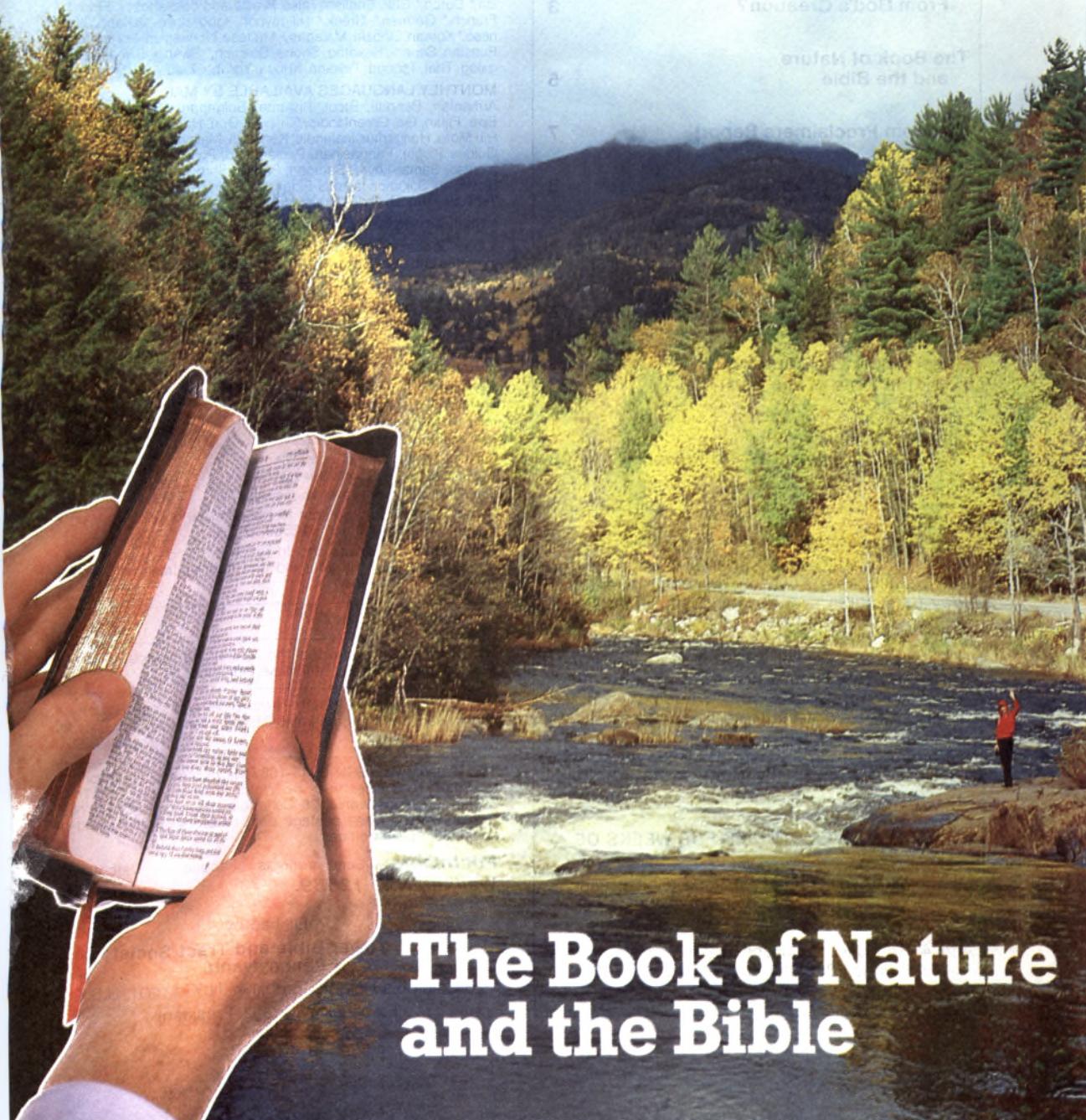


The Watchtower

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom

March 1, 1988



**The Book of Nature
and the Bible**

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

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What Can We Learn From God's Creation?

Creation Had It First: Sonar

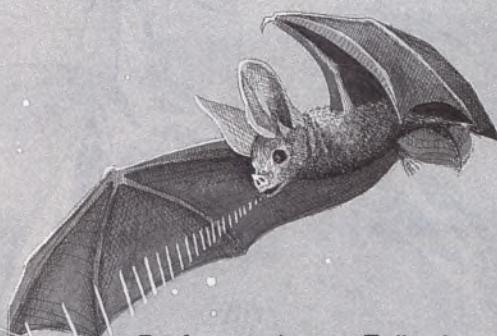
Bats are equipped with a system somewhat similar to a sonar, enabling them to locate and follow the movements of their prey by sending out sounds and analyzing the echoes. But a certain moth (the dogbane tiger) has a jamming signal that sends out waves similar to those of its adversary. Upon receiving the signal, the bat, not having enough time to analyze whether it is an obstacle or not, systematically avoids the moth.



PIGEONS find their bearings by using clusters of magnetic crystals in their heads and necks. Certain fish produce electricity. Several varieties of birds remove excess salt from the seawater they drink. Some shellfish have cavities that can be filled either with water to dive or with gas to surface again.

Yes, whether he realizes it or not, whenever a man uses a compass, generates electricity, designs a submarine, or desalinates seawater, he is in fact just imitating God's creation.

Indeed, God's creation has so many lessons for man that it sometimes is called "the book of nature." For example, bionics is a branch of science devoted to a practical application of systems found in



Professor James Fullard, of the University of Toronto, Canada, expressed his admiration, saying: "The amazing thing is the sheer volume of information processing and profound neurological decisions handled by both the bats and the moths, using a very limited number of nerve cells. They exhibit a degree of economy and sophistication that could be the envy of human aerial warfare strategists."

creation. These include airplane wings with features like those of birds, submarines shaped like dolphins, and concrete structures designed like human bones. But is technical knowledge all that "the book of nature" has to offer?

No, it sometimes provides practical lessons of a moral nature too. Referring to the ant's instinct for diligence, for example, the Bible book of Proverbs admonishes: "Go to the ant, you lazy one; see its ways and become wise. Although it has no commander, officer or ruler, it prepares its food even in the summer; it has gathered its food supplies even in the harvest."—Proverbs 6:6-8.

However, ethology, a science claiming

to draw lessons from animal behavior, has its limitations. Human behavior cannot be put in exactly the same category as that of animals. Noteworthy differences, such as language and an infinitely more sophisticated thinking process in man, must be taken into consideration. As one scientist put it: "We are not just smarter apes." Our minds "make us qualitatively different from all other forms of life."

Moreover, there are some questions that a close study of creation alone can never answer. These include: Does life have a purpose? Does God exist, and if so, does he care about us? Let us now see if such questions can be answered.



Creation Had It First: The Diving Bell

About the beginning of the 16th century, Leonardo da Vinci is said to have invented a diving apparatus. But a certain spider named *Argyroneta aquatica* already had a perfect system for breathing under water. As Andrée Tétry explains in her book *Les outils chez les êtres vivants* (Tools Used by Living Beings), this spider "settles in slow-moving streams among submerged aquatic plants and weaves among them a fine horizontal network, loosely held in place by a multitude of threads. Returning to the surface, . . . the spider, with a sudden jerk, catches an air bubble in its water-repellent abdominal hairs. . . . Down the spider goes again and sets the air bubble free underneath the network of silken threads. The bubble then rises to form a slight bulge in the net." By repeated trips, the spider accumulates enough air to spend the day under its bell, where it eats the prey caught during the night. Concerning this, Tétry adds: "Man's diving apparatuses, therefore, correspond with the most specialized types observed in nature."

The Book of Nature and the Bible

"The universe confounds me! I cannot imagine that such a 'clock' can exist without there being a Clockmaker."

—Voltaire, 18th-century French philosopher.

A PRECISION watch inspires admiration for the skill and talent of its maker. But what about the universe that surrounds us? Can that reveal, at least to a degree, the personality of its Creator?

Almost 2,000 years ago, the apostle Paul, one of the writers of the Bible, gave an answer to this question: "For [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." (Romans 1:20) So, what can we learn from observing this book of nature?

What the Clock Teaches Us About the Clockmaker

A majestic waterfall, the sea during a storm, a clear night sky filled with thousands of stars—these are some things that make us think of a powerful Creator. The precision of the orbits of the planets can also remind us, as it reminded Voltaire, that the Creator must be a Grand Organizer, a Master Clockmaker.—Psalm 104:1.

The variety of the earth's produce—the fruits and vegetables that we receive in abundance—also bear witness to God's generosity. Paul attested to this when he

declared that God "did not leave himself without witness in that he did good, giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling your hearts to the full with food and good cheer."—Acts 14:17.

What the Clock Does Not Tell Us

Further examination of the book of nature would teach us about still other qualities of God. But if we rely solely on what we learn from creation, our knowledge of God will always be limited. The French writer Robert Lenoble explains this in his book *Esquisse d'une histoire de l'idée de Nature*, (An Outline History of the Idea of Nature): "Man will always turn his attention to Nature in order to penetrate its mystery and discover its secret, a secret that will never come out of a laboratory." More than half of the Frenchmen polled by the Catholic daily *La Croix*—whether they were believers or atheists—agree with this



*The universe reveals aspects of
God's personality*

and admit that "science will never be able to give a sufficient explanation of the universe, since a lot of things belong to the philosophical or the religious field."

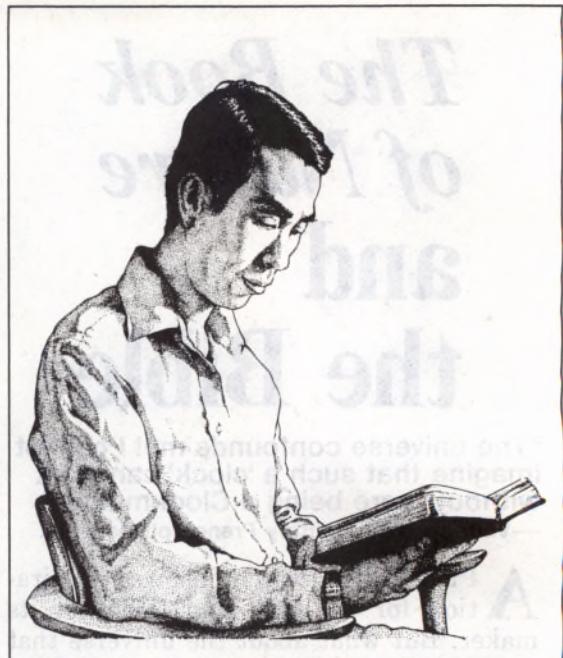
About 3,500 years ago, the faithful Job came to the same conclusion. He raised the question: "But wisdom—where can it be found, and where, now, is the place of understanding?" Is this wisdom to be found in the book of creation? "The watery deep itself has said, 'It is not in me!' The sea too has said, 'It is not with me!' It has been hidden even from the eyes of everyone alive, and from the flying creatures of the heavens it has been concealed."—Job 28:12, 14, 21.

Where, then, should we go to find this wisdom? That same book answers: "God is the One who has understood its way, and he himself has known its place." (Job 28:23) And God has shared his wisdom with mankind in a wonderful way by means of his Word, the Bible.

Unique Knowledge From the Bible

The Bible gives us unique insight into the origin of mankind. It tells us that God prepared the earth and then placed there the first human couple. Our first parents could have lived eternally in perfect surroundings. But they rebelled, and by their sin they opened the way for all the evils—including sin and death—that have afflicted mankind.—Genesis, chapters 1 to 3; Romans 5:12-21.

The Bible also tells us in detail the steps taken by God to remedy the situation. Thousands of years after Adam and Eve, God's own Son, Jesus, came to earth to give mankind the opportunity to be reconciled to God. Christ thus held out to humans who would exercise faith in him and who would recognize the value of his sacrifice the prospect of eternal life on an earth that would be turned into a paradise.—Luke 23:43; John 3:16.



Only the Bible can tell us about God's purposes toward man and the earth

This hope is offered to each one of us. To realize it we must acquire accurate 'knowledge of the only true God and of the one he sent forth, Jesus Christ.' We must also live in harmony with that hope. This accurate knowledge is found in the Bible.—John 17:3; James 2:24-26.

Would you like to have a detailed answer to questions such as, Where did man come from? What happens after death? What are the causes of mankind's problems? Is there any hope that they will be solved some day? When and how will God bring about perfect conditions for humanity? If so, we encourage you to look into the Bible, the only book that will give you answers from the God of the universe and the only book containing "the basis of a hope of the everlasting life." The purpose of the Watchtower Society's publications is to help you find these answers in your Bible.—Titus 1:1, 2.

Kingdom Proclaimers Report

Jehovah Blesses Integrity Keepers in Cyprus

JESUS said to his followers: "If they have persecuted me, they will persecute you also." (John 15:20) And Jehovah, by means of the prophet Isaiah, said: "Any weapon whatever that will be formed against you will have no success." (Isaiah 54:17) These expressions have both proved true in Cyprus, where the integrity-keeping Witnesses of Jehovah are busy preaching the good news.

□ "The Greek Orthodox Church has been very active trying to undermine our work," says a report from that land. "The priests distribute leaflets accusing us of all sorts of things and telling the people to avoid discussions with Jehovah's Witnesses. They even visit people who study the Bible with the Witnesses and try to discourage them. In Paphos, a priest-theologian tried to convince

three different persons to stop studying the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses. On different occasions, each of the three invited a brother to have a discussion with this theologian. Happily, all three are now actively associated with Jehovah's organization." This, of course, annoyed the priest, who commented: "I will never again have a discussion with Jehovah's Witnesses." Some priests even went so far as to strike some of the brothers while these were engaged in the ministry. Usually, however, the efforts of the clergy backfire, and more people are now taking their stand for Jehovah.

□ The following experience from Cyprus shows that keeping integrity under opposition brings blessings. A woman's husband was killed during the war of 1974, leaving her with a

little girl to raise. The woman remarried. Disillusioned by the hypocrisy of the clergy and the uncertainty of the future, she agreed to study the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses. She progressed rapidly and started telling her relatives the good things she was learning. Opposition began. The biggest test came when her 15-year-old daughter remarked: "I have lost my father, and if you do not stop studying with Jehovah's Witnesses, I will renounce you as my mother. I shall be an orphan." Nevertheless, the woman continued to study.

One day the girl visited a friend in the hospital. At the next hospital bed, a Witness was visiting his relative when a priest came to see the same patient. A conversation started between the brother and the priest. The brother was calm and tactful, using the Bible to explain his position. The priest, on the other hand, was aggressive. He raised his voice, but not a single time did he open the Bible. The girl watched the scene and was impressed by the kindness of the brother and by the fact that he used the Bible. That very evening, when the brother and his wife visited her mother for the Bible study, the girl explained what had happened at the hospital and asked them: "Could you study with me as well?" Now the girl is studying twice a week, and the husband too is studying. The mother is a baptized publisher.

Truly, Jehovah is blessing his integrity-keeping servants in Cyprus!



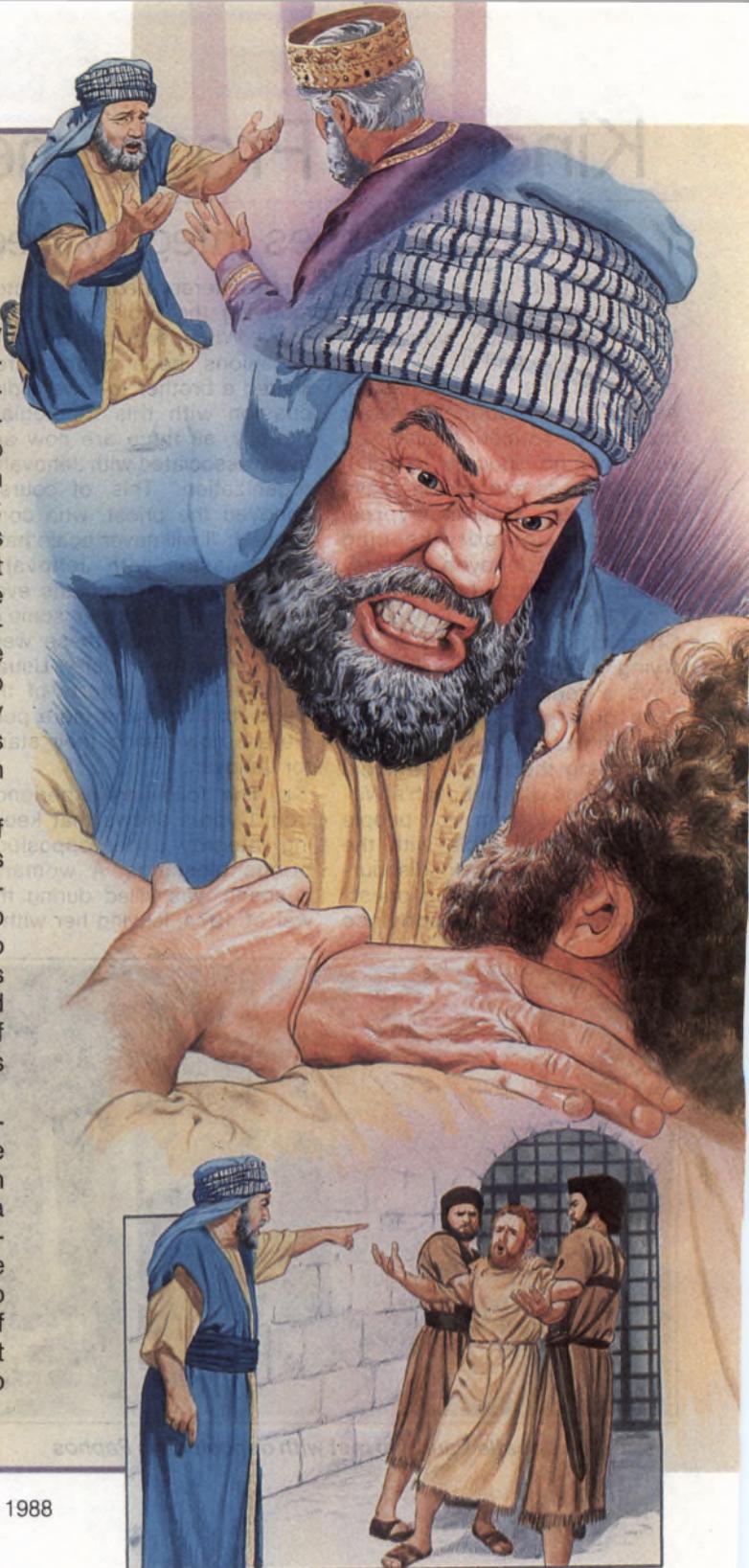
The apostle Paul also met with opposition in Paphos

A Lesson in Forgiveness

JESUS is apparently still in the house in Capernaum with his disciples. He has been discussing with them how to handle difficulties between brothers, so Peter asks: "Lord, how many times is my brother to sin against me and am I to forgive him?" Since Jewish religious teachers propose granting forgiveness up to three times, Peter probably considers it very generous to suggest: "Up to seven times?"

But the whole idea of keeping such a record is wrong. Jesus corrects Peter: "I say to you, not, Up to seven times, but, Up to seventy-seven times." He is showing that no limit should be put on the number of times Peter forgives his brother.

To impress on the disciples their obligation to be forgiving, Jesus tells them an illustration. It is about a king who wants to settle accounts with his slaves. One slave is brought to him who owes the enormous debt of 60,000,000 denarii (about \$50,000,000). There is no



way he can pay it. So, as Jesus explains, the king orders him and his wife and his children to be sold and payment to be made.

At that the slave falls down at his master's feet and begs: "Be patient with me and I will pay back everything to you."

Moved with pity, the master mercifully cancels the slave's enormous debt. But no sooner has he done so, Jesus continues, than this slave goes and finds a fellow slave who owes him only 100 denarii (about \$90). The man grabs his fellow slave by the throat and begins choking him, saying: "Pay back whatever you owe."

But the fellow slave does not have the money. So he falls at the feet of the slave to whom he is in debt, begging: "Be patient with me and I will pay you back." Unlike his master, the slave is not

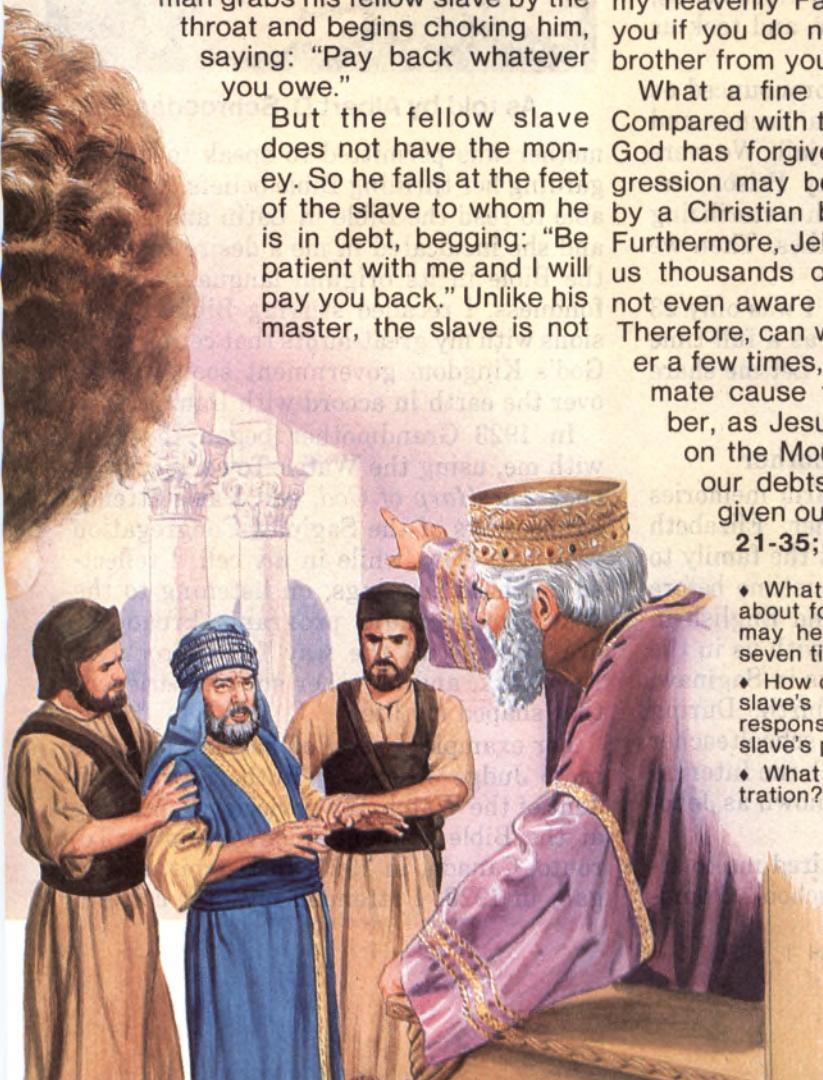
merciful, and he has his fellow slave thrown into prison.

Well, Jesus continues, the other slaves who saw what had happened go and tell the master. He, in turn, angrily summons the slave. "Wicked slave," he says, "I canceled all that debt for you, when you entreated me. Ought you not, in turn, to have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I also had mercy on you?" Provoked to wrath, the master delivers the unmerciful slave over to the jailers until he should pay back all that he owes.

Then Jesus concludes: "In like manner my heavenly Father will also deal with you if you do not forgive each one his brother from your hearts."

What a fine lesson in forgiveness! Compared with the large debt of sin that God has forgiven us, whatever transgression may be committed against us by a Christian brother is small indeed. Furthermore, Jehovah God has forgiven us thousands of times. Often, we are not even aware of our sins against him. Therefore, can we not forgive our brother a few times, even if we have a legitimate cause for complaint? Remember, as Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount, God will "forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors." **Matthew 18: 21-35; 6:12; Colossians 3:13.**

- ♦ What prompts Peter's question about forgiving his brother, and why may he consider his suggestion of seven times to be generous?
- ♦ How did the king's response to his slave's plea differ from that of the response of the slave to a fellow slave's plea?
- ♦ What do we learn from Jesus' illustration?



My Life in Jehovah's Spirit-Directed Organization

THE first Sunday in June 1934, Alex Jones and I were preaching from door to door in Jersey City, New Jersey. Suddenly, police officers rushed into the apartment house where we were, arrested us, shoved us roughly into a car, and took us off to jail!

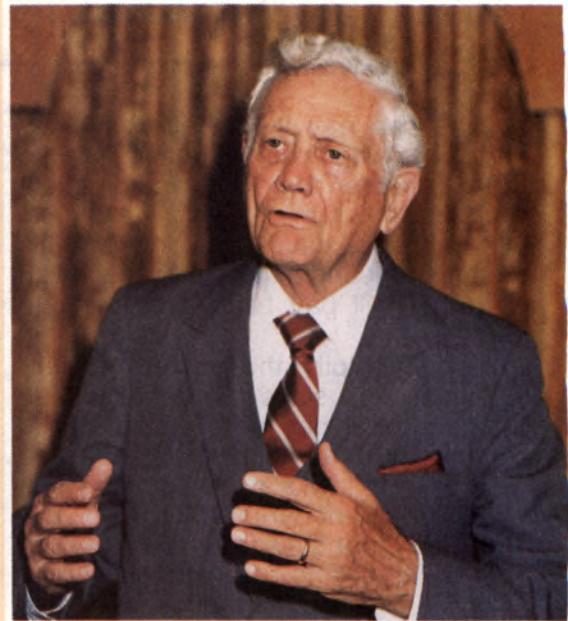
Three days later, a judge pronounced us guilty of peddling without a license and sentenced us to ten days in jail. We were taken to the Hudson County Prison, required to undress, go through a sterilizing bath, and put on prison clothes. Then we were marched to a cell.

Here I had time to reflect. I was only 23 and was happy with my life as a full-time minister at Brooklyn Bethel. Let me share some of those reflections.

Grateful to Grandmother

Particularly did I have warm memories of my maternal grandmother, Elizabeth Darger. Her parents brought the family to Michigan from Germany sometime before 1870. She taught German and English in the public schools and lived with us in the home of my Lutheran parents in Saginaw, Michigan, the city of my birth. During World War I, she and her schoolteacher sisters became associated with the International Bible Students, now known as Jehovah's Witnesses.

Although my parents required me to attend the Lutheran Sunday school, Grand-



As told by Albert D. Schroeder

mother was permitted to speak to me regarding her thrilling Bible beliefs. She was able to read the Bible in Latin and Greek, and she inculcated in me a desire to study the Bible in its original languages. With fondness, I recalled stirring Bible discussions with my great-aunts that centered on God's Kingdom government soon to take over the earth in accord with Daniel 2:44.

In 1923 Grandmother began to study with me, using the Watch Tower Society's book *The Harp of God*, and I also attended meetings of the Saginaw Congregation with her. Now, while in my cell, I reflected on those meetings, on listening to the Watchtower radio programs broadcast over WBBR all the way from Brooklyn, New York, and on other such experiences that shaped my life.

For example, I recalled hearing over the radio Judge Joseph F. Rutherford, president of the Watch Tower Society, speaking at the Bible Student's convention in Toronto, Canada, in 1927. In Detroit, Michigan, in 1928, I attended my first conven-

tion. There I heard Brother Rutherford speak in person. At that convention, I rejoiced to shout "Aye" to the resolution "Declaration Against Satan and for Jehovah." The new book *Government* was released that showed God's Kingdom to be a theocratic government, not a democratic one.

Reflections on School Days

I also reflected on my school days. On the urgings of my parents, who did not want me to become a full-time minister, I accepted a college scholarship. Thus, in September 1929, I entered the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor to study language, economics, and engineering.

Mrs. Judson, the landlady in whose building I lived, was in touch with the Ann Arbor Congregation of Bible Students. On my return to school in the fall of 1930, she told me that a fine young man from Alabama had just moved into the room across from mine and that she thought he would be responsive to "our Bible message." Indeed he was! William Addison Elrod and I quickly became fast friends as he embraced Bible truths; and we continue to be friends to this day.

Bill Elrod and I took a surveying course during the summer of 1931, so we were unable to attend in person the 1931 convention in Columbus, Ohio. However, on Sunday, July 26, we did listen to the public talk on the radio and were among the enthusiastic invisible audience that accepted the beautiful new name "Jehovah's Witnesses."

In those days Socialist, Fascist, and Communist forms of government were being discussed extensively on campus. In October 1931 Winston Churchill spoke to 3,000 of us students, advocating democracy as still the best form of government. Later, in December 1931, Lord Bertrand Russell, the renowned British mathematician and philosopher, spoke on pacifism.

Still later, Dr. Hjalmar Schacht, president of the Reichsbank in Berlin, Germany, discussed the need for nationalistic control of economies; in other words, he advocated national socialism, or Nazism. Two years later he was in Hitler's government as minister of economic affairs.

Having heard the appeals of these world statesmen, I was more convinced than ever that the Messiah's kingship alone can be a satisfactory world government. So Bill Elrod and I planned to finish school June 15, 1932, and then begin as partners in the full-time preaching work, now known as pioneering.

We began our pioneer service before we were baptized because at that time it was not clearly understood whether those with the earthly hope needed to be baptized or not. However, after I was baptized in Vandercook Lake, Michigan, July 24, 1932, it became evident that my hope had changed to that of an anointed one, which was confirmed by the 'witness of the spirit.'

—Romans 8:16.

Brooklyn Bethel Service

On September 9, while we were pioneering in Howell, Michigan, Bill came running out of the post office waving a yellow telegram. Opening it, we read the invitation from Brother Rutherford to report for Bethel service as soon as convenient. It took us only 72 hours to wind up our pioneer affairs and then drive the 700 miles to Brooklyn in our Model T Ford. We finally crossed the Brooklyn Bridge and arrived at Bethel on September 13, 1932. At the time, there were about 200 members of the Bethel family, most of them of the King's anointed brothers.

After serving in a factory assignment for a few weeks, I received a job change to the Service Department. An affable Irish brother, Thomas J. Sullivan, was the overseer. He always reminded us younger ones,

'When problems are presented, be sure to get all the facts before suggesting a solution.' (Proverbs 18:13) With a twinkle in his eyes, he would add: "What is your hurry? Give Jehovah an opportunity. See what his spirit does about it."

Reflecting on these past experiences while in prison, I rejoiced at the privilege of suffering for righteousness' sake, even as did Jesus Christ and the apostles. (John 15:20; 1 Peter 4:16) As I look back, I realize that such experiences were preparing me for future privileges.

Thrilling New Light

Early in 1935, some six months after my release from prison and return to Bethel, I recall a number of discussions at the Bethel table regarding the identity of the "great multitude." (Revelation 7:9, 13, *King James Version*) Some expressed support for the view that this was a secondary heavenly class, even as the first president of the Watch Tower Society, Brother Russell, had taught. Others, however, argued that the "great multitude" consisted of those with an earthly hope. During these discussions, Brother Rutherford did not commit himself.

All of us at Bethel were excited as we traveled by special train to Washington, D.C., for the convention to be held from May 30 to June 3, 1935. On the second day of the convention, Brother Rutherford presented the thrilling news that the "great multitude" are indeed an earthly class. At the climactic moment, he asked: "Will all those who have the hope of living forever on the earth please stand?" About half of the 20,000 in attendance stood. Then Brother Rutherford proclaimed: "Behold! The great multitude!" There was a brief hush. Then we all shared in a gladsome cry, and the cheering was loud and long. The next day 840 were baptized, mostly of the earthly class.

This 1935 new light on the "great multi-



With my partner, Bill Elrod

tude" led to steps of reorganization in 1936 to prepare for the expected influx of members of this class. For example, until then, there was just one large English congregation in all of New York City, but now new congregations were formed with us younger anointed ones being assigned as overseers. Today, there are 336 congregations in New York City!

A New Assignment

Thursday, November 11, 1937, proved a momentous day for me. I had received notice to come to Brother Rutherford's office that afternoon at 3:00 p.m. Arriving on time, I was concerned that I might be in for some reprimand. But after a few friendly exchanges, Brother Rutherford asked whether I would be willing to take up another assignment.

"I'm willing to serve wherever needed," I replied.

Then, taking me completely by surprise, Brother Rutherford inquired: "How would you like to serve at the London Bethel as branch servant?"

"My, that's a big assignment!" I commented.

"Furthermore, this means a one-way ticket, agreeing to stay there until after Armageddon. So I will give you three days to decide," he continued.

"Well, Brother Rutherford, I don't need the three days. If it is Jehovah's will that I go, my answer is yes!"

"I thought that would be your answer," he replied. "Brother Knorr already has your ticket on the liner *Queen Mary* that sails for England next Wednesday."

My head began to whirl. "You will receive training during the next few days," Brother Rutherford concluded.

When I returned to the Service Department, located in the factory, Brother Knorr began laughing at my overwhelming surprise. He knew what had just happened. Nathan Knorr was factory overseer and earlier had traveled to England with Brother Rutherford. At once he began giving me training on how to oversee a branch operation. A few days later, I returned to Brother Rutherford for further preparation.

Brother Rutherford's advice, based on Micah 6:8, was 'to do justly, stand firm for organizational policies, uphold Bible standards, render prompt obedience, and not to procrastinate. Be kind in dealing with the brothers, share regularly in the field service, and be humble in walking with God.' He said the British field had leveled off because the previous branch overseers did not fully support the field ministry. So he concluded emphatically: "Encourage increased field service. Britain right now needs 1,000 pioneers, not just 200 as they have at present."

Reception in England

When the *Queen Mary* landed at Southampton, I took the train to London and then went by taxi to the Society's branch

office, which for 26 years had been located at 34 Craven Terrace, Lancaster Gate. The International Bible Students Association vice president received me cordially. I delivered to him Brother Rutherford's letter that authorized him to dismiss the branch servant and to notify the Bethel family that I would be replacing him. This was done at the noon meal, and the 30 Bethel members received me warmly.

In time I became acquainted with many of the branch servants and representatives in Europe. These were anointed ones that took the lead uncompromisingly in the preaching work in spite of the Hitler-time obstacles, men such as Martin Harbeck of Switzerland, Charles Knecht of France, Fritz Hartstang of the Netherlands, Johan Eneroth of Sweden, William Dey of Denmark, and courageous Robert Winkler of the Society's German underground organization. By every Scriptural means, these fearless men of faith withstood the harsh Nazi persecutions.

Brother Rutherford Visits

In 1938, the year before the outbreak of World War II, the British had developed transoceanic radio-telephone transmission. Their engineers agreed to tie in four continents for a special convention centered in London, September 9 to 11. The Royal Albert Hall, the largest suitable place in London, was engaged for the convention. Brother Rutherford's group, including Nathan Knorr, arrived three weeks early to aid with preparations.

To advertise the public talk, sandwich-sign parades were organized. Before the first information march was due to take place, Brother Rutherford asked to see me. While we were discussing convention matters, he was doodling with his pen, which at times he did when talking with someone. He peeled from a pad what he had written and handed it to me. "What do you think of that?" he asked.

"RELIGION IS A SNARE AND A RACKET," it read.

"It looks blazing hot," I replied.

"I meant it to be strong," he said. He then instructed that placards with this wording be made in time for our first convention information march Wednesday evening. The next night Nathan Knorr and I led the march of about a thousand brothers for six miles through the center of London.

Brother Rutherford called me to his office the next morning and asked for a report. "Many called us communists and atheists and made other hostile remarks," I said. So he thought for a few minutes and finally peeled off a sheet with the suggested slogan "SERVE GOD AND CHRIST THE KING." He thought that interspersing signs with these words might neutralize the catcall reaction, which it did. This 1938 convention went off well. The principal sessions on Saturday and Sunday, with the feature lecture "Face the Facts," were transmitted successfully to 49 simultaneously held conventions throughout the English-speaking world.

After the convention, a training session was held with the branch servants of European countries. During the session, Brother Rutherford severely reprimanded me for the lack of training of the attendants. The

discipline brought tears to my eyes. Later, William Dey of Denmark comforted me privately, saying that Brother Rutherford was using me to teach all of them indirectly. And so it was! The next day Brother Rutherford, who liked to put on an apron and cook, invited all of us to a special dinner that he had prepared. All enjoyed delightful fellowship.

The World War II Years

On September 1, 1939, Hitler invaded Poland. On Sunday, September 3, Britain declared war on Germany. Thousands of us in Britain were out in the field service that morning, appropriately placing the new book *Salvation*. At each door people were shaken; some women were crying. All of us ran out of Bible literature as we gave Scriptural comfort to the people.

The following month, we received an advance copy of the November 1, 1939, *Watchtower* article entitled "Neutrality." Right on time it outlined the Scriptural position for true Christians during worldly conflicts. (John 17:16) Soon arrests and imprisonment of hundreds of our British brothers and sisters began to take place.

The air warfare over Britain, called the Battle of Britain, grew intense late in 1940 and continued into 1941. We in London endured 57 consecutive nights of 14-hour-long bombings. The air was alive with screeching noises. Fires burned furiously everywhere. Twenty-nine bombs fell within 500 yards of Bethel. Our large Kingdom Hall adjacent to Bethel was set afire by incendiary bombs, but it was quickly brought under control by our trained Bethel brothers.

There were wartime restrictions of many kinds, including food rationing and limits on travel. Yet, we kept up and even increased our house-to-house preaching. In 1937 Britain had 4,375 publishers, but

In Our Next Issue

- Is Prayer Worth the Effort?
- Trust in Jehovah Leads to Dedication and Baptism
- Medo-Persia—The Fourth Great World Power in Bible History

by 1942 the number had increased to 12,436. Pioneers had increased from 201 when I arrived in England in 1937 to 1,488 in 1942! Surely, Jehovah has richly blessed this early sowing by field preachers. Now, more than 50 years later, there are more than 109,000 Kingdom publishers in Britain, including more than 6,000 regular pioneers.

From September 3 to 7, 1941, we accomplished, aided by Jehovah's spirit, what government officials called "impossible." We held Britain's largest convention of Jehovah's Witnesses to that date. Over 12,000 met at Leicester's De Montfort Hall and its surrounding grounds right in the midst of war. This was the same hall that was used when the Society's 1983 annual corporation meeting was held in Leicester. Over three thousand of us then reminisced about the 1941 wartime convention experiences.

The London office became a refugee center during the war. Its phone was always ringing. A relief fund was made available, enabling brothers who were bombed out to get immediate aid. Also, brothers who were refugees from Poland, Germany, Norway, France, Belgium, Holland, and other places came to London where they were given a helping hand. Many of these took up pioneer service in Britain.

Persona Non Grata

As soon as the United States entered the war on December 8, 1941, I lost my exemption as a U.S. citizen from the British military draft. Because of my Christian

neutralitv, I could not comply with the various orders issued by the British government for war duties. Finally, on May 6, 1942, the British government notified me that I was persona non grata and therefore was ordered to return to the United States.

On August 1, London's *Daily Herald* carried my picture on its front page along with the article "They've Told Him 'Go Home.'"

On Monday morning, August 24, 1942, two Scotland Yard detectives arrested me for deportation. They took me by train to Glasgow, Scotland, where I was held overnight in the medieval Barlinnie Prison. The next day I was escorted on board the British cruiser *S.S. Hilary*, where I continued under custody. It took 13 days for our convoy of 52 ships to cross the Atlantic in zigzag fashion to avoid German submarines. Escaping their torpedoes, we made it safely to Halifax, Canada! Now set free, the next day I went on by train to

New York, arriving on September 10.

Peace Period Remarkably Forecast

I found great joy in returning to the many warm brothers at Brooklyn Bethel. I had come in time to attend the history-making convention in Cleveland, Ohio, September 18-20, 1942. There, Brother N. H. Knorr, the Society's new president, gave the talk "Peace—Can It Last?" This brought new light on Revelation 17:8. It was revealed that the Allied powers would prevail and that a new international "peace beast" would arise. This did occur when, after the war ended in 1945, the United Nations was organized!



Being taken by train to Barlinnie Prison

Watchtower Bible School of Gilead

After the annual corporation meeting of the Watch Tower Society on October 1, 1942, Brother Knorr as president called Maxwell G. Friend, Eduardo F. Keller, and me to his office. He told us that a decision had been made that morning to establish a missionary Bible school at Kingdom Farm, South Lansing, New York. He said that I would be the school registrar and was to serve as the chairman of the committee to get the school organized. We worked with Brother F. W. Franz in designing the fine Bible courses. This began a long period of happy cooperation with him in advancing Bible education.

Monday morning, February 1, 1943, was the official dedication by Brother Knorr of what is now known as the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead, located on Kingdom Farm near South Lansing, New York. After the dedication program, school sessions began in the four classrooms, each containing 25 students. The course of advanced Christian education covered 20 weeks, the Bible being the major textbook.

Happy months, then happy years, of deeper studies in the Bible proved to be my blessed lot. Along with other devoted instructors, I was grateful to Jehovah for this privilege of teaching and moving the hearts of such dedicated students who loved Jehovah and his work! Up to 1960, 3,700 students came from 70 lands to enrich our school classes.

Sharing in Married Life

While attending the "Triumphant Kingdom" conventions in Europe in 1955, I renewed my acquaintance with dear Charlotte Bowin, who had been one of my students in the first class of Gilead in 1943. She served for 12 years as a faithful missionary in Spanish territory, including Mexico and El Salvador. Now, along with

her partner Julia Clogston, she was attending these European conventions. Incidentally, Charlotte's parents had been members of the Brooklyn Bethel family when they were both single, back in Brother Russell's time. Then, when they married, Martin Bowin became a traveling overseer until Charlotte was born in 1920.

In January 1956 Charlotte entered Bethel service and was transferred to Kingdom Farm. In August 1956 we were married. When Charlotte became pregnant, we were downhearted, believing that this would end our full-time service. However, Brother Franz encouraged us, saying: "You haven't sinned in making the womb fruitful. Take courage! It may be that Jehovah will arrange for you somehow to continue in the full-time service."

So it turned out. I was able to continue on the Gilead School faculty. First we lived in a small rented apartment, and then in 1962 we moved into a newly built house located about a mile from the school. There in South Lansing, New York, our son, Judah Ben, who was born in February 1958, spent his early years.

We had many joys in Judah Ben's upbringing, as we always tried to apply Bible principles. (Ephesians 6:1-4) He was encouraged to follow Micah 6:8, even as I sought to apply that text in my life. Later, Judah became a third generation Bethelite and served at Bethel for 12 years. He was married to a lovely pioneer sister, Amber Baker, in June 1986. They now pioneer in Michigan.

The School for Elders

At the 1958 Yankee Stadium convention, Brother Knorr announced the opening of a new school for elders, to be known as the Kingdom Ministry School. On March 9, 1959, the first class of 25 students commenced its four weeks' course at Kingdom

Farm, where the Gilead School was also functioning. When Gilead School was moved to Brooklyn in September 1960, the Kingdom Ministry School remained at Kingdom Farm, where we were able to train a hundred elders monthly. I found that being a father proved to be an asset in teaching the family heads attending the new school.

In 1967 this school was transferred to Bethel in Brooklyn. Later, in 1968, it was relocated to Pittsburgh, where, up until 1974, thousands of fine elders received training. From 1974 on, the school was conducted in various Kingdom Halls throughout the country. My wife and son accompanied me as I traveled to these different locations. They served as pioneers while I taught the school.

Further Royal Service

In November 1974, I was teaching the Kingdom Ministry School in my hometown of Saginaw, Michigan, when I received an unforgettable letter from the Governing Body. It invited me to become a member of that body and also invited my wife and son to serve as members of the Brooklyn Bethel family. So on December 18, 1974, we moved into Bethel, and I took up my new privileges of service.

The Governing Body works well together in directing the worldwide activities of Jehovah's Witnesses, in publishing the spiritual food for our progressive enlightenment, and in making judicial decisions. The Governing Body meets every Wednesday, opening the meeting with prayer and asking for the direction of Jehovah's spirit. A real effort is made to see that every matter that is handled and every decision that is made is in harmony with God's Word the Bible.

As a member of the Governing Body, I have been sent out to visit various branches as a zone overseer. It has been heart-



With my wife, Charlotte

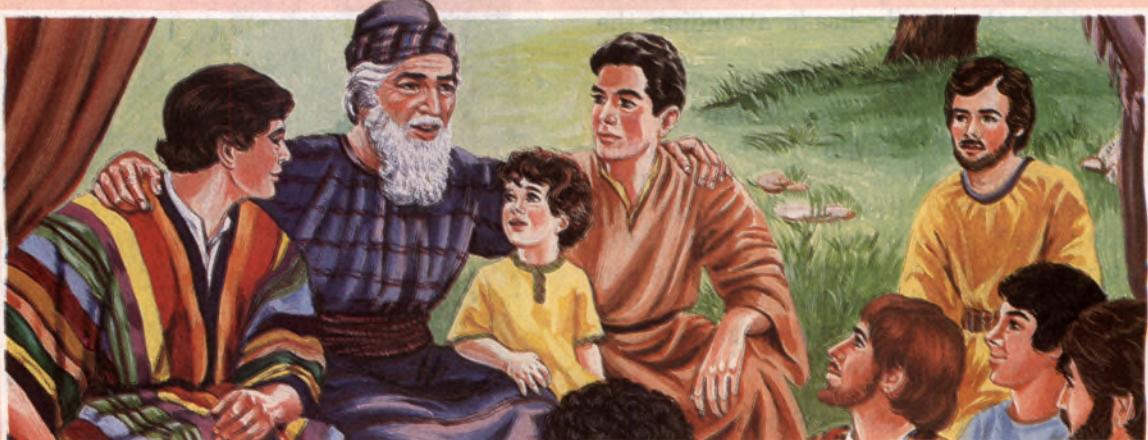
warming for me to experience firsthand the unity of Jehovah's people in so many countries. It is also a personal joy to meet again the many Gilead missionaries still faithful in their foreign assignments. Indeed, in every country, Jehovah's people are the best and the happiest!

Jehovah is simultaneously feeding all his people spiritually through *The Watchtower* and other Biblical publications. All of this is evidence that Christ Jesus has been our ruling King since 1914 and that he will successfully lead us through the "great tribulation" just ahead. Finally, all you who are young in years, wisely build careers of full-time sacred service now! You too will have thrilling privileges waiting for you. (Micah 7:7) I rejoice in Jehovah's providential care over the past decades. His blessings have truly made me rich. (Proverbs 10:22) I am grateful to Jehovah every day for the privileges I have in serving him in his spirit-directed organization.—Revelation 7:14.

Childbearing Among God's People

"May Jehovah . . . increase you a thousand times."

—DEUTERONOMY 1:11.



LOOK! Sons are an inheritance from Jehovah; the fruitage of the belly is a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a mighty man, so are the sons of youth. Happy is the able-bodied man that has filled his quiver with them." So we read at Psalm 127:3-5. Yes, childbearing is a wonderful privilege that the Creator Jehovah granted the first human couple and their descendants.—Genesis 1:28.

Childbearing in Israel

² Large families were considered very desirable among Abraham's descendants through Isaac and Jacob. Even children born to secondary wives and concubines were considered legitimate. This was the case with some of Jacob's sons, who became founding fathers of the 12 tribes of Israel. (Genesis 30:3-12; 49:16-21; compare 2 Chronicles 11:21.) While God's original

arrangement for marriage was monogamy, he tolerated polygamy and concubinage among Abraham's descendants, and this worked for a more rapid increase in population. The Israelites were to become "a people as numerous as the dust particles of the earth." (2 Chronicles 1:9; Genesis 13:14-16) Within that nation would come the promised "seed" by whom "all nations of the earth" would be able to bless themselves.—Genesis 22:17, 18; 28:14; Deuteronomy 1:10, 11.

³ Obviously, in Israel childbearing was looked upon as a sign of Jehovah's blessing. (Psalm 128:3, 4) It should be noted, however, that the opening words of this article, quoted from Psalm 127, were written by King Solomon, and much of this king's reign was a particularly favorable time for Israel. Of that period the Bible states: "Judah and Israel were many, like the grains of sand that are by the sea for multitude,

1. How does the Bible speak of childbearing?
2. Why were large families desirable among the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob?

3. What was the situation in Israel during Solomon's reign?

eating and drinking and rejoicing. And Judah and Israel continued to dwell in security, everyone under his own vine and under his own fig tree, from Dan [in the north] to Beer-sheba [in the south], all the days of Solomon."—1 Kings 4:20, 25.

Hard Times for Children in Israel

⁴ But there were other periods in Israel's history when childbearing was anything but a joy. At the time of the first destruction of Jerusalem, the prophet Jeremiah wrote: "My eyes have come to their end in sheer tears. . . . Because of the fainting away of child and suckling in the public squares of the town. . . . Should the women keep eating their own fruitage, the children born fully formed?" "The very hands of compassionate women have boiled their own children."—Lamentations 2:11, 20; 4:10.

⁵ Apparently, similar heartrending scenes occurred nearly seven centuries later. Jewish historian Josephus relates that during the siege of Jerusalem in 70 C.E., children snatched food from the mouths of their fathers, and mothers took food from the mouths of their infant children. He recounts how a Jewish woman killed her sucking baby, roasted the body, and ate part of it. Bringing children into the Jewish world in the final years leading up to the execution of Jehovah's judgments against Jerusalem in 607 B.C.E. and 70 C.E. could hardly be termed responsible childbearing.

Childbearing Among the Early Christians

⁶ How was childbearing viewed among the early Christians? First it should be

4, 5. (a) Why was childbearing not always a cause for joy in Israel? (b) What heartrending scenes took place on at least two occasions in Jerusalem?

6, 7. (a) What practices did Jesus do away with for Christians? (b) By what means was spiritual Israel to grow, and what proves this?

noted that Jesus did away with polygamy and concubinage among his disciples. He reestablished Jehovah's original standard, namely monogamy, or marriage of one man to one woman. (Matthew 19:4-9) Whereas fleshly Israel became populous through childbearing, spiritual Israel was to grow through disciple making.—Matthew 28:19, 20; Acts 1:8.

⁷ If the expansion of Christianity was to come about mainly by childbearing, Jesus would not have encouraged his disciples to "make room" for singleness "on account of the kingdom of the heavens." (Matthew 19:10-12) The apostle Paul would not have written: "He also that gives his virginity in marriage does well, but he that does not give it in marriage will do better."—1 Corinthians 7:38.

⁸ However, while encouraging celibacy for the sake of supporting Kingdom interests, neither Jesus nor Paul imposed it. Both foresaw that some Christians would marry. Naturally, some of these would have children as a matter of course. The Christian Greek Scriptures contain several passages that gave the early Christians direct counsel on the upbringing of children. (Ephesians 6:1-4; Colossians 3:20, 21) If elders or ministerial servants were married, they were to be exemplary parents.—1 Timothy 3:4, 12.

⁹ The apostle Paul even stated that having children could be a protection for some Christian women. Concerning material relief for needy widows, he wrote: "Turn down younger widows . . . They also learn to be unoccupied, gadding about to the houses; yes, not only unoccupied, but also gossipers and meddlers in other people's affairs, talking of things they ought not."

8. What shows that many of the early Christians were married and had children?

9. According to the apostle Paul, how would certain Christian women be protected by childbearing, but what would they need in addition?

Therefore I desire the younger widows to marry, to bear children, to manage a household, to give no inducement to the opposer to revile. Already, in fact, some have been turned aside to follow Satan." Such women would be "kept safe through childbearing, provided they continue in faith and love and sanctification along with soundness of mind."—1 Timothy 5:11-15; 2:15.

'Tribulation in the Flesh'

¹⁰ It is noteworthy, however, that in his first letter to the Corinthians, the same apostle Paul suggested a different solution for widows. He qualified his advice on marrying, stating that he gave it "by way of concession." He wrote: "Now I say to the unmarried persons and the widows, it is well for them that they remain even as I am. But if they do not have self-control, let them marry, for it is better to marry than to be inflamed with passion. But she [a widow] is happier if she remains as she is, according to my opinion. I certainly think I also have God's spirit."—1 Corinthians 7:6, 8, 9, 40.

¹¹ Paul explained: "If a virgin person married, such one would commit no sin. However, those who do will have tribulation in their flesh. But I am sparing you." (1 Corinthians 7:28) With regard to such "tribulation in their flesh," the *New World Translation* marginal reference refers us to Genesis 3:16, where we read: "To the woman he [Jehovah] said: 'I shall greatly increase the pain of your pregnancy; in birth pangs you will bring forth children, and your craving will be for your husband, and he will dominate you.'" In addition to pos-

10. What different counsel for widows did Paul give in his first letter to the Corinthians?

11. (a) What would those who marry experience, and how does the marginal reference on 1 Corinthians 7:28 shed light on this? (b) What did Paul mean when he said, "I am sparing you?"

sible marital difficulties, the "tribulation in their flesh" that those who marry would encounter undoubtedly includes problems related to childbearing. While Paul forbade neither marriage nor childbearing, he obviously felt duty bound to warn his fellow Christians that such could bring about problems and distractions that might hinder them in their service to Jehovah.

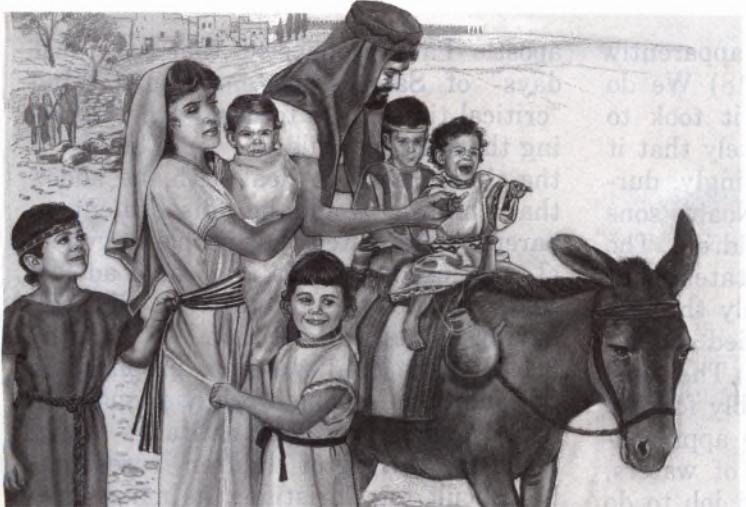
"The Time Left Is Reduced"

¹² In the first century C.E., Christians were not free to lead their lives like worldly people. Their situation would affect even their married life. Paul wrote: "Moreover, this I say, brothers, the time left is reduced. Henceforth let those who have wives be as though they had none, . . . and those making use of the world as those not using it to the full; for the scene of this world is changing. Indeed, I want you to be free from anxiety. . . . But this I am saying for your personal advantage, not that I may cast a noose upon you, but to move you to that which is becoming and that which means constant attendance upon the Lord without distraction."—1 Corinthians 7:29-35.

¹³ Bible scholar Frédéric Godet wrote: "Whereas unbelievers regard the world as sure to last indefinitely, the Christian has always before his eyes the great expected fact, the Parousia [Presence]." Christ had given his disciples the sign of his "presence," and had warned them: "Keep on the watch, therefore, because you do not know on what day your Lord is coming." (Matthew 24:3, 42) The time left was "reduced" in that those first-century Christians had to live constantly in expectation of Christ's coming. Furthermore, they did not know how much time remained for them individ-

12. What counsel did the apostle Paul give to married Christians, and for what reason?

13. In what sense was 'the time left reduced' for the first-century Christians?



Quick flight from Jerusalem would be more difficult for those with young children

ually before "time and unforeseen occurrence" brought their life to a close, ending all possibility for them to 'make their calling sure.'—Ecclesiastes 9:11; 2 Peter 1:10.

¹⁴ For Christians in Judea and Jerusalem, the need to "keep on the watch" was particularly imperative. When Jesus gave warning of the second destruction of Jerusalem, he stated: "Woe to the pregnant women and those suckling a baby in those days!" (Matthew 24:19) True, Jesus did not tell first-century Christians that they should refrain from having children. He simply made a prophetic statement of fact, indicating that when the signal of Jerusalem's imminent destruction appeared, quick flight would be more difficult for pregnant women or those with young children. (Luke 19:41-44; 21:20-23) Nevertheless, as unrest grew among the Jews in Judea during the years preceding 66 C.E., doubtless Jesus' warning came to the minds of Christians and influenced their attitude toward bringing children into the world in those troubled times.

14. (a) How is Matthew 24:19 to be understood? (b) How did Jesus' warning take on added urgency as the year 66 C.E. approached?

Childbearing Today

¹⁵ How should Christians view marriage and child-bearing today, in this "time of the end"? (Daniel 12:4) It is truer than ever that "the scene of this world is changing," or, as another translation puts it, "the present scheme of things is rapidly passing away."—1 Corinthians 7:31, Phillips.

¹⁶ Now, as never before, "the time left is reduced." Yes, only a limited time remains for Jehovah's people to finish the work he has given

them to do, namely: "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) That work must be accomplished before the end comes. It is, therefore, appropriate for Christians to ask themselves how getting married or, if married, having children will affect their share in that vital work.

An Ancient Example

¹⁷ Jesus likened the time of "the presence of the Son of man" to "the days of Noah." (Matthew 24:37) Noah and his three sons had a specific work to accomplish before the Flood. It involved building a gigantic ark and preaching. (Genesis 6:13-16; 2 Peter 2:5) When Jehovah gave instructions about the building of

15, 16. (a) How is 'the time left reduced' for Christians living today? (b) What questions should Christians ask themselves?

17. (a) What work did Noah and his three sons have to accomplish before the Flood, and how long did it apparently take? (b) For what possible reasons did Noah's sons and their wives refrain from having children during the pre-Flood period?

the ark, Noah's sons were apparently already married. (Genesis 6:18) We do not know exactly how long it took to build the ark, but it seems likely that it took several decades. Interestingly, during all this pre-Flood period, Noah's sons and their wives had no children. The apostle Peter specifically states that 'eight souls were carried safely through the water,' that is, four married couples but no children. (1 Peter 3:20) The sons' remaining childless was possibly for two reasons. First, in view of the approaching destruction by a deluge of waters, they had a divinely appointed job to do that required their undivided attention. Second, they doubtless felt disinclined to bring children into a world where "the badness of man was abundant in the earth and every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only bad all the time," a world "full of violence." —Genesis 6:5, 13.

¹⁸ This is not to say that the course of action taken by Noah's sons and their wives before the Deluge was meant to set the rule for married couples living today. Nevertheless, since Jesus compared Noah's day to the period in which we are now living, their example can provide food for thought.

"Critical Times"

¹⁹ Like Noah and his family, we are also living in "a world of ungodly people." (2 Peter 2:5) Like them, we are in "the last days" of a wicked system of things that is about to be destroyed. The

18. Although not setting a rule to follow, how does the course taken by Noah's sons and their wives provide food for thought?

19. (a) How do our times compare with Noah's day? (b) What did Paul foretell for "the last days," and how does his prophecy concern childbearing?

apostle Paul prophesied that "the last days" of Satan's system would bring "critical times hard to deal with." Showing that raising children would be one of the things hard to deal with, he added that children would be "disobedient to parents." He stated that people in general, not excluding children and adolescents, would be "unthankful, disloyal, having no natural affection." (2 Timothy 3:1-3) While Paul was here prophesying of conditions among worldly people, obviously such prevalent attitudes would make the rearing of children increasingly difficult for Christians, as many have experienced.

²⁰ All the foregoing shows that it is necessary to have a balanced view of childbearing. While it can bring many joys, it can also bring many heartaches. It has advantages and disadvantages. Some of these will be considered in the following article.

20. What will be considered in the following article?

Points for Review

- Why were large families desirable in Israel?
- What indicates that there were times when childbearing brought heartaches to the Jews?
- How was spiritual Israel to grow in number?
- How was the 'time left reduced' for the early Christians?
- What possible reasons are there why Noah's sons and their wives remained childless before the Flood, and what about the situation today?

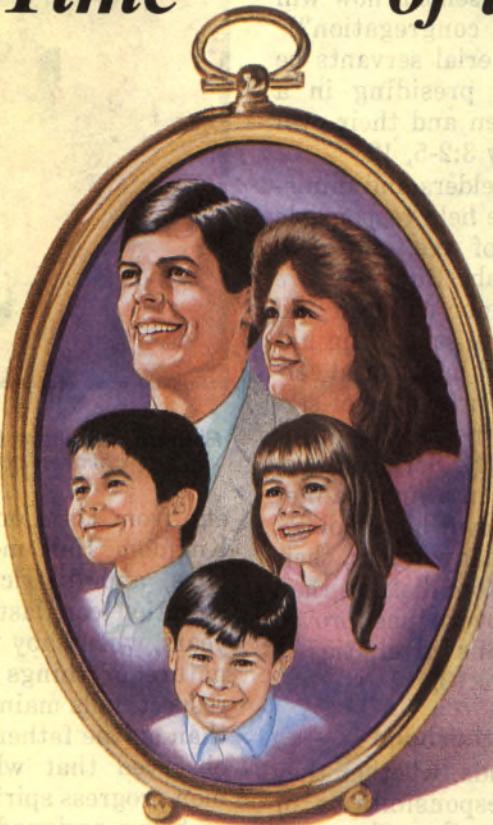
Responsible Childbearing in This Time

THE joy of parenthood is undeniable. The maternal instinct is natural, although stronger in some women than in others. In many Western lands, little boys are more interested in playing with mechanical toys, while little girls generally prefer dolls, which toy makers strive to make as realistic as possible. Many girls just live for the day when they will be able to cuddle, not a doll, but their own live, warm, gurgling baby.

Joys and Responsibilities

² Responsible childbearing requires parents to consider a newborn baby not as a plaything but as a creature for whose life and future they are accountable to the Creator. When they bring a child into the world, parents must be prepared to take on a big responsibility and adjust accordingly. They are embarking on a 20-year feeding, clothing, health-

1. What is a natural desire of most women, and how does this show up early in life?
2. How should parents consider a newborn baby, and what must they be prepared to undertake?



"Presiding in a fine manner over children."—1 TIMOTHY 3:12.

care, and education program, with the end result unpredictable.

³ Happily, a great many Christian parents have raised children who have become faithful, dedicated servants of Jehovah. Some have seen their children grow up and enter the full-time service as pioneers, missionaries, or Bethel family members. Of such parents it can truly be said: "The father of a righteous one will without fail be joyful; the one becoming father to a wise one will also rejoice in him. Your father and your mother will rejoice, and she that gave birth to you will be joyful."

—Proverbs 23:24, 25.

Parental Heartaches

⁴ But this is not always the case, even for elders who have children. The apostle Paul wrote: "The overseer should

3. Why can Proverbs 23:24, 25 be applied to many Christian parents?

4, 5. (a) What is Scripturally required of elders and ministerial servants who have children? (b) How have some children meant "adversities" to their father?

therefore be irreprehensible, a husband of one wife . . . a man presiding over his own household in a fine manner, having children in subjection with all seriousness; (if indeed any man does not know how to preside over his own household, how will he take care of God's congregation?)" Paul added: "Let ministerial servants be husbands of one wife, presiding in a fine manner over children and their own households."—1 Timothy 3:2-5, 12.

⁵ Of course, Christian elders and ministerial servants cannot be held responsible if their children, once of age, refuse to continue serving Jehovah. But they *are* responsible for their minor children and for older children who are still living under their roof. Elders and ministerial servants have lost precious privileges of service because they became negligent or failed seriously to meet the Scriptural requirement of "presiding in a fine manner over children and their own households." For such ones, and for many others, their children brought them more distress than joy. How often the proverb has proved true: "A stupid son means adversities to his father!"—Proverbs 19:13.

Responsible Fatherhood

⁶ All Christian husbands, whether they have congregational responsibilities or not, should also consider the effect that taking care of young children could have on their wife's spirituality. If a wife is not spiritually strong, how will a baby, or a number of babies, affect her personal study and opportunities to share in the preaching work?

⁷ Do husbands always realize that taking care of a baby or a young child often prevents their wives from getting full ben-

6. What question should Christian husbands ask themselves?
7. What has happened to some Christian wives, and what is often the cause of this situation?



Fathers can share the responsibility of keeping children quiet during meetings

efit from the Congregation Book Study, Kingdom Hall meetings, circuit assemblies, and district conventions? Such a situation can last for months, and even years, when baby follows baby. It is in the nature of things that the load, in this respect, falls mainly on the mother, rather than on the father. It has sometimes been observed that whereas some Christian men progress spiritually, even to the point of being assigned privileges in the congregation, their wives become spiritually weak. Why? Often it is because their young children prevent the wives from concentrating at meetings, doing deep Bible study, or sharing in a large measure in the witnessing work. Can fatherhood be called responsible if it permits such situations to develop?

8. Fortunately, this is not always the case. Many Christian fathers do their utmost to assist their wives.
8. How do many fathers share the load of looking after the children, with what benefit to their wives?

most to share the load of looking after the children. They take their full share in seeing that their children remain quiet during congregation meetings. If their baby starts to cry, or their child becomes boisterous, they in their turn will take it outside for appropriate discipline. Why should mother always be the one to lose parts of the meetings? At home, considerate husbands help their wives with the chores and in getting the children to bed so that husband and wife can sit down to concentrate quietly on spiritual matters.

⁹ When things are properly organized in a congregation, young mothers with babies can share in the auxiliary pioneer service. Some are even regular pioneers. So children are not always a handicap. Many Christian parents show a fine pioneer spirit.

Childless But Happy

¹⁰ Some young couples have decided to remain childless. Although the wives had maternal instincts just as strong as those in other women, they decided, in agreement with their husbands, to refrain from having children in order to devote themselves to serving Jehovah full-time. Many of them have served as pioneers or missionaries. They can now look back over the years with gratitude. To be sure, they have produced no fleshly children. But they *have* produced new disciples who have continued faithfully worshiping Jehovah. These 'genuine children in the faith' will never forget who was instrumental in bringing them "the word of truth."—1 Timothy 1:2; Ephesians 1:13; compare 1 Corinthians 4:14, 17; 1 John 2:1.

9. What proves that children are not always a handicap?

10. What have some married couples decided, and how have they been blessed?

¹¹ Many married couples throughout the world who have relinquished the joys of parenthood have been able to serve Jehovah in the circuit work, the district work, or at Bethel. These likewise look back with satisfaction over their lives spent serving Jehovah and their brothers in these special privileges. They have no regrets. While they have not had the joy of bringing children into the world, they have played a vital part in furthering Kingdom interests in their various fields of activity. Of all these couples who have remained childless "on account of the kingdom," the scripture is surely applicable that says: "God is not unrighteous so as to forget your work and the love you showed for his name, in that you have ministered to the holy ones and continue ministering."—Matthew 19:12; Hebrews 6:10.

A Personal Matter

¹² As we saw at the outset of this discussion, childbearing is a gift of God. (Psalm 127:3) It is a unique privilege that is not shared by Jehovah's spirit creatures. (Matthew 22:30) There have been times when the bearing of children formed part of the work that Jehovah assigned to his servants on earth. This was the case with Adam and Eve. (Genesis 1:28) It was true of the Flood survivors. (Genesis 9:1) Jehovah willed that the sons of Israel should become numerous through childbearing.—Genesis 46:1-3; Exodus 1:7, 20; Deuteronomy 1:10.

11. (a) Where are many childless couples serving Jehovah, and why do they not have any regrets? (b) What scripture can be applied to all couples who have remained childless "on account of the kingdom"?

12. (a) Why is childbearing a unique privilege? (b) During what periods was childbearing a God-given assignment?

¹³ Today, childbearing is not specifically a part of the work Jehovah has committed to his people. Nevertheless, it is still a privilege that he grants to married people if they desire it. Christian couples who decide to start a family should not, therefore, be criticized; neither should couples who refrain from having children.

¹⁴ So the matter of childbearing in this time of the end is a personal one that each couple must decide for itself. However, since "the time left is reduced," married couples would do well to weigh carefully and prayerfully the pros and cons of childbearing in these times. (1 Corinthians 7:29) Those who do choose to have children should be fully aware not only of the joys childbearing can bring but also of the responsibilities involved and the problems that can arise for them and the children they bring into the world.

When Unplanned

¹⁵ Some may say: "That's all very well, but what if a child comes along unexpectedly?" This has happened to many couples who were fully aware of the fact that this is not the ideal time to bring children into the world. Some of them had been in the full-time service for years. How should they view the arrival of the unexpected newcomer?

¹⁶ This is where *responsible* parenthood comes into play. True, a pregnancy might be unexpected, but the baby that comes along cannot be considered unwanted by Christian parents. Whatever changes its arrival might bring about in their lives, they should certainly not feel resentful

13, 14. (a) What can be said of childbearing today, and what criticism would be inappropriate? (b) While childbearing in this time of the end is a personal matter, what counsel is given? 15, 16. (a) What attitude should be avoided when an unexpected pregnancy occurs, and why? (b) How should any child be considered, involving what responsibilities?

toward it. After all, they were responsible for its conception. Now that it is here, they should accept their changed situation, knowing that, in one way or another, "time and unforeseen occurrence befall" all humans. (Ecclesiastes 9:11) Willingly or not, they have taken part in a creative act of which Jehovah God is the Author. They should accept their child as a sacred trust and lovingly assume their responsibilities as "parents in union with the Lord."—Ephesians 6:1.

"Do Everything in the Name of the Lord"

¹⁷ Just before he gave counsel on family matters, the apostle Paul wrote: "Whatever it is that you do in word or in work, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, thanking God the Father through him." (Colossians 3:17-21) Whatever state a Christian may find himself in, he should be thankful to Jehovah and take advantage of his situation to "do everything in the name of the Lord."

¹⁸ The Christian who has chosen to remain single will use his or her freedom, not for self-indulgence, but to work "whole-souled as to Jehovah," if possible in some form of full-time service. (Colossians 3:23; 1 Corinthians 7:32) Similarly, a married couple who decide to refrain from having children will not selfishly 'make use of the world to the full' but will give Kingdom service the largest possible place in their lives.—1 Corinthians 7:29-31.

¹⁹ As for Christians who have children, they should accept their parenthood in a

17. What counsel did the apostle Paul give to the Colossians, and how can this advice be followed today?

18, 19. (a) How can single Christians and childless couples "do everything in the name of the Lord"? (b) How should Christian parents view their children, and what goal should they set for themselves?

responsible way. Far from looking upon their children as a hindrance to serving Jehovah, they should consider them as a special assignment. What will this entail? Well, when a dedicated Christian meets someone who shows an interest in the truth, he starts a regular home Bible study with that one. Having started the study, the Witness is very diligent, returning week after week in order to help the interested one to make spiritual progress. Nothing less is needed in the case of a Christian's children. A regular, well-thought-out Bible study, starting as soon as possible and held on a regular basis, is needed to help the youngster to grow spiritually and to learn to love his Creator. (2 Timothy 3:14, 15) Additionally, parents will be careful to set a good example of Christian conduct in the home, just as they do in the Kingdom Hall. And where possible they will take the responsibility of training their children in the field service. In this way, in addition to preaching to other adults, parents will seek, with Jehovah's help, to "make disciples" of their own children.—Matthew 28:19.

Children During the "Great Tribulation"

²⁰ Ahead of us is the "great tribulation such as has not occurred since the world's beginning until now, no, nor will occur again." (Matthew 24:21) It will be a difficult time for adults and children alike. In his prophecy on the conclusion of the present system of things, Jesus foretold that Christian truth would divide families. He stated: "Furthermore, brother will deliver brother over to death, and a father a child, and children will rise up against parents

20. (a) What is ahead of us, and of what difficulties did Jesus give warning? (b) What bearing do Jesus' words have on rearing children in the time of the end?

and have them put to death." (Mark 13:12) Obviously, rearing children in the time of the end would not always be a pure joy. It could bring heartbreak, disappointment, and even danger, as Jesus' words quoted above show.

²¹ But while being realistic about the difficulties ahead, those who have young children should not be unduly concerned about the future. If they remain faithful themselves and do their best to bring up their children "in the discipline and mental-regulating of Jehovah," they can be confident that their obedient children will be favorably considered. (Ephesians 6:4; compare 1 Corinthians 7:14.) As part of the "great crowd," they and their young children can hope to survive "the great tribulation." If such children grow up to be faithful servants of Jehovah, they will be eternally thankful to him that they had responsible parents.—Revelation 7:9, 14; Proverbs 4:1, 3, 10.

21. (a) While contemplating the future realistically, why should parents not be unduly concerned? (b) What can be their hope, for themselves and their children?

Review Questions

- What long-term program does the birth of a child involve?
- Why have some elders and ministerial servants lost their privileges?
- What factors should a Christian husband consider with regard to his wife's becoming pregnant?
- What proves that a Christian couple can be childless and happy?
- How should the birth of a child be considered by the parents, and why do they not have to be unduly concerned about the future?

Mighty Babylon

The Third Great World Power

MIIGHTY Babylon sat majestically astride the Euphrates River in southern Mesopotamia. She was a "decoration of kingdoms," a religious, commercial, and military center. (Isaiah 13:19) She had great wealth, magnificent buildings, and world-famed gardens. She was the world power of her day!

Nevertheless, Jehovah's prophet Jeremiah was inspired to write: "Babylon must become piles of stones, the lair of jackals, an object of astonishment and something to whistle at, without an inhabitant." —Jeremiah 51:37.

This great city a total ruin? Who could imagine such a thing? Yet, once proud Babylon is now no more than a disappointing collection of desolate ruin-mounds, some 50 miles south of Baghdad, in southeastern Iraq. What led to her fall?

Babylon, one of the world's oldest cities, was founded by Noah's great-grandson

Nimrod, the mighty hunter in defiance of Jehovah. (Genesis 10:8-10) However, the period that interests us came long after Nimrod's time. It came after both Egypt and Assyria had been the dominant world powers.

Babylon in Nebuchadnezzar's Day

Some 2,600 years ago, back in the year 632 B.C.E., the Babylonians and their allies overthrew Assyria.* Babylon then replaced Assyria, becoming the third great world power in Bible history.

Nebuchadnezzar, who assumed the throne of this Neo-Babylonian, or New Babylonian, Empire, was not only a conqueror but also a city builder. Babylon's mighty walls and impressive buildings can, for the most part, be attributed to him. Great quantities of bricks have been found bearing the name "Nebuchadnezzar"—the very same Nebuchadnezzar mentioned so often in the Bible books of Jeremiah and Daniel, the Nebuchadnezzar whom the Bible quotes as boasting: "Is not this Babylon the Great, that I myself have built?"—Daniel 4:30.

Two great walls surrounded Babylon, with rubble filling the space between them. Together, they made a barrier over 80 feet thick. Outside the walls a moat from 65 to 260 feet wide, with a brick-lined inner face, was used by boats of all kinds.

The highway from the north passed through the 40-foot-high Ishtar Gate into the city's main artery, the broad Proces-

* As to dates, we accept the chronology that is found in the Bible, which at times differs from ancient dates based on less reliable secular sources. For a detailed discussion of Bible chronology, see the book *Aid to Bible Understanding*, pages 322-48.

Ancient Babylon reached her zenith under Nebuchadnezzar, passed her religion on to the world, and was conquered in one night. Knowing more about this city will strengthen your conviction in the Bible's accuracy and in the unerring fulfillment of its amazing prophecies.

sion Way. Nebuchadnezzar's palace was on the right, inside the Ishtar Gate. Its huge throne room measured 55 by 170 feet. The gate and the walls leading up to it were ornamented with brilliantly colored glazed brick panels representing lions, bulls, and dragons. One of the lions can be seen on display in the Louvre museum in Paris.

The Babylonian Religion

The Hebrew name of the city, Babel, means "confusion," while the Sumerian and Akkadian names for it mean "Gate of God." Both meanings tie Babylon in with its religion. Some scholars believe that the Babylonian god Marduk (Merodach in the Bible) may have been Nimrod deified. The Babylonian religion also acknowledged a number of triads of gods. One such was composed of Sin (the moon god), Shamash (the sun god), and Ishtar (goddess of love and fertility).

Astrology was rampant there. The Babylonians named the then known planets after their five leading gods and goddesses. A modern historical work explains: "We refer to these planets by their Roman names, but the Romans had adopted the Babylonian terms and simply translated them into their equivalents in Rome. Thus the planet of Ishtar, the goddess of love, became Venus, and that of the god Marduk was changed to Jupiter."* The name "Chaldean," used by the Babylonians, came to be almost synonymous with "astronomer."

The Bible says that Babylon was "a land of graven images" and of filthy "dungy idols." (Jeremiah 50:2, 38) Yet its religious ideas became a major source for other religions worldwide. Professor Morris Jastrow states in *The Religion of Babylonia and Assyria*: "In the ancient world, prior

* *The Dawn of Civilization and Life in the Ancient East* (1940 edition), by R. M. Engberg and F. C. Cole, pages 230-2.

to the rise of Christianity, Egypt, Persia, and Greece felt the influence of the Babylonian religion." Later, many of its false ideas were accepted and taught even in the churches of Christendom. Thus, the Bible calls the world empire of false religion "Babylon the Great."—Revelation 17:3-5.

Jerusalem Captured by Babylon

The prophet Isaiah lived when Assyria, the second world power, dominated the ancient world. Yet he was inspired by God to prophesy that Jerusalem would be destroyed, not by the then powerful Assyrians, but by the Babylonians. (Isaiah 39: 6, 7) Did this prophecy prove true? Let us see.

It was a century after Isaiah's time that Babylon and her allies conquered Assyria, and Babylon became the new world power. Then, in 617 B.C.E., Babylon's king Nebuchadnezzar captured King Jehoiachin of Jerusalem and sent him and other "foremost men of the land" as prisoners to Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar made Mattaniah king in Jerusalem and "changed his name to Zedekiah."—2 Kings 24:11-17.

The Babylonians' own records, found by archaeologists, also confirm this event. The Babylonian Chronicle, ancient clay tablets on which were recorded major events, says that Babylon's king "besieged the city of Judah [Jerusalem], and . . . took the city and captured the king. He appointed therein a king of his own choice, received its heavy tribute and sent (them) to Babylon."

Further, the Bible refers to the food allowance that was given to Jehoiachin while he was in exile in Babylon. (2 Kings 25:27-30) Archaeologists have found administrative documents in Babylon that refer to the allowance of food given both to "Jehoiachin, king" and to the "sons of the king of Judah."

Though the people of Jerusalem were in

a covenant relationship with Jehovah God, they still stubbornly refused to follow God's ways or to heed his prophets. Jehovah said they had "hardened their neck in order not to obey [his] words." Through Jeremiah he warned that "all Judah I shall give into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he will actually take them into exile in Babylon and strike them down with the sword."—Jeremiah 19:15; 20:4.

So when Zedekiah rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonians returned and laid siege to Jerusalem. They breached its walls on Tammuz 9, 607 B.C.E. They burned the temple, pulled down the city walls, and took Zedekiah and most of the people captive to Babylon. Jehovah's words indeed proved true: "And all this land must become a devastated place, an object of astonishment, and these nations will have to serve the king of Babylon seventy years."—Jeremiah 25:11.

Nebuchadnezzar's Dream Image

Later, Babylon's king Nebuchadnezzar, head of the world power of his day, received some extraordinary information. God gave him a dream of an immense image. The dream revealed the outline of world history from Nebuchadnezzar's time all the way down through the succeeding world powers of Medo-Persia and Greece, on through Rome, and even beyond our present time to the permanent replacement of all human governments by God's Kingdom. God's prophet Daniel told Nebuchadnezzar: "The grand God himself has made known to the king what is to occur after this. And the dream is reliable, and the interpretation of it is trustworthy."—Daniel 2:28-45.

Nebuchadnezzar also had to learn personally, in a most forceful way, that God can have a hand in such world affairs—that "the Most High is Ruler in the kingdom of mankind, and that to the one

whom he wants to he gives it."—Daniel 4:25.

Babylon's Desolation Foretold

However, Babylon's excessive cruelty to Jehovah's people would not go unpunished. Through Jeremiah, God had said: "And I will pay back to Babylon and to all the inhabitants of Chaldea all their badness that they have committed in Zion before the eyes of you people." And through Isaiah he had foretold: "I am arousing against them the Medes."—Jeremiah 51:24; Isaiah 13:17.

Some two centuries in advance, Jehovah even gave the name of the leader who would bring Babylon down and liberate His people—Cyrus, known also as Cyrus the Great. The prophecy about Cyrus said there would be open "before him the two-leaved doors, so that even the gates will not be shut." (Isaiah 44:26-45:1) Did such a thing really happen? History answers.

Babylon Falls!

As the foretold 70 years of Jewish captivity were about to end, the Medes and the Persians were on the march. Babylon's king Nabonidus had already fled from Cyrus on the field of battle. The Greek historian Herodotus says that the Babylonians were equipped to withstand a very long siege. And apparently they had great confidence in Babylon's mighty walls.

As the Bible account relates, on the night of October 5/6 of the year 539 B.C.E., Belshazzar was hosting a great feast inside Babylon, wining and dining a thousand exalted guests. (Daniel 5:1-4) Herodotus confirms that there was a festival in Babylon that night. He says that the people of the city "were dancing at the time, and enjoying themselves." Outside, however, Cyrus had diverted the waters of the Euphrates, which ran right through the cen-

ter of the city. As the water level sank, his army sloshed through the riverbed, past the towering walls, and entered through what Herodotus called the "little gates that lead down to the river," gates left open by the Babylonians.

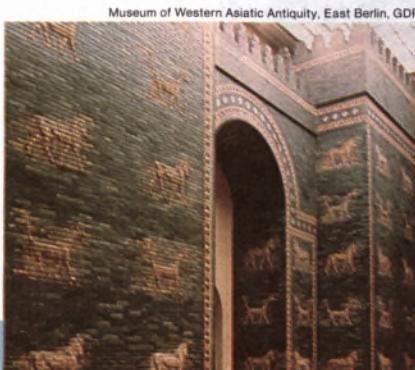
Many years in advance, the prophet Jeremiah had written a graphic description of Babylon's fall: "The mighty men of Babylon have ceased to fight. . . . One runner runs to meet another runner, and one reporter to meet another reporter, to report to the king of Babylon that his city has been captured at every end, and that the fords themselves have been seized, and the papyrus boats they have burned with fire."—Jeremiah 51:30-32.

The Nabonidus Chronicle, now in the British Museum, confirms this description. It says that "the army of Cyrus entered Babylon without battle."

Jehovah's Prophecy Fulfilled

In one night Babylon had fallen. The third world power of Biblical history had come to a sudden halt. Cyrus could boast on a cuneiform document, known as the Cyrus Cylinder: "I am Cyrus, king of the world, great king, legit-

*Reconstruction of
Babylon's Ishtar Gate
(right)
The ruins of Babylon
today (below)*



Based on a map copyrighted by Pictorial Archive (Near Eastern History) Est. and Survey of Israel

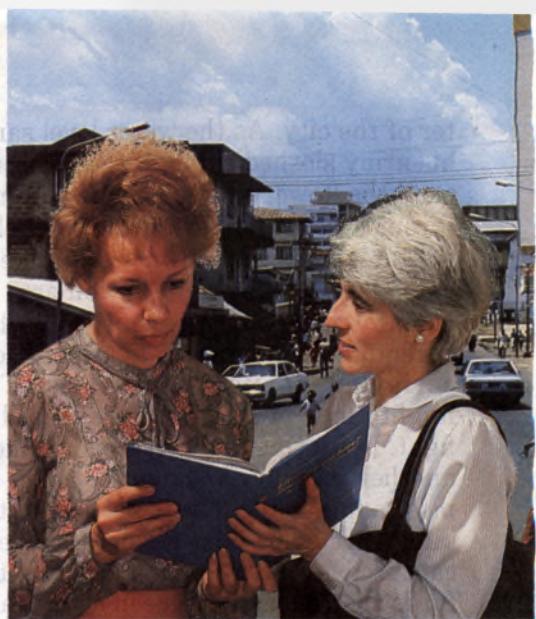
imate king, king of Babylon, king of Sumer." Soon thereafter, Cyrus issued his famous decree, and about 50,000 Jewish captives returned to rebuild Jerusalem and Jehovah's temple, arriving back there just at the end of the foretold 70 years of captivity.—Ezra 1:1-11.

Centuries later, Jesus' apostle Peter came to teach a Jewish community that flourished here, and it was from Babylon that Peter wrote at least one of his inspired Bible letters. (1 Peter 5:13) In the course of time, however, the prophecy was fulfilled: "And Babylon, the decoration of kingdoms, the beauty of the pride of the Chaldeans, must become as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. She will never be inhabited." —Isaiah 13:19, 20.

Today, mighty Babylon is nothing but dusty piles of stones, ruins in a wasteland—a silent and eloquent testimony to the unfailing accuracy of Jehovah's prophetic Word.—Jeremiah 51:36, 37.

"I'm no longer an atheist!"

"I met a woman from Poland who is a professor," reports a missionary in Senegal, Africa. "We had a long discussion, and I endeavored to answer her many questions." The professor refused a publication designed for Bible study, explaining: "I am an atheist. That book does not interest me at all." However, she did accept the book *Life—How Did It Get Here? By Evolution or by Creation?*



"When I returned the following week," the missionary reports, "she excitedly told me that she had read the book from cover to cover. When I proposed examining the *Creation* book with her, she replied: 'But I have no need to study *that* book now! I have read it entirely, and it has completely changed my mind—I'm no longer an atheist! Now I would like for you to study that red book you first showed me, along with the Bible!'"

—John 3:18
"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16
"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16