tools depicted here. His saw (1) consisted of a wooden frame holding an iron blade with teeth set in a way that would cut on the pull stroke. He would use a square (2) to lay out his work and a plumb (3) to line up vertical surfaces. Also in his toolbox were a level (4), a rule stick (5), a plane with its sharp, adjustable iron blade for smoothing rough lumber (6), and an ax (7) for cutting down trees.

The carpenter's bow lathe (8) and gouge (9) were used for cutting and shaping spindles. On the toolbox lid, you can see a wooden mallet (10) used for pounding dowels into joints or for driving chisels. Also shown are a small handsaw (11), a drawknife (12) for shaping, and some nails (13). In front of the toolbox is an iron hammer (14) and an adze (15) for roughing out timber. On the lid is a knife (16) as well as chisels (17) of various widths. A bow drill (18) leans against the toolbox.





DRAW CLOSE TO GOD

"Lift Up Your Son"

2 KINGS 4:8-37

THE death of a child is among the most painful losses a human can experience. Jehovah God has the power to undo such losses. We know that this is true because he empowered a few men in Bible times to resurrect the dead. One case, recounted at 2 Kings 4:8-37, involved the resurrection of a young boy by the prophet Elisha.

The story unfolds in the city of Shunem. A barren woman and her husband extend kindness to Elisha, regularly offering him food and lodging. One day, the grateful prophet tells the woman: "At this appointed time next year you will be embracing a son." The day she thought would never come finally dawns, and true to Elisha's word she holds a baby son in her arms. Sadly, her joy is short-lived. A few years later, the boy suffers a severe headache while in a field and is carried home, where he dies "upon [his mother's] knees." (Verses 16, 19, 20) The bereaved mother lifts up the little corpse and gently places it on the couch that so often has served as the prophet's bed.

Without delay and with her husband's consent, she makes the trip of some 20 miles to Mount Carmel to see Elisha. Upon meeting him, she does not give way to wailing or weeping or other ways of expressing acute sorrow. Is it because she has heard that Elijah, Elisha's predecessor, had restored life to the son of a widow? (1 Kings

17:17-23) Does the Shunammite have faith that Elisha could do the same for her young son? Whatever the case, she refuses to leave for home until Elisha agrees to go with her.

Back in Shunem, Elisha alone enters the room he knows so well and sees the lifeless body "upon his couch." (Verse 32) The prophet approaches Jehovah with what must be an intensity of supplication. Then, as Elisha holds the little body, "gradually the child's flesh [grows] warm." The once still, tender heart is beating again! Elisha summons the mother and utters the words that must turn her agony into unbridled joy: "Lift up your son."—Verses 34, 36.

The account of the resurrection of the Shunammite woman's son is a source of hope and comfort. Jehovah understands the grief of parents who have lost a child in death. What is more, he yearns to undo such losses. (Job 14:14, 15) The resurrections performed by Elisha and others in Bible times are a token of what Jehovah will do on a far grander scale in his righteous new world to come.*

The Bible's promise of a resurrection does not eliminate the pain of losing a loved one. One faithful Christian man who lost his only child said: "My pain will not be gone completely until I can hold my son again." Imagine the prospect of being reunited with your loved ones who have died. Just the thought of being able to hold them again can make your pain easier to bear. Are you moved to learn more about the God who gives us this precious hope?

* For more information about the Bible's promise of a resurrection, see chapter 7 of the book *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* published by Jehovah's Witnesses.





128TH GILEAD GRADUATION

Missionaries Sent to "Make Disciples"

"IN ORDER for all the nations to hear the good news, some Christians were going to have to be willing to leave their family and their home to preach the good news in a foreign country." With those words, David Splane of the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses set the tone for an exciting spiritual event.

On March 13, 2010, nearly 8,000 people gathered for the graduation of the 128th class of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead. Friends, family members, and guests from 27 different countries attended the program.

"The Disciples Couldn't Just Stay at Home"

As chairman, Brother Splane opened the program by discussing Jesus' command: "Go therefore and make disciples of people of all the nations." (Matthew 28:19, 20) He emphasized that Jesus sent his disciples to the people. True, at Pentecost 33 C.E., individuals from Mesopotamia, North Africa, and many parts of the Roman Empire came to Jerusalem and heard the good news. Even so, "the disciples couldn't just stay at home and wait for people from all the nations to come to them," said the speaker. "They had to go to the most distant part of the earth to find the people."—Acts 1:8.

"Jesus didn't just tell his disciples what to do," said Brother Splane. "He taught them how to do it. He didn't just tell them to pray; he taught them how to pray. He didn't tell them to preach; he showed them how to preach. He didn't just tell them to be good

teachers; he demonstrated good, effective teaching methods."

Addressing the parents of the graduating students, the chairman quoted Jesus' assurance to his disciples: "Look! I am with you all the days until the conclusion of the system of things." (Matthew 28:20) Brother Splane reassured the audience that Jesus would continue to care for the students in their foreign assignments.

"Go Ahead and Boast"

Anthony Morris of the Governing Body encouraged the class to "go ahead and boast." He said that there are appropriate and inappropriate kinds of boasting. Inappropriate boasting involves bringing glory to ourselves. Appropriate boasting is described at 1 Corinthians 1:31: "He that boasts, let him boast in Jehovah." Brother Morris said: "That's something to brag about—to have insight and knowledge of Jehovah God. In fact, your greatest privilege—and mine—is to bear that holy name, to be one of Jehovah's Witnesses."—Jeremiah 9:24.

The speaker then emphasized the importance of making Jehovah's name known by sharing the experience of a missionary in Africa. The missionary, along with his wife, was traveling to give a Bible lecture. At a check-point, a young soldier pointed a gun at the brother and asked who he was. His wife, who recalled her Gilead training, leaned over and whispered to him, "Tell him you're one of Jehovah's Witnesses and you're on your way to give a Bible lecture." He took her advice, and they were allowed to pass through the check-

point. The next day, the couple heard on the radio that the president had told his soldiers to be on the lookout for assassins who were calling themselves missionaries! By identifying themselves as Jehovah's Witnesses rather than saying they were missionaries, the couple was spared much heartache. Brother Morris concluded his talk, saying: "When you arrive in your assignment, you go ahead and boast. Boast in all that Jehovah is going to accomplish as he uses you to his everlasting glory."

"Will You Fulfill Your Mission?"

Geoffrey Jackson, a member of the Governing Body and former missionary, helped the graduating students consider the above question. He asked, "What do we mean when we say that someone is a missionary?" He explained that the word "missionary" comes from a Latin expression that refers to a person or a group that has received a special assignment. As Jehovah's Witnesses, our mission is to preach the good news and to help others spiritually. We do this work in imitation of Jesus Christ, who always kept his mission on earth clearly in mind. To the Roman Governor Pontius Pilate, Jesus said: "For this I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth."—John 18:37.

The speaker helped the class reflect on the Bible account of the battle of Jericho. For six days the Israelite warriors got up early in the morning, put on armor, and marched around Jericho, only to return home. "From a human viewpoint," said the speaker, "their mission seemed irrational and strange." He said that some soldiers may have thought, 'What a waste of time.' On the seventh day, though, the Israelites were directed to circle the city seven times, after which they had to shout a great war cry. The result? Jericho's walls fell flat!—Joshua 6:13-15, 20.

From the account of Jericho, Brother Jackson drew four lessons. (1) *Obedience is essential*. We should do things Jehovah's way, not feeling that our way is better. (2) *Faith and trust in Jehovah are vital*. "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down," not by the use of battering rams. (Hebrews 11:30) (3) *We must be patient*. In time, Jehovah's blessing will "overtake you." (Deuteronomy 28:2) (4) *Don't give up*. Never forget your mission. Brother Jackson summed up his discussion, saying, "If you keep those points in mind, you will fulfill your mission to Jehovah's praise and glory."

Other Highlights of the Program

"Love the Bible and Its Author." That was the theme developed by Maxwell Lloyd, a member of the United States Branch Committee. He told the class, "The Bible must be a living book to you." He then gave them the following encouragement: Never let your love for Jehovah God become dormant. Do not take for granted that everybody understands what you are teaching. Learn to simplify Bible truths in order to get the material into your students' hearts. Be humble. Do not give the appearance that you have superior knowledge. Teach by example. May your students see in you a deep love of the Bible.

"Mark Well the Ravens." Michael Burnett, a class instructor and former missionary, delivered the talk with the above title. He said that we are going to have anxious thoughts on occasion. But remember Jesus' counsel: "Mark well that the ravens neither sow seed nor reap, . . . and yet God feeds them." (Luke 12:24) According to the Law covenant, ravens were unclean, not fit to be eaten. They were to be considered loathsome. (Leviticus 11:13, 15) In spite of their status, God feeds them. "So if you are confronted with major anxiety in the future," said Brother Burnett, "think about the raven. If God takes care of an unclean, loathsome bird, how much more so is



Gilead students reenact one of their preaching experiences

he going to take care of you who are clean in his eyes."

"I Do You No Wrong." Mark Noumair, another Gilead instructor, helped all in attendance to examine the illustration Jesus gave regarding vineyard workers. Some workers toiled all day. Others labored just one hour. Yet, they all received the same wage! Murmuring broke out among those who worked longer. To the complainers, the master of the vineyard said: "I do you no wrong. You agreed with me for a denarius, did you not? Take what is yours and go." (Matthew 20: 13, 14) The lesson? Do not compare yourself with others. "Negative comparisons will only rob you of joy," said Brother Noumair. "Worse yet, they could cause you to leave your assignment, giving up a precious privilege of service." The speaker reminded the class that Jesus is directing the spiritual har-

vest in our day and can do with his followers as he pleases. If Jehovah and Jesus decide to do something extra for others, they do you no wrong. Focus on what is yours, and never allow the "wages" of others to sidetrack you from the work Jehovah has given you to do.

Experiences and Interviews

When not in class or doing homework, Gilead students join local congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses in the public preaching work. Sam Roberson, one of the Gilead instructors, interviewed a number of students regarding their experiences. Sister Alessandra Kirchler, for example, met a woman who was very much concerned about her son's smoking habit. Alessandra later called back with an *Awake!* article on the subject. No one was at home, but she left the article anyway. Eventually, Alessandra found the woman at home and was invited in. The lady appreciated the article and said, "I've often wondered what God is trying to teach me with all the trials he gives me." Alessandra showed her from the Bible that God does not cause bad things to happen to us. (James 1:13) Now both the woman and her son are enjoying a Bible study.

Melvin Jones of the Service Department conducted interviews with three former Gilead graduates: Jon Sommerud, who serves in Albania; Mark Anderson, who serves in Kenya; and James Hinderer, who serves in the Theocratic Schools Department. All three agreed that Gilead not only teaches students basic Bible truths but also teaches them how to apply those truths, no matter who the students are or where they serve.

One of the students then read a touching letter of appreciation from the class. John Barr, 96, the oldest member of the Governing Body, concluded the program with a prayer, asking Jehovah to bless the work of the 128th class of Gilead.



128th Graduating Class of the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead

In the list below, rows are numbered from front to back, and names are listed from left to right in each row.

- (1) Keller, E.; Ostropowich, I.; Jacobsen, S.; Arias, M.; Dieckmann, Y.; Tanaka, J.; Harada, K.
- (2) Camacho, L.; Kirchler, A.; Rodriguez, S.; Ward, B.; Trenalone, K.; Victoria, V.; Oxley, F.; Nguyen, K.
- (3) Oxley, O.; De Dios, A.; Lindström, C.; Allen, J.; Meads, T.; Waddington, J.; Victoria, E.
- (4) Harada, H.; Lindström, A.; Orsini, E.; Logue, D.; Missud, T.; Bergeron, S.; Camacho, G.; Ward, T.
- (5) Kirchler, W.; Nguyen, H.; Kremer, E.; Burgaud, C.; Titmas, N.; De Dios, C.; Rodriguez, A.; Waddington, M.
- (6) Dieckmann, J.; Allen, C.; Titmas, R.; Arias, J.; Bergeron, E.; Keller, J.; Ostropowich, F.; Burgaud, F.
- (7) Tanaka, K.; Kremer, J.; Jacobsen, R.; Trenalone, J.; Logue, J.; Meads, D.; Missud, D.; Orsini, A.

Class assigned to the **25** countries shown below:



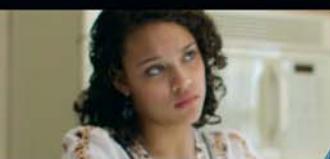


U.S. National Archives photo

Will the earth be destroyed? SEE PAGE 5.



According to the Bible, what will God bring to an end? SEE PAGES 5-6.



If you are annoyed with your spouse, what will help you to communicate tactfully? SEE PAGE 12.



What did Jesus say was the secret to being happy?
SEE PAGE 16.



How might Jesus' training as a carpenter have influenced his teaching? SEE PAGES 25-26.

Would you welcome a visit?