

The **WATCHTOWER**

Announcing
**JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM**

SEPTEMBER 15, 1967

Semimonthly

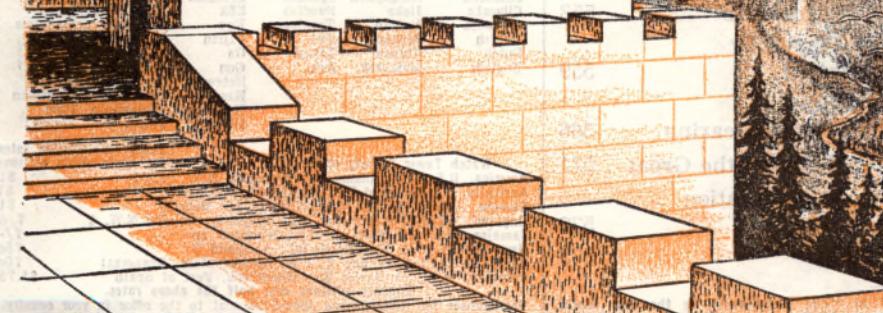
GOD'S SPIRIT AND WORD
—DIVINE PROVISIONS
FOR LIFE

RECOGNIZING THE PART PLAYED
BY JEHOVAH'S ORGANIZATION

CAN YOU GET ALONG WITHOUT GOD?

HOW IMPORTANT
IS GOOD ASSOCIATION TO YOU?

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

THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER"

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

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

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

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

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

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"They will all be taught by Jehovah."—John 6:45; Isaiah 54:13

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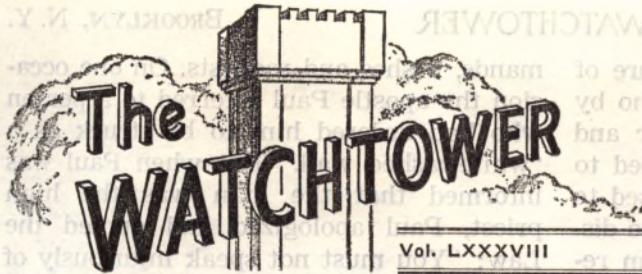
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**JEHOVAH'S
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GIVE RESPECT TO WHOM IT IS DUE

INCLUDED in the rule, "just as you want men to do to you, do the same way to them," is the giving of respect to whom it is due. To do so is not only right but also the course of wisdom, for it contributes to good relations both with our Maker, Jehovah God, and with our fellowman.—Luke 6:31.

To give respect to whom it is due requires thought and good judgment and so may be said to be an art. And since it is a just and righteous requirement it can also be called a virtue. As the inspired apostle Paul commanded: "Pay all of them their dues, . . . respect to whom respect is due." (Rom. 13:7, RS) The modern trend is away from giving respect, especially on the part of youths. As one officer of the law put it: "Kids today seldom say, 'Sir.'"

Respect has been defined as "the feeling of esteem, regard, or consideration, excited by the contemplation of personal worth, dignity or power; that which is due, as to personal worth and power." It implies a reasoned estimation or evaluation of a person and the measure of recognition due him.

The One above all others that is deserving of our respect is our Maker, for he cer-

tainly has 'personal worth, dignity and power' above all others. Yet perhaps never before in the history of man has there been such widespread disrespect of Him as today, and that even by clergymen of Christendom whose very vocation, it would seem, obligates them to inculcate respect for God in others. Surely all those who say "God is dead" and who would preach a religion without a living God are offering God an insult by denying that he exists.

However, all intelligent creatures who have true understanding will accord the Creator the respect that is due him. Of course, one way in which we can do this is by always treating God's name with respect, avoiding all blasphemy and profanity. But there is also another way. As the apostle Peter shows, by our very course of action we can show "respect for Jehovah." Yes, as the saying is, "actions speak louder than words," and so by being careful that we do not displease God by our course of conduct, we are according him due respect.—2 Pet. 2:11; Ex. 20:7.

Just as the Creator is entitled to our highest respect by reason of his position, qualities and powers, so to the extent that others have 'personal worth, dignity and

power' they are entitled to a measure of respect. Among such are fathers, who by reason of their being the life-giver and provider of their children are entitled to respect, as the Bible shows: "We used to have fathers who were of our flesh to discipline us, and we used to give them respect." Children can show respect to their fathers (and their mothers) by always addressing them in a respectful tone of voice and manner. Especially can children show respect to their parents by obeying them. However, today many children fail to show respect to their parents, and many parents foolishly tolerate their children's disrespectful course.—Heb. 12:9; Prov. 15:5; Eph. 6:1-3.

Husbands, by reason of the headship the Scriptures accord them and the security they give their wives, are deserving of the respect of their wives, even as the Bible commands: "The wife should have deep respect for her husband." This certainly would preclude the wife's bossing her husband. She does not say, as some do, "I sent my husband to the store to get some milk." No, she can send her children, but her husband she respectfully asks if he would want to do this, that or the other thing. Christian wives are counseled that they might well win their unbelieving husbands for Christianity by their "chaste conduct together with deep respect." At the same time the wise and loving husband will treat his wife with due respect, as the modest, virtuous "weaker vessel, the feminine one."—Eph. 5:33; 1 Pet. 3:2, 7.

A measure of respect should also be given to others having positions of authority, such as a schoolteacher, a foreman in a place of business or workshop, or a government official. Here, again, this respect can be shown by one's tone of voice and by complying with their proper com-

mands, wishes and requests. On one occasion the apostle Paul referred to a person who had ordered him to be struck as a "whitewashed wall." But when Paul was informed that the man was the high priest, Paul apologized and quoted the Law: "You must not speak injuriously of a ruler of your people." Yes, this is another way in which respect can be shown those in authority, by not speaking injuriously of them. And, in particular, whenever those in authority demand of Christians a reason for the hope in them are they to do so "with a mild temper and deep respect."—Acts 23:3-5; 1 Pet. 3:15; Eph. 6:5.

Then, again, womankind as a whole is to be shown a certain measure of respect. Anything bordering on undue familiarity is to be avoided. Wisely the apostle Paul counseled the minister Timothy to treat older women as he would his own mother and the younger women as he would his own fleshly sisters, all of which means with respect.—1 Tim. 5:2.

This principle of giving respect to whom it is due obviously applies also within the Christian congregation. Certainly those who have been given the oversight and who have to take the lead should be given respect, since they represent Jehovah God and his Son Jesus Christ. Nor to be overlooked is the fact that the youthful members in the congregation should give respect to those well along in years.—Lev. 19:32; Prov. 16:31; Heb. 13:17.

The widespread lack of respect for the Creator, Jehovah God, for parents and for others in positions of authority is one of the indications that we are living in the "last days." However, those who are wise and would do what is right will not go along with this trend but will give respect to whom it is due.—2 Tim. 3:1-5.

Can you get along without GOD?

NEARLY two hundred years ago Napoleon Bonaparte asked the famous French astronomer Pierre Simon Laplace why he made no mention of God in his new book about the stars. Laplace replied: "I had no need of the hypothesis." Although considering God unnecessary was then a rather radical thought in some circles, no longer is it viewed as such today.

Now it is not uncommon for many persons to think that they can get along without God. Although saying that they believe he exists, most persons do little or nothing to show that they recognize a need for him. They do not regularly pray to him. They do not seek to learn his will. Nor do they attempt to live their lives in harmony with the fine principles found in His Word the Bible. They may praise Bible teachings as fine ideals, but they do not adopt them to live by.

Some persons even boast that whatever they have, they have obtained by their own efforts, without any help from God. Are they correct in such a conclusion? Are we in no way indebted to or dependent upon God? Can we really get along without Him?

IS GOD VITAL TO HUMAN EXISTENCE? IS LIFE POSSIBLE WITHOUT HIM?

THE SOURCE OF LIFE

To begin with, who gave us life? Individually, of course, it was our parents. But who originated or created human life? To that Source we obviously are indebted. But could life have occurred by chance, and, therefore, not have had any intelligent source?

Recently this question was explored by the noted French philosopher Claude Tresmontant, who lectures on the philosophy of science at the famous Sorbonne in Paris. In an interview, he observed: "Only very few scientists now seriously think" that pure chance can be "put forward as an explanation of the emergence of even the simplest living organism."

He then went on to explain why a chance combination of elements can no longer be taken seriously as an explanation for the origin of life. "We are now aware of the extraordinary complexity of the large molecules which enter into the composition of the living cell," he said. "Calculations have been made to discover what likelihood there would be of hitting on the simplest of these large molecules through the operations of chance from an initial state of primitive chaos, and the conclusion is that the length of time and the amount of matter needed for the chance creation of a single molecule would

be out of all proportion to the known age of our galaxy."

So Tresmontant observed that "for matter to have been able, on its own," to invent complex forms of life, "it must be gifted with great wisdom and incomparable genius." If one attributes to chance what is radically contradictory to the laws of probability, one is, in effect, spelling chance with a capital letter, and using it as a synonym for God.

Clearly, it is not unintelligent chance but Almighty God who is the Source of life! With the Bible psalmists the reverential person acknowledges: "Jehovah is God. It is he that has made us, and not we ourselves." "For with you is the source of life." (Ps. 100:3; 36:9) Truly, we are indebted to God for giving us life, and we should gratefully thank Him for this marvelous gift.

SUSTAINER OF LIFE AND PROVIDER

But now that we are alive, do we need God? Are we in any way dependent upon him? An infant simply cannot get along without its earthly parents. It needs someone to feed it, clothe it and take care of its other necessities. Are humans similarly dependent upon God, their heavenly Father, or Life-giver?

Many persons do not think so. 'What has God done for me?' they may ask. True, they may labor hard to feed and clothe their families, perhaps working long hours to plant seed, and toiling beneath a hot sun to harvest the fruitage. Yet, who makes that seed develop into nutritious food that can give strength to their bodies and cause their children to grow? How is it that seed, plus a little water and soil, can produce such miraculous results? Is any human responsible?

No, but it is God's doing! Long ago the Christian apostle Paul discussed this matter of growth, and said: "I planted, Apol-

los watered, but God kept making it grow; so that neither is he that plants anything nor is he that waters, but God who makes it grow." (1 Cor. 3:6, 7) Although Paul was here discussing spiritual growth, the principle is equally true relative to the growth of literal seed. God sustains the miraculous processes that enable these to germinate and produce the many things that man needs.

The French astronomer Laplace haughtily assumed that, because he had discovered some of the laws responsible for the orderly and complex movements of the heavenly bodies, the hand of God was not involved. But who arranged, for example, that the earth should revolve on its axis at just the right speed (about 1,000 miles an hour at the equator) so that life on earth is bathed in ideal periods of sunlight and darkness? And who set the speed of earth's orbit around the sun at some 66,600 miles per hour, which is just the right speed to hold the earth on a course at an ideal distance from the sun for terrestrial life to grow and prosper?

The magnificent law and order governing the universe rule out the possibility of these ideal circumstances occurring by chance. Jehovah God is the Creator and Designer of the star and planetary systems. As the Bible explains: "He is counting the number of the stars; all of them he calls by their names." (Ps. 147:4; Isa. 40:25, 26) And the law and order that continue to govern the movement of the planets and stars testify that God still exists and is sustaining and enforcing these laws. Yes, man could not get along without Him; in fact, life would not continue on earth.

Just as an infant is dependent upon its parents for the necessities of life, so all humans are similarly dependent upon Jehovah God. The apostle Paul was correct in telling people that God gives "rains

from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling your hearts to the full with food and good cheer." (Acts 14:15-17) We should, therefore, credit God for these things and render him heartfelt thanks. For, as the Bible says, "he himself gives to all persons life and breath and all things," and "by him we have life and move and exist."—Acts 17:25, 28.

So whether humans choose to acknowledge it or not, they are indebted to God for life and are dependent upon him for the many physical necessities that make life possible. Yet, does the heavenly Father only provide food to feed the body and none to nourish the mind? Can humans get along without the spiritual provisions of Jehovah God?

LIVING WITHOUT GOD

Although probably the vast majority of earth's population say they believe that God exists, by choice most of them live in ignorance of his spiritual provisions. They turn a deaf ear to the Holy Scriptures. They make little or no effort to learn about God's provisions for recovering humankind from the deteriorating effects of sin and blessing them with perfect health and life in a righteous new system of things.

The circumstance of such persons is similar to that of the ancient Ephesians before they became Christians. The apostle Paul wrote to these: "You were at that particular time without Christ, alienated from the state of Israel and strangers to the covenants of the promise, and you had no hope and were without God in the world. But now in union with Christ Jesus you who were once far off have come to be near by the blood of the Christ."—Eph. 2:12, 13.

Before coming to a knowledge concerning God's purposes those Ephesians were "without God." They were living in ig-

norance of his spiritual provisions and had no genuine hope for life in lasting happiness. The prospect before them was of living out a short life-span and dying. Only after responding to the message of the Holy Scriptures did they enter a close relationship with God and enjoy the sure hope of everlasting life. This prospect was made possible by their acceptance of God's provision of Jesus Christ, through whose sacrifice they were released from the condemnation resulting from inherited sin and brought near to God.—Eph. 1:7; Rom. 5:12.

It is, therefore, true that one can live temporarily without God's spiritual provisions. Physical food alone will sustain a person for a while. But, in time, it is unavoidable that the effects of sin catch up with him and he dies. Man, even with his great advances in medical science, is unable to do anything to prevent this. How evident, then, that man needs God! He cannot get along indefinitely without knowing about Him and his provisions! Jesus Christ emphasized this fact when with his disciples, saying: "This means everlasting life, their taking in knowledge of you, the only true God, and of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ."

—John 17:3.

RECOGNIZE YOUR NEED FOR GOD

However, apparently because they see so much wickedness and human suffering without discerning any intervention by God, many persons question whether there is a God, and conclude that, if there is, they can get along without him. It causes some even to become set in a course of wickedness, as noted by the Bible writer: "Because sentence against a bad work has not been executed speedily, that is why the heart of the sons of men has become fully set in them to do bad."—Eccl. 8:11.

But just because God does not imme-

dately rise up and uproot wickedness is no proof that He does not exist, or that one can get along without Him. It is jumping to a conclusion, perhaps one that a person selfishly wishes to believe. The inspired Bible psalmist notes: "The wicked one according to his superciliousness makes no search; all his ideas are: 'There is no God.'" (Ps. 10:4) Such a person who refuses to make an open-minded search of the evidence will never arrive at the truth. By continuing in his closed-minded, ungrateful course he will miss out on the grand blessings that

Jehovah God has in store for all those who avail themselves of his provisions.

So be appreciative and thankful. Give God credit for the life you enjoy. Make known to Him your gratitude for the food you eat, the air you breathe, the beautiful scenery that delights your eye, the melodious sounds that please your ear, and His many other blessings. Begin now! For example, the next time you sit down to a meal, why not give Jehovah God heartfelt thanks for providing the food? It was He who made it grow.

However, you need more than just God's physical provisions. Life is only temporary and empty without His spiritual food to nourish the mind and heart. (Matt. 4:4) Therefore, show your appreciation for this provision by setting aside time for regular Bible study. Do not put it off! Jehovah's witnesses will be happy to assist you to obtain this valuable knowledge concerning God and his purposes. You cannot get along without it. Remember: Jesus said that it means everlasting life.

O how grand it will be when the redemptive power of Christ's sacrifice is applied in behalf of all who appreciate their

Grand Creator! Even dead loved ones will be brought forth from their tombs. Then, not just a few, but millions will realize the joy experienced by the parents of the twelve-year-old girl whom Jesus Christ resurrected. The Bible record says: "They were beside themselves with great ecstasy." (Mark 5:42) Imagine the rejoicing on earth when Jesus' sure promise is fulfilled: "The hour is coming in which all those in the memorial tombs will hear his voice and come out"! (John 5:28, 29) No human power can accomplish this. It can come about only through

the power of the original Source of life, Jehovah God, who will use Jesus Christ to do the resurrecting. How obvious it is that we need God, that we cannot get along without Him.

If, now, like the Ephesian Christians of long ago, you accept God's provision for recovering mankind from condemnation to sin and death, you will have the happy prospect of never, throughout all eternity, being without God. Rather, you will be a personal part of the glorious scene described in God's Word the Bible:

"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 any more. The former things have passed away."

Can you confidently trust that this is an authentic promise? Yes, indeed, for the Bible goes on to give the assurance: "And the one seated on the throne said: 'Look! I am making all things new.' Also, he says: 'Write, because these words are faithful and true.'"—Rev. 21:3-5.

COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- Finding Freedom with Jehovah's Visible Organization.
- Following Faithful Shepherds with Life in View.
- Is the Religion of Your Parents the Right One for You?
- A Heavenly Temple of Worship for All Mankind.

GOD'S SPIRIT

IF YOU awoke from sleep to find that you were breathing in death-dealing fumes, would you not fight your way out to fresh air? If you learned that your diet contained poisonous substances that were weakening your body so much that you would soon die, would you not change to that which would give nourishment and health to the body? Yet, despite our concern to eliminate immediate dangers, it is getting to be increasingly difficult for us to live on the earth at all because of the contamination of the air we breathe, the food we eat and the water we drink. Fallout from atomic explosions and harmful smokes and chemicals pollute the air, as well as food and water supplies. The growing and processing of food often leave it depleted nutritionally and tainted with poisons and additives. Sewage and other wastes pour into the streams and lakes supplying fresh water, bringing disease and death to many who drink it. Added to this peril is the critical shortage of food and fresh water in many parts of the world.

1. What endangers the air and food supplies of man, making it increasingly difficult to live on earth?



—Divine Provisions for Life

"It is the spirit that is life-giving; the flesh is of no use at all. The sayings that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life."—John 6:63.

² Did you know, however, that there is a more deadly, yet subtle, "air" being breathed in today than the literal air that is becoming more and more polluted? or that the vast majority of mankind are consuming a steady diet of "food" and "drink" that is sending them rapidly to the grave? Spiritually speaking, the "air" or worldly atmosphere that most people breathe in today is the "spirit of the world," which has been judged as unclean by Jehovah. (1 Cor. 2:12; Rev. 16:17-21) There is this common inclination of mind that so permeates the whole of society that it causes people to think, to speak and to take certain attitudes and viewpoints, and to follow a rather well-defined pattern of conduct that runs counter to the influence of God's spirit and the instruction in his Word, the Bible. This is not strange, since "the whole world is lying in the power of the wicked one," Satan the Devil, who is described as the "god of this system of things," and as "the ruler of the authority of the air, the spirit that now operates in the sons of disobedience." (1 John 5:19; 2 Cor. 4:4; Eph. 2:2) Unless we get awake to the lethal effects of

2. (a) What "air" is more deadly than natural air that has been contaminated, and from where does it come? (b) Contrast the outcomes of those guided by the "spirit of the world" and those guided by God's spirit.

this spirit that is created by the Devil and that caters to the selfish desires of the flesh, we will perish. We must, rather, seek to be guided by the holy spirit of God, and thus be motivated to walk in the pure and righteous way that leads to life. "For those who are in accord with the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those in accord with the spirit on the things of the spirit. For the minding of the flesh means death, but the minding of the spirit means life and peace." —Rom. 8:5, 6.

³ Is the spiritual diet provided for the minds of the masses any better than the "air" they breathe? The groans of a sick world, ready to die, give the ominous answer. The ever-growing violence, greed, immorality and blasphemy against God in the world are the terrible results. They have pushed aside the pure food of God's Word, which would bring spiritual health and give instruction in the way to everlasting life, and have turned aside to the philosophy, the theories, the codes of ethics, the plans, the ideologies and, yes, even the divisive influences of the religious sects of this old system. Just as physical food and water that are contaminated make the body sick and hasten death, so the feeding on this diet has made the masses of mankind so sick that God considers them dead though living. (Eph. 2:1; 1 Tim. 5:6) "Two bad things that my people have done: They have left even me, the source of living water, in order to hew out for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, that cannot contain the water." "They have left Jehovah, they have treated the Holy One of Israel with disrespect, they have turned backwards. Where else will you be struck still more, in that you add more revolt? The whole head is in a sick condition, and the whole heart is

3. What is the spiritual diet of the masses of mankind, and what has been the effect?

feeble. From the sole of the foot even to the head there is no sound spot in it." —Jer. 2:13; Isa. 1:4-6.

⁴ If he is to make right decisions leading to life, man needs solid food based on truth on which to feed his mind, not worldly wisdom. Jesus put the emphasis in the right place when being tempted by the Devil: "It is written, 'Man must live, not on bread alone, but on every utterance coming forth through Jehovah's mouth.'" (Matt. 4:4) The mind of man needs divine wisdom to think straight. There must be a basis of truth on which to build. In prayer to God, Jesus stated: "Your word is truth." (John 17:17) It is by a careful study of the Bible, the book of truth, that we appreciate the only way to everlasting life, that is, through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. "Jesus said to them: 'I am the bread of life. He that comes to me will not get hungry at all, and he that exercises faith in me will never get thirsty at all.'" —John 6:35; Jas. 3:13-18.

⁵ Paul wrote to the Hebrew Christians who were slow in understanding the deeper things regarding Jesus as the Messiah: "Concerning him we have much to say and hard to be explained, since you have become dull in your hearing. But solid food belongs to mature people, to those who through use have their perceptive powers trained to distinguish both right and wrong." (Heb. 5:11, 14) He further warned: "Look out: perhaps there may be someone who will carry you off as his prey through the philosophy and empty deception according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary things of the world, and not according to Christ." —Col. 2:8; Ps. 119:104, 105.

⁶ No doubt about it, if we want life in

4. In contrast to the wisdom of this world, what type of food does man need for his mind?
5. What will the solid food of God's Word aid one to do?
6. Because God wants man to live, what provisions has he made for him?

God's new system of things, we must stop breathing in the "spirit of the world" and henceforth let God's holy spirit be a motivating force in our lives. We must stop feeding upon the husks of worldly knowledge and stop drinking the polluted waters of man-made ideas, while we henceforth feast upon the spiritual food and drink in the knowledge and truth of God's Word. The choice is really one of life or death. We must accept God's provisions for life or we will lose out. If we really want life, He will help us to get it, because it is not his will that any should perish. The divine provisions of his spirit and Word are two strong guarantees of this.—2 Pet. 3:9; Ezek. 33:11; John 7:37-39.

The question arises now, How can we get the greatest benefits from these divine provisions for life? Jehovah does not miraculously open our minds and pour in an understanding. He has never worked that way. We must search for knowledge and understanding as if for hidden treasures. (Prov. 2:1-9) If our hearts are right and we really want to serve God, he will give us understanding, but not forcibly. Worship must be completely voluntary, from the heart. While he gave inspiration to Bible writers and others, they had to use their intellect to learn God's will and make their own decision to serve him. Often they did not fully understand what they received by inspiration. (Dan. 12:8, 9; 1 Pet. 1:10-12) He does not take possession of us as the demons do when they control a person's mind that has been given over to them. We do not get the "holy ghost" or spirit, along with visible manifestations, as in the days of the apostles. When the apostles and those closely associated with them died, there were no more powerful works or miracles performed

with the aid of God's holy spirit.—1 Cor. 13:8-13; 2 Pet. 1:19-21.

¹⁰⁸ But does this mean that the holy spirit no longer works in our behalf? No, powerful works were just one operation of the spirit. Paul shows that there are "varieties of gifts, but there is the same spirit." (1 Cor. 12:4-6) Jesus said: "It is the spirit that is life-giving; the flesh is of no use at all. The sayings that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life." "When the helper arrives that I will send you from the Father, the spirit of the truth, which proceeds from the Father, that one will bear witness about me; and you, in turn, are to bear witness, because you have been with me from when I began." (John 6:63; 15:26, 27) Since Pentecost 33 C.E., Jehovah's holy spirit has continued to be a "helper," a 'remembrancer,' a 'teacher,' and a 'witness bearer.' (John 16:7-16; 14:25, 26; Mark 13:11) After it inspired the last Bible writer, John, to close the Bible canon, it has fulfilled these roles primarily by aiding Jehovah's true servants to get a progressive understanding of God's Word and to spread the good news in all the world as a witness. There was no need for additional revelations but to understand what had been written already. Paul put it this way: "For it is to us God has revealed them through his spirit, for the spirit searches into all things, even the deep things of God. Now we received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is from God, that we might know the things that have been kindly given us by God. These things we also speak, not with words taught by human wisdom, but with those taught by the spirit, as we combine spiritual matters with spiritual words."—1 Cor. 2:10, 12, 13.

7. (a) Does God give us an understanding of his Word miraculously? (b) How shall we view the operations of God's spirit upon the prophets and Bible writers?

8. (a) While powerful works are no longer performed by the holy spirit, what operations have continued down until today? (b) How does God's spirit help us to understand the 'things kindly given us by God'?

¹⁰ The process, then, calls for a change in thinking. We have to stop breathing in the spirit of this world and to work for a new spirit or force within us that is in harmony with God's spirit and Word. God's spirit has always worked in harmony with his Word. It cannot go contrary to it. He will not give us some contrary direction or new direction if he has it there in his Word for us to learn, but he will help us to understand what is written. We must get the understanding of spiritual matters by getting the spiritual words in the Bible clear in mind. We have to get the related parts fitted together so that we get spiritual understanding. Paul wrote Timothy: "Keep holding the pattern of healthful words that you heard from me with the faith and love that are in connection with Christ Jesus. This fine trust guard through the holy spirit which is dwelling in us."—2 Tim. 1:13, 14; Eph. 3:14-19.

¹¹ In themselves, the pages of the Bible are merely paper with ink upon them, whether bound in fancy or plain cover. However, when one begins to study these spirit-inspired words with a good heart, a powerful force is generated so that it truly can be said that God's spirit is being absorbed by the discerning reader. This is really one of the outstanding operations of the holy spirit, by reason of the force put into God's Word by holy spirit. It produces results when it begins to work in our lives. "For the word of God is alive and exerts power and is sharper than any two-edged sword and pierces even to the dividing of soul and spirit, and of joints and their marrow, and is able to discern thoughts and intentions of the heart." (Heb. 4:12) The Word of God is that penetrating! It gets down to our motives for

doing things. It distinguishes between what we appear to be as a living creature, the soul, and what we really are at heart, in attitude, in spirit. If we let it act in our lives, it will counteract wrong ideas, impure motives and selfish desires. It can create within us a powerful force to motivate toward righteousness.—Jer. 17:9, 10.

WORKING FOR A NEW SPIRIT

¹¹ When Jehovah made man, he gave him the marvelous faculty of a reasoning mind. What a gracious gift this was! The minds of Adam and Eve were not printed circuits that could produce only predetermined thoughts or results on a given stimulus. Neither were they robots, controlled from heaven according to their every move. Rather, Jehovah would teach them progressively all the things they needed to know in order to make right decisions in life. Right and wrong were not to be learned by the empirical (or trial and error) method. Perceptions would be taken in through the senses and would be associated together into patterns of knowledge. This could be put to use at the moment or stored in the memory for later use. In time man would have in his mental reservoir a vast accumulation of learning from his Creator that he could put to use as wisdom in carrying out God's purpose for him with understanding.—Prov. 3:1-7.

¹² The workings of the mind are very complex, but we know that from the time one is born there is present a mental force that motivates him to do things. The Bible speaks of this mental inclination or motivating force as the spirit (*ru'ahh*, Hebrew; *pneu'ma*, Greek) of man. (Prov. 25:28; 1 Cor. 2:11) It springs from one's de-

9. How can we acquire the "pattern of healthful words" in our minds?

10. In what way does God's spirit work through his Word?

11. How did God purpose that man use his mind?

12. (a) What did Jehovah create within the minds and hearts of men to cause them to have incentive? (b) How does man differ from the lower animals as to the potential of this mental force?

sires, needs, aspirations and other stimuli both inside and outside the body, and is given intensity of force by reason of cultivating them. The lower animals have a spirit too; but, in contrast, this mental force drives them to do things according to instinct, varying little from the way their progenitors did things for centuries past. With man, the potential of this mental inclination to exert itself in more than one direction according to a reasoned-out course gives him the ability to choose, and thus man is a free moral agent. Yet, the freedom man has is limited. It has bounds. It must of necessity be that way in his own interests, since there are many things that he can choose to do which are harmful. The Creator of man, knowing what is good for him, mentally and physically, has set reasonable bounds that are not burdensome.—1 John 5:3; 1 Pet. 2:16.

¹³ Closely associated with this driving force is a person's will, which is the faculty of conscious and deliberate action. It denotes fixed and persistent intent and purpose. How one takes in knowledge and relates this together so as to have understanding has a great bearing on the will. There are motivating mental forces behind our actions, and the control that our will exercises upon these forces determines whether we do one thing or something different. We call this willpower. We can strengthen our will with reasons for doing the right thing as determined by God and by the consequences of doing the wrong thing, and by doing this our motivating force will direct us in the proper way. "When wisdom enters into your heart and knowledge itself becomes pleasant to your very soul, thinking ability itself will keep guard over you, discernment itself will safeguard you, to deliver you

from the bad way."—Prov. 2:10-12; Dan. 11:3; 1 Cor. 7:37.

¹⁴ Our first parents did not continue to take in right knowledge and strengthen their wills to fulfill Jehovah's purpose for them. They let wrong desire become fertile so as to motivate them to a course of self-determination. (Jas. 1:14, 15; 2 Cor. 11:3) They sinned, and by inheritance we have the same tendencies. "The inclination of the heart of man is bad from his youth up." (Gen. 8:21) David confessed: "Look! With error I was brought forth with birth pains, and in sin my mother conceived me." Faced with the wretchedness of his sinful course, he prayed contritely: "Create in me even a pure heart, O God, and put within me a new spirit, a steadfast one. Do not throw me away from before your face; and your holy spirit O do not take away from me." (Ps. 51: 5, 10, 11) We have to study God's Word diligently and take to heart its counsel to have this new spirit. We have to respond to the leadings of God's holy spirit. Left to our own judgment, we would often fall and be led into wrong pathways, despite any sincere intentions. Hence, the apostle counsels: "Put away the old personality which conforms to your former course of conduct and which is being corrupted according to his deceptive desires; but . . . be made new in the force actuating your mind, and . . . put on the new personality which was created according to God's will in true righteousness and loyalty."—Eph. 4:22-24.

¹⁵ If one prays, studies and works for a right spirit and is determined to have it, God is faithful in that He will help that person to have a good spirit. Jesus emphasized the need to pray for God's spirit

13. Discuss the performance of one's will in relationship to his "spirit."

14. (a) Because of sin, what is the nature of man's inclination of mind? (b) How can we have a new spirit to actuate our minds?

15. To keep a good heart and the right spirit, what is needed?

to strengthen our own spirit: "Keep on the watch and pray continually, that you may not enter into temptation. The spirit, of course, is eager, but the flesh is weak." (Matt. 26:41) Our spirit has to be given a boost or be inclined so strongly in the right direction that any fleshly desire to go the wrong way or follow the course of least resistance is counteracted. Then we will not give in to temptation or "allow place for the Devil." (Eph. 4:27) With our minds awake, alive, eager to do God's will, we will be able to move the flesh to obey despite its limitations and imperfections.—1 Cor. 9:26, 27; Rom. 6:12-14.

¹⁶ Thus, God does not perform a miracle in our case and remove imperfection and the inclination to sin from our bodies. It is still there, and we are very conscious of it day by day, even though we apply ourselves diligently to a godly course. "I find, then, this law in my case: that when I wish to do what is right, what is bad is present with me. I really delight in the law of God according to the man I am within, but I behold in my members another law warring against the law of my mind and leading me captive to sin's law that is in my members. . . . So, then, with my mind I myself am a slave to God's law, but with my flesh to sin's law." (Rom. 7:21-25) We would be unable to triumph over the desires of the flesh in our own strength. That is why God grants us the help we need over and above what we are able to do ourselves to meet the requirements, "that the power beyond what is normal may be God's and not that out of ourselves." (2 Cor. 4:7) He gives us his spirit, not to perform a miracle to take away the problem, but to give us the understanding on how to cope with it, to endure it, to be trained by it, to prove integrity by it. "For God gave us not a

spirit of cowardice, but that of power and of love and of soundness of mind."—2 Tim. 1:7; Luke 11:13.

¹⁷ We should not feel that our trials are always special ones involving the great issue of universal sovereignty, such as Job's trial was, and yet never should we go to the other extreme and feel that we are not contributing to the vindication of Jehovah's name by our course of faithfulness under test. The Devil and his demons would act to destroy God's servants without any mercy if God did not provide the necessary protection and the climate wherein faith, hope and love could be nurtured and integrity worked out. The Devil repeatedly calls into question the integrity and uprightness of God's servants and he often maneuvers matters so that we are tempted, abused, threatened or otherwise interfered with. Some issues are cut very sharply, and it may at times seem to be a very close decision as to whether the individual will maintain integrity and faithfulness under test. If Jehovah effected miraculous deliverance indiscriminately, then there would be a basis for the Devil to taunt Jehovah, that he did not let the issue run its full course: 'Jehovah helped him right at the crucial point; if He had not delivered him just then, he would surely have failed the test that I set up that time.' Thus the results would be inconclusive as to the issue.—Prov. 27:11; Rev. 7:1-4, 9-17.

¹⁸ On the other hand, if the test or trial is being taken beyond what is reasonable, beyond the point where it would prove anything pertaining to the issue, then there would be justification for Jehovah to step mercifully into the picture with relief, with some operation, either by his

16. (a) What continues to work in opposition to our renewed minds? (b) What is needed in order to triumph over the desires of the flesh?

17. (a) As we undergo various trials, of what should we not lose sight? (b) Why are we subjected fully to the test at times?

18. What can we expect in the way of relief from Jehovah?

holy angels who are public servants in behalf of the holy ones on earth or otherwise. The individual may not feel this special help, but he will feel the relief. Jehovah can call a halt to matters, making a way out, if the test has served its purpose, or he can allow it to run its limit, in some instances, if faithfulness to death is the only way the issue can be settled. "Consequently let him that thinks he is standing beware that he does not fall. No temptation has taken you except what is common to men. But God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear, but along with the temptation he will also make the way out in order for you to be able to endure it." —1 Cor. 10:12, 13; 2 Cor. 4:7-12.

¹⁹ How comforting the words of Paul: "Therefore we do not give up, but even if the man we are outside is wasting away, certainly the man we are inside is being renewed from day to day." (2 Cor. 4:16)

19. Since Jehovah is "making an estimate of spirits," what should we be careful to do?

It is the "man we are inside" that we want to keep renewed and to safeguard. As we endure, we remember that Jehovah is "making an estimate of spirits." (Prov. 16:2) He watches to see if we are letting the spirit of this world and its wisdom motivate us, or if we are keeping close to his Word and responding to his spirit. "Do not be grieving God's holy spirit . . . go on perceiving what the will of Jehovah is. . . . keep getting filled with spirit."—Eph. 4:30; 5:17, 18; Gal. 5:16-26.

²⁰ If we are going to make it into God's new order of things for mankind, we must avail ourselves of all the provisions Jehovah has made for life. In this article we have seen how his spirit and his Word are indispensable aids without which we cannot do. There is a third provision that is indispensable also, and in the next article we will see how it too is a loving provision from Jehovah to his people in their quest for life.

20. Jehovah has given us his spirit and his Word for what purpose? What will the next article show?

Recognizing the part played by

JEHOVAH'S ORGANIZATION



"One isolating himself will seek his own selfish longing; against all practical wisdom he will break forth."—Prov. 18:1.

WHEN Jehovah God created man and then created his helpmate woman, he purposed that they should mul-

1. What craving did Jehovah put within human creatures, and what happens when this cannot be satisfied properly?

tiply their kind upon the earth and fill the earth. In time, the earth would be teeming with perfect human creatures, yet not overfilled. It was not God's will that any should live lives that were unrelated to

others. They were to live as one huge happy family of God, each being concerned for and having regard for those around him. Man is gregarious by nature. We all love the association of others. One of the extreme means of punishment is to put a person in solitary confinement. Some of God's servants have thus been treated and it became necessary to call upon all the resources at their disposal to keep their spiritual and mental equilibrium. They were alone as to their relationship with other human creatures, but Jehovah strengthened them for the ordeal by his spirit. He caused them to remember the things that they had studied beforehand in his Word and all the counsel and encouragement that had been received previously in association with God's people. By continually going over these things in their minds, they kept their faith strong and filled the need for association with others so that they were able to maintain their spiritual balance.

² Nevertheless, the fact remains that man cannot easily maintain his mental balance if cut off for long periods of time from association with his fellow creatures. We crave association, good companionship. How well this emphasizes the importance of Jehovah's provisions through his organization! We need his spirit and we need his Word, but we also need the benefits of his organization if we are successfully to gain life in his new order. Jehovah lovingly brings us together and has us cooperate as a body, with mutual benefits to all the members. Not only this, but we are brought into association with Jehovah, with his Son, Jesus Christ, and with the millions of other heavenly creatures. These heavenly creatures are closely associated with Jehovah in carrying out

his purpose and they are his heavenly organization, referred to symbolically as his wife. We as human creatures can have the motherlike attentions of his wifely organization, if we put ourselves in a position to receive these. We cannot feel the presence of the angels and they do not materialize to help us today as they did in Bible times, but they, nevertheless, are there to minister to our needs.—Heb. 1:7, 14; Ps. 34:7; Matt. 18:10.

³ Logically the visible part of Jehovah's organization is built around those remaining of the spirit-begotten disciples who will, in time, be in heaven with Christ Jesus as part of the heavenly government. Jesus prophetically foretold that they would be busily serving up spiritual food at the proper time when he arrived the second time. In harmony with his words at Matthew 24:45-47, they have now been given charge of all the Master's kingdom interests on earth, not only to supply spiritual food to the household of faith, based on God's Word, but to supervise the preaching work world wide and to care well for all the "great crowd" of right-hearted ones who are coming into their midst to be taught of Jehovah. (Isa. 2: 2-4) A great dividing work is being done, with the "sheep" being divided to the one side for life and the "goats" to the other for death. How each individual responds to the message of Christ's "brothers," the spirit-begotten ones making up this "faithful and discreet slave," will dictate on which side he will be placed. (Matt. 25: 31-46) The sheeplike ones are glad that Jehovah has left a remnant of these "brothers" on the earth to take the lead in worship and to serve as a channel through which so many tangible benefits are dispensed to help them gain life.

2. How has Jehovah taken note of the needs of his servants in arranging for them to be associated with others of his creatures?

3. (a) Who logically make up the nucleus of Jehovah's visible organization? (b) What is involved in their taking care of all the Master's interests in the earth?

⁴ The trend today among many moderns who adopt the spirit of this world is to avoid being part of an organization. To them this is regimentation and deprives them of their freedom. They protest, they rebel, they riot, they challenge by disobeying and otherwise show their opposition to any restraints that society in general imposes. Rebellion against God and against reasonable regulations may make one less conscious of sin when indulging the weaknesses of the body and may give one a feeling he is not restrained by other individuals or the rules of an organization, but he grows old and dies just like those of preceding generations. The principles of God and his requirements for life do not change as a result of a person's changes in philosophical views or norms of conduct.—Prov. 19:20, 21; 1 Pet. 2:16; Gal. 6:7, 8.

⁵ A rebellious son may leave the well-ordered home of his father because of not liking the necessary restraints and conditions under which he is allowed to live there. He may choose to disregard all the instruction given to him by his parents, thinking thereby to get "real freedom." But what father who has a natural love for all his children would not hope that the rebellious son would carefully consider his immature course and see that he was not really gaining freedom but was striking out on a long road of hardship, heartache and perhaps a disgraceful death? Somewhere along the line, if he did not change, his life would likely end in violence or with him a disillusioned mental wreck. How different from the wise son who responds to needed discipline, grows to maturity under the loving tutelage of his parents and then takes his place in the larger organization, the congregation or

community, as a useful, happy person! —Luke 15:11-32.

⁶ Jehovah has, therefore, wisely provided that his people should be working together in an organized way like a family with himself as Father and Head. This is done, not to unduly restrict our freedom, but to help us to use our God-given freedom in a right way. We enjoy meeting together to talk about God's Word and have it explained to us. We are strengthened when we work together in carrying out our commission to preach the good news to all in our community. In being brought together, we learn how each one is faring in his service to Jehovah, so that we can carry the burdens of one another, yet not prying unduly into one another's private lives. How would we be able to carry on all these essentials of the Christian ministry without working together as an organization?

Moreover, what confusion would come about if Jehovah were dealing with each of us individually, giving this one a new truth and that one a revelation; or that one an interpretation and this one a commission of work, all independent of one another! Rather, Jehovah has seen fit to work through his organization in providing food for all at the proper time. Unifying service instructions are given so that all might work together in preaching the good news efficiently and to accomplish the best results.—1 Cor. 14:26-33, 40; Rom. 15:1, 2; Eph. 4:16.

⁷ Today Jehovah's witnesses are found in 199 lands. There are 96 branches, all tied in with the central headquarters in Brooklyn, New York, namely, the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society. There the work of the governing body of anointed ones is centered, and from here they give

4. As to becoming a part of an organization, what is the trend of most people in the world?

5. In throwing off all restraints, what does one fail to realize? What will a wise son do?

6. Jehovah's organization might be likened to what, and how does being organized facilitate all things being cared for efficiently?

7. What is more important than the location of the headquarters of the earthly organization?

supervision to the preaching world wide and the preparation of publications containing spiritual food. If Jehovah had not long ago tested out and cleansed his people and put his spirit upon them, and if they were not working closely in harmony with his Word, they would be no different from any other religious body that was incorporated to carry on a work. They know that where the headquarters is located is not the important thing, or even the name of the corporation. However, the central organization is located in New York city because of the definite advantages in getting the good news printed and distributed world wide rapidly. Location was important to the Samaritans as well as the Jews, this prompting the Samaritan woman to say to Jesus: "Our forefathers worshiped in this mountain; but you people say that in Jerusalem is the place where persons ought to worship." Jesus said to her: "Believe me, woman, The hour is coming when neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you people worship the Father. . . . the hour is coming, and it is now, when the true worshipers will worship the Father with spirit and truth, for, indeed, the Father is looking for suchlike ones to worship him. God is a Spirit, and those worshiping him must worship with spirit and truth." (John 4: 20-24) So location is not the important thing. It is *you* with God's spirit!

⁸ Wherever a person is in the earth, then, it does not matter. Neither do we have to face in a certain direction or assume a certain pose in worshiping the Father. Orderliness, but not empty ritual! The main thing is, What is in our hearts? Our spirit or motivating force must be in harmony with God's Word of truth and responding to his holy spirit. We must love Jehovah with all our heart, mind,

soul and strength. Yet this complete devotion to God does not crowd out the obligation to love our neighbor as we do ourselves, and even to love our enemies. To do this, we cannot worship God and carry out his commission of work independently of others who are doing the same thing. Hence, Jehovah's witnesses, wherever they are, have the privilege of working with a congregation organized under the supervision of the governing body of Jehovah's witnesses. Where there are only one or two in a group, and a congregation has not yet been formed, they receive benefits directly from headquarters and visits from traveling representatives as they have group studies and visit others with the good news. Even behind the Iron Curtain our brothers see the need to have their group meetings regularly and to preach to others systematically, although at the risk of their lives.

BENEFITS TO YOU PERSONALLY

⁹ Let us take a typical congregation and assume that you became associated with that congregation in a way similar to that of thousands of others of Jehovah's Christian witnesses who have become associated. What benefits would you have received and would you continue to receive from Jehovah's organization in your quest for life in his new system of things? First of all, very likely you were brought the hope of everlasting life by a member of the local congregation who came to your door and gave a brief Bible sermon to stimulate your interest in the Bible and then left with you some Bible literature prepared by the organization. A small territory assignment had been made up including your home and it was issued to that member by the congregation. Like all other ministers throughout the world, he

8. How are Jehovah's witnesses organized on the community level?

9. How would one be assisted by the organization on first being contacted?

was preaching the good news therein according to instructions received through the organization, which, among other practical points, suggested that he try to reach every person in the territory with the message of God's kingdom and to follow up any interest shown with return visits and Bible studies. He did return and studied with you for a period.

¹⁰ In time, as you took in knowledge and your appreciation grew, you responded to an invitation to come to one of the meetings of the congregation. You saw, as you attended more frequently, that these were all arranged so that there was a balanced spiritual diet. The deeper things from God's Word were received along with general encouragement and counsel. New truths were learned and there was refreshment in reviewing old ones. (Matt. 13:52) There was instruction on how to carry out the ministry. Your appreciation of God's channel for dispensing "food at the proper time" increased steadily. You listened to others speak from the platform and then you joined in commenting when there was audience participation. Later you enrolled in the Theocratic Ministry School to receive special training in speaking, composition, Bible research, refutation, and so forth. There was a different spirit here, and you enjoyed this Christian association. All this built you up spiritually and prepared you for future service. All these benefits you began to receive because you had begun to associate with Jehovah's organization.—Heb. 10:23-25.

¹¹ As your knowledge of Jehovah's requirements grew, it became clear to you that being a member of the congregation of Jehovah's Christian witnesses did not mean that you were just a part of the

laity, requiring no more than to listen and put money in a collection plate. In fact, you never saw a collection plate passed at any of the meetings. You were learning that your faith was, not a dead faith, but one that was alive. You wanted to tell others about the good things you were learning. You accepted the invitation extended by the one teaching you to accompany him from house to house in the witnessing work. You learned the best ways of carrying on the ministry by doing the talking. Thus you availed yourself of another training arrangement in the organization that helped you to be a better minister of God.—Acts 20:20, 21; Heb. 13:15, 16; Jas. 1:22-25.

¹² You noticed early in your association that the congregation had appointed servants who ministered to the needs of the congregation. Before they were appointed by the governing body, they had to measure up to Bible standards for overseers and ministerial assistants. (1 Tim. 3:1-10, 12, 13) They were not bosses; neither did they expect nor want the adulation of those whom they served. None were paid for their willing service in behalf of their brothers. How different from the leaders in the many sects of Christendom! These busied themselves with preparation of meetings, discourses and schedules of work. They took the initiative in providing a reasonable place to meet and the supplies for carrying on the preaching work. Necessary records were kept and checked to see how the congregation was doing collectively and whether any individual needed some special help from mature ones in some way. The sick and infirm were visited and ministered to as needed.—John 13:12-17; Heb. 13:7.

¹³ As you grew toward Christian matu-

10. How would one be assisted by the meetings and by association with others in the congregation?

11. What provision does the organization make to help all 'make public declaration for salvation'?

12. What organizational benefits are provided by the overseers and ministerial servants?

13. How does the organization help with problems encountered in growing to maturity?

rity, some problems were encountered, you became discouraged a time or two; you might even have had a few misunderstandings with some of your spiritual brothers and sisters. But you saw the need to keep your faith strong, to apply Bible principles. (Col. 3:12-14) You learned. You were being trained. You wanted to please God and gain the prize of life. The appointed servants in the congregation were there to help in all these situations. They were not there to take away your Christian freedom, but they were interested in helping all to work together in peace and to protect the congregation from any spiritual or immoral danger, remembering Peter's counsel: "Shepherd the flock of God in your care, not under compulsion, but willingly; neither for love of dishonest gain, but eagerly; neither as lording it over those who are God's inheritance, but becoming examples to the flock."—1 Pet. 5:2, 3.

¹⁴ You recall the first circuit servant's visit and how he helped the congregation with suggestions for improving the ministry and with encouraging discourses. You attended your first circuit assembly, and then a large convention in a nearby city. You sent for a rooming assignment from the rooming department of the convention and you volunteered to work in the convention organization. It was here at the convention that you symbolized your dedication to do Jehovah's will by being immersed in water along with many others. What outstanding spiritual benefits that you will never forget! Who made all these arrangements? It was Jehovah's faithful organization, not unlike the arrangements made in a similar way by Jehovah for the nation of Israel and the early Christian congregation.—1 Sam. 7:

14. How does the organization provide benefits through assemblies?

16; Deut. 16:16; Acts 2:41, 42; 13:2-4; 14:21-28.

¹⁵ The need for working closely with Jehovah's organization and appreciating all the benefits provided by it became more and more apparent to you as you saw Jehovah's hand in all the arrangements. This was an organization, not out just to get members, but one to help a person get life. From the governing body to the servants in the local congregation, all were your spiritual brothers interested in getting Jehovah's will accomplished in the best way and making sure that all received of the spiritual benefits that Jehovah is progressively giving to his people. Every publication, every branch office, every factory, every school, every meeting, every preaching campaign was designed to get 'the good news preached in all the world as a witness.' This was and is the chartered purpose of the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, the legal agency used by Jehovah's witnesses, and it has no other purpose for being in existence. The more you examined Jehovah's visible organization, the more you could see that it operated just as the early Christian congregation did during the days of the apostles.—Matt. 28:18-20; 24:14; Acts 15:6, 22-29; 16:4, 5.

¹⁶ What valuable blessings and experiences you were having by associating with Jehovah's organization! If you had not met with and worked with your spiritual brothers and sisters, there would have been few opportunities to cultivate your love for them. You would not have seen opportunities to assist others as you grew stronger and were able to help those who needed it. Likewise, you would not have come into view so that your weaknesses

15. What does one come to appreciate about Jehovah's organization, as to its purpose in the earth?

16. In bringing brothers and sisters together, how does the organization help one in cultivating love and other fruits of the spirit?

could be seen and thus you could be assisted to overcome these so that you might be a better servant of Jehovah. Were you shy and timid in the presence of others? Then giving comments at meetings and preaching publicly helped you greatly in speaking to others. It became a joy rather than something to avoid. Were you quick tempered? Others had to bear with you for a little while as you cultivated self-control and worked for a mild temper, but working with others and receiving their help and patience helped you to conquer this. Whatever the problem or situation, you found over the years that it was better coped with by closely associating with and availing yourself of the many benefits of Jehovah's organization.—1 Thess. 5:11; Gal. 6:2.

¹⁷ As you got better acquainted with others you saw that they, too, had problems or weaknesses on which they were working in addition to newfound joys and privileges from Jehovah. This one's health posed a problem; another had some difficulty keeping ahead financially. This one had a tendency to be anxious over little things; another did not take things seriously enough. This sister had an opposing mate; that father had a boy who was rebellious at times. This one was becoming a little weary in well-doing; another did not seem to have enough time to get everything accomplished. Here was a brother who could not decide whether to marry now. There was one skilled in a profession who found it difficult to break free in order to enter the preaching work full time. This one was having a battle with some fleshly weakness. It was like a thorn in the flesh. Another found it difficult to face persecution or opposition. This one had a worldly habit that was deeply ingrained, which he was fighting

to overcome; that one's wife was somewhat sensitive and became easily offended. This young sister was developing some outside interest that was dividing her mind; this servant was beginning to feel somewhat loaded down with responsibility and found it difficult to keep balanced.

¹⁸ Jehovah had not caused any of these situations, yet he allowed them. Some they brought upon themselves and, with good judgment, could have been avoided; others came despite what they could do. Some were caused by the Devil having his agents on earth bring opposition, but to a large extent they were situations all common to life and arose because of imperfection and trying to live for the new system of things, while still living in the old. If they tried to work all these out day by day in isolation from Jehovah's organization, they would never make it. You now could see very clearly that we need the instruction, the counsel, the encouragement, the loving help of our brothers. Weaning ourselves away from God's organization leaves us lonely "sheep" in a cold world that cares nothing for us. (1 Pet. 4:7-11) Being in contact with bad associations continually without renewing ourselves by regular association with Jehovah's witnesses, we would soon cool off in our love for Jehovah and in our zeal for his true worship. (2 Pet. 2:20) We would just be swallowed up by the world again and go down with it.—Prov. 18:1.

¹⁹ Now here we are at the present and looking into the future. Will we keep enduring and appreciating all the provisions Jehovah makes by his spirit, his Word and his organization? All three work together to give us daily blessings and benefits without which we just cannot be. But

18. How do all these situations come about, and why is it necessary to stay close to Jehovah's organization in order to cope with them?

19. What must we recognize about the three main provisions of Jehovah, his spirit, his Word and his organization?

17. What are some common situations facing various ones in Jehovah's organization?

remember, much depends upon how each of us takes advantage of these. We have to watch our spirit and never let the spirit of this world begin to influence us. We must submit to the leadings of Jehovah's holy spirit. We must study his Word both privately and congregationally. We must

let it be a real force in our lives. We must appreciate Jehovah's Christian organization and work closely with it. Let us never slight any of these benefits. They have been provided by the Life-giver, knowing what we need in order to have everlasting life.

THE Bridegroom and Bride TURN ATTENTION TO Family-rearing

TO BRING up children is a happy but heavy responsibility. It requires tender care, constant attention, the expression of much love, discipline, correction, family togetherness, association and participation in recreation. Therefore, when a man is at war it is hardly the time for him to give attention to raising a family. Nations generally recognize this and exempt men with families from military service unless the national situation becomes extreme. When a newly married man returns from war he is so happy to be with his bride and she with him. Their happiness is greatest because now they can work together, they can plan a home and begin carrying out the primary purpose of marriage—the bringing up of a family. It is something that God has provided. We of the human race are thankful that God has arranged things this way, for through it we have come to have life.

In order that we might understand Jehovah's purposes toward us God has used

this very circumstance to illustrate for us what he is going to do for the human race. He loves the human family and wants us to have life, not just for a few short years with a good part of these years filled with troubles and suffering, but life forever under a condition where there will be no lack of constant happiness. He has repeatedly told us through his Word that he has provided the Messiah, his only-begotten Son Jesus Christ, as the means for life for humankind. How he will bring these benefits to us here on the earth he makes plain by using the very understandable illustration of a bridegroom and bride giving attention to the rearing of a family.

Jesus Christ is the Bridegroom. (John 3:28, 29) He is spiritual, immortal, in heaven. (1 Pet. 3:18; 1 Tim. 6:14-16) Who is his bride and what kind of person is she? Well, the Bible says that the Christian congregation is his bride. (Col. 1:18) Of course, she is no individual wom-

an but is a composite bride, an organization made up of people. A bride who is to marry a spiritual bridegroom must be spiritual, and she is such, being the Israel of God, or spiritual Israel, spirit-begotten sons of God. This composite bride is also spoken of as the "little flock" to whom God will give the Kingdom (Luke 12:32), and who are to be kings and priests with Christ. (Rev. 20:4, 6) In harmony with their being a "little flock" the Bible indicates that they number only 144,000. (Rev. 14:1) The Bridegroom and bride belong to the family of the great heavenly Father, Jehovah God. Having married the Son, each member of the composite bride has on the forehead the name of Christ as the Husband and also the name of his Father.

A FIGHT TO PROTECT BRIDE AND FAMILY NAME

Now, the concern of the Bridegroom and his bride is to bring up a family worthy of the illustrious name of the Father Jehovah, obedient and fully respectful of the family name. It is in behalf of this family name and also in protection of his bride that the Bridegroom must fight a war before he can enjoy full peace and give undivided attention to family-rearing. This war is against the enemies of his Father, led by God's chief opponent, Satan the Devil. Satan has used men on earth opposed to true Christianity to attempt to destroy the bride or contaminate her morally or spiritually so that she will not be fit to marry the heavenly Bridegroom. For this reason the Bridegroom fights the battle of Armageddon, thoroughly crushing out all earthly enemies and then defeating Satan and his wicked demons. What results from this action is described in the Bible as the fleeing away of the earth and the heavens, so that no place is found for them. (Rev. 20:11) Thereby every obstacle is removed to com-

plete peace, so that there remains no threat to the bride. The Bridegroom has now established completely favorable conditions for his bride: "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the former heaven and the former earth had passed away, and the sea is no more."—Rev. 21:1.

With the old heaven of Satan and his demons gone, along with the spirit of Satan, which is the spirit of the world that exerts its wicked force to turn people's minds toward wickedness, a new administrative body has full sway, namely, Jesus Christ and his 144,000 associate kings and priests. The Bible helps us to locate the time that the Bridegroom and his bride turn attention toward bringing forth a family, when it tells us that this administration is to rule for a thousand years. (Rev. 20:4) This happy time is at the beginning of Christ's thousand-year reign. The "new earth" over which this administration rules is not a new earthly globe traveling in space, anymore than the "new heaven" replaces the heaven of God. It is that which permanently replaces the old, corrupt, earthly human arrangement of Satan, just as the new heavens permanently replaces the old Satanic heavens that has corrupted and dominated human society. The "new earth" is a completely righteous new earthly human society. The symbolic "sea" of the restless, rebellious, ungodly peoples out of whom the symbolic wild beast ascended long ago for the Devil's use will be gone. (Rev. 13:1, 2; Isa. 57:20) Our literal seas will remain. But how will such a righteous new earthly society come about? The apostle John saw how in his vision:

NEW JERUSALEM COMES DOWN

"I saw also the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God and prepared as a bride adorned for her

husband." (Rev. 21:2) This is a most happy time for the Bridegroom, a time for him to begin his glorious reign of a thousand years with his bride. It is, naturally, a happy time for her too, and she is described as beautifully adorned for the occasion. She is likened to a city, Jerusalem, which in the time of the glorious reign of King Solomon was a place of awe-inspiring beauty, high on Zion's hill with its magnificent temple seen from afar, glistening in the sunlight and exalting the true worship of Jehovah God. A city is often used in the Scriptures to represent an organization. This bride is an organization bound together in complete unity in the love of the Bridegroom and of his Father Jehovah and completely equipped for service, "prepared as a bride adorned for her husband," and ready to do her husband's bidding. Together now they joyfully turn attention toward the earth, for they serve as the new capital organization, the new administration. They are the complete seed of Abraham by means of whom "all nations of the earth will certainly bless themselves."—Gen. 22:18; Rev. 3:12.

How can those then on the earth, having at least a measure of life by being of Adamic stock, become children of the Bridegroom and his bride? Or, who are the children brought forth? Well, those then on earth are living alright, having survived the battle of Armageddon, but they are not perfect; they still have the Adamic inheritance of sin; they would die in time. Armageddon has not changed their bodies, although it has vanquished their enemies. So they need real life infused into them. They need to become, instead of the children of sinful Adam, the children of the "Eternal Father" Jesus Christ. (Isa. 9:6) This means that there is much work for the bride and the Bridegroom to do, for a great deal of love and

tender care and the infusing of real life into these persons is their responsibility. Besides this there are millions who have no life at all. They have died and are out of existence. These are part of the nations and families of the earth that the Abrahamic seed must also bless, and so they must be brought back, must stand again on this earth for an opportunity to become the posterity of the bride and Bridegroom, permanent members of the family. (Gen. 12:3) How will the bride and Bridegroom accomplish this work? John had that question answered next in his vision:

THE BRIDEGROOM'S FAMILY

"With that I heard a loud voice from the throne say: '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.'" (Rev. 21:3) That is how it comes about. God the great Source of life does not personally tent or reside with mankind on earth, in direct contact with them, because even those who compose the bride, while they were yet on earth, did not have God personally dwelling with them. Jesus Christ was serving as Mediator between God and men in behalf of the 144,000, the bride. So the time has come for the rest of mankind to be fully reconciled to God. (1 Tim. 2:5, 6; 2 Cor. 5:20) During their becoming reconciled God dwells with them only representatively, in anticipation of the time when the thousand years of the millennial reign are ended. At that time all those obedient on earth will have been taken into the family of the Bridegroom, "the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world," and by then will have had cultivated into them his own righteous qualities. They will demonstrate the family traits of Jesus Christ the "last Adam," instead of the degrading, deteriorating

traits of their original father the "first man Adam." (1 Cor. 15:45) Through their faith in the shed blood of the Lamb of God, through their obedience to Christ as the Eternal Father, the benefits of his perfect sacrifice will operate upon them to bring them life, in contrast with the sin inherited from Adam, which has worked toward their death.—John 1:29, 36; Rom. 5:12.

In ancient Israel the tent in the wilderness had an inner compartment called the Most Holy in which God representatively dwelt with his people. The light between the cherubs over the ark of the covenant and the cloud that stood above the tabernacle were evidence of Jehovah's favorable attention toward them. The bride class of 144,000 members, we recall, is a spiritual house, a spiritual temple for which Jesus Christ is the foundation cornerstone, the place for Jehovah God to inhabit by spirit. (1 Pet. 2:5; Eph. 2:19-22) As the husband is really the foundation of the family, so Christ is toward his bride. When they come down out of heaven, meaning that they turn their attention and activities and power toward this earth and those living on it, God takes up residence with men by means of this temple class. It is the center of worship to which all people must come, just as in ancient Israel the tabernacle (and later the temple) was the center of worship. They will thereby become reconciled to God and become truly "his peoples."

What will be the result to his peoples as they come closer and closer to complete reconciliation to God? John tells us: "And [God] will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be any more. The former things have passed away." (Rev. 21:4) What a wonderful, refreshing, invigorating, life-giving arrangement for mankind! As they ex-

press obedience and as Christ and his bride lovingly assist them in making progress spiritually and apply the ransom benefits to them to the healing of their bodies, there will be less and less pain, less and less reason for tears. Death will come to be no more. The death inherited from Adam will cease to spread any farther when children cease to be born. Those living on earth, when they come to perfection, will cease to have any of the Adamic sin working in them. The death that was received as an inheritance from Adam will be completely wiped out, to be nonexistent.—Rom. 5:12, 18, 19.

Graveyards have brought much sorrow to humankind. It is a disturbing thing even to view a graveyard. Hades, the common grave of all mankind, will likewise become no more when the resurrection of those in the graves occurs and when none will thereafter go down into the grave as a result of Adam's sin. Then it will indeed be true: "The former things have passed away."

ASSURANCE FROM THE UNFAILING PURPOSER

Jehovah realizes that it is hard for humans on earth under the conditions we observe today to visualize such a desirable condition. It seems too good to be true, but, then, on the other hand, does not the situation at the present time under Satan the great enemy of God seem too bad to be true? And did not God's Word foretell this day? God himself tells us that he will cause these good things to come to pass. It is impossible for him to lie. (Heb. 6:18) John writes: "And the one seated on the throne said: 'Look! I am making all things new.' Also, he says: 'Write, because these words are faithful and true.'" (Rev. 21:5) Jehovah kindly and understandingly gives us this added assurance over his own name. He is the

faithful and true God, and his Son the Bridegroom gave his life that man might live. The Son is concerned, above all things, with carrying out and bringing to truth and reality these promises of God.

The things that God purposes are so sure to take place that he calls himself "the One telling from the beginning the finale, and from long ago the things that have not been done." Even of his servants Abraham, Isaac and Jacob he could say, even though they were dead, that he was their God, for "he is the God, not of the dead, but of the living." Before he commanded John to write down the vision given him he said further to John: "They have come to pass!" because they are sure to be accomplished.—Isa. 46:10; Matt. 22:32; Rev. 21:6; Rom. 4:17.

Do you believe that these things will take place? God, further showing us how he can consider things that are not as though they are, patiently says: "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end." In the Greek language, in which the apostle John wrote, the letter alpha begins the alphabet and the letter omega ends it. Jehovah here tells us, therefore, that when he begins a thing, being the Almighty and the Purposer, he brings it to a successful end. No hindrance or interference can cause him to leave it unfinished.—Rev. 21:6; 1:8; 22:13.

His promise being based on such a solid foundation, we can be confident in accepting his invitation: "To anyone thirsting I will give from the fountain of the water of life free." (Rev. 21:6) Psalm 36:9, addressed to Jehovah, says: "With you is the source [or, fountain] of life." (NW, AV, AS) Any human creature that thirsts for perfect, happy life throughout eternity will have to get it from the great Source or Fountain of life Jehovah God, who is the Alpha with whom all good things start. The thirsty one cannot buy

this life-imparting, life-sustaining water with gold, silver or material things. Jehovah God gives it free, but only on his own terms. Hence the water of life must be accepted through his Son Jesus Christ.

God then speaks to the remnant yet on earth of the 144,000 spiritual heirs of God, joint heirs with Jesus Christ. In his eighth and last exhortation to faithfulness in the Revelation, Jehovah says: "Anyone conquering will inherit these things, and I shall be his God and he will be my son." (Rev. 21:7; 2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21) To make this heavenly inheritance sure for themselves the remnant of the 144,000 must conquer this wicked world just as Jesus Christ the chief Son of God did. (John 16:33; Rev. 3:21) They must keep conquering the world by keeping integrity toward God and maintaining spiritual and moral chastity as an espoused bride until shortly this wicked system's fiery end removes it from existence and they enter the new order victoriously.

NOT ALL WILL BECOME THE BRIDEGROOM'S CHILDREN

Will all mankind on earth automatically become the children of the bride and Bridegroom, eventually taken into the great, everlasting family of Jehovah God? No. John next describes those who will not: "But as for the cowards and those without faith and those who are disgusting in their filth and murderers and fornicators and those practicing spiritism and idolaters and all the liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulphur. This means the second death." (Rev. 21:8) Persons practicing these things are not conquerors of the world, for they are carrying on the very things of the world, the works of the flesh. They are carrying out the works of the sinful forefather of the human race, Adam, and following the pattern of Bab-

ylon the Great, "the mother of the harlots and of the disgusting things of the earth." The murderers, the fornicators or sexually immoral, those who follow Babylon the Great in practicing spiritism, sorcery and magic, the idolaters, including those who worship the symbolic "wild beast" and its modern-day "image," and the liars who imitate the Devil "the father of the lie"—this kind do not conquer the world and will be destroyed at Armageddon. In the new earth these qualities will be equally detestable and persons practicing them will not be permitted to continue living.—John 8:44; Rev. 17:5, 6; 18:23, 24.

The fountain of the water of life, although open to such persons, is turned down by them and therefore they do not drink from it, losing their own lives. The death they die will be, not the Adamic death, but a death due to their own willful rebellion and wickedness. It will be eternal death, symbolized by the "lake that burns with fire and sulphur," the second death. (Rev. 21:8) It is no so-called "conscious living death," to be suffered by an imaginary immortal human soul that is tormented with fire and brimstone for eternity. It is a death from which there is no resurrection. There is no key for the second death, though Jesus has the key for the Adamic death. (Rev. 1:18) The second death is absolutely distinct from Adamic death, for the Dragon, the Original Serpent, Satan the Devil,

never died in Adamic death but he is hurled into the "second death," the symbolic lake of fire, and so, too, are the "wild beast" and the "false prophet." Even the Adamic death itself and Hades or Sheol are hurled into the "second death." So the "lake of fire" symbolizes everlasting destruction of a person or thing. It is Adamic death that will be no more, not the "second death." Those hurled into second death will remain in it forever, unredeemed.

There will be no sorrow to the Bridegroom and bride over the death of such persons, for these will have shown the same wicked spirit as Satan and no tears will be shed because of their passing off the face of the earth. During the thousand-year reign, when the bride and Bridegroom are concentrating on the rearing of a family, they will also be directing their children in the construction of the most beautiful of homes, namely, an earthly paradise, so that by the end of the thousand years and after the destruction of the unworthy in the "lake of fire" there will be a tremendous family of thousands of millions, all living happily with everlasting life on the beautified earth. (Ps. 37:10, 11; Rom. 8:21) God's purpose in this blessed marriage of his beloved, faithful Son will be carried out to a glorious conclusion, bringing mankind into the family of the heavenly Father as "sons of God."

A Clergyman Escapes Babylon the Great

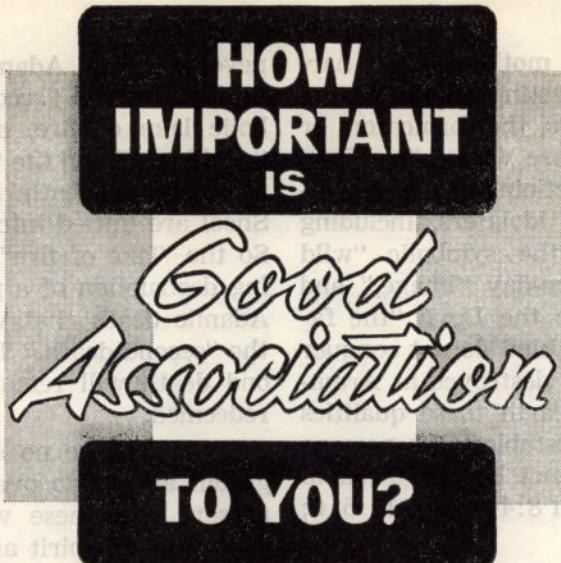
- In a town in Mexico, a Protestant clergyman, who had been a pastor there for ten years, obtained a copy of the book *From Paradise Lost to Paradise Regained* from Jehovah's witnesses. He confessed to the Witnesses that he did not know what to preach in church anymore. When shown the book, he was surprised at the way it taught the truth so clearly. A study was started and it was conducted twice a week for two months. This resulted in his resigning as pastor of the church there. In the third month he began visiting some of his former flock and telling them about the "good news." Studies are being conducted with some of these same people.

WHEN the apostle Peter in the first century referred to Christians as "the entire association of your brothers in the world," his was an accurate allusion to one of the outstanding characteristics of Christ's followers. (1 Pet. 5:9) They associated with one another. They were not content to stay home and enjoy a secret, personal religion. They felt the need for as much association as was practicable with others of the same faith. Their faith had to be talked about.

Those Christians needed the association of one another. No other association could satisfy. Then, too, they were mindful of the apostle's warning: "Bad associations spoil useful habits." (1 Cor. 15:33) By regularly assembling together in good association, they could heed the urgent advice of Bible writer Jude to be "building up yourselves on your most holy faith." (Jude 20) So vital to them was this link with the Christian congregation that persecutions, political turmoil, distance, hardships, weather—none of these could dissuade zealous Christians from meeting together. Is that your attitude too?

DISTANCE, PROBLEMS OVERCOME

The fact that their home is far from the nearest meeting place with other Christians, together with lack of transportation, may loom as an obstacle to some, but not to many witnesses of Jehovah in Panama. Over rugged mountain paths one group of eight spend three and a half hours on



legs and feet, put on their shoes and enjoy the program, undaunted by the prospect of a similar return trip, only this time in the dark.

Are you without transportation, and is the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses quite a distance from your home? Well, think about some of the Witnesses in Colombia, South America, who often have to go on foot, in sunshine or rain, twenty miles to get to a meeting place, and not on well-lighted paved roads, but along narrow paths, fording rivers up to the waist, enduring the heat or the torrential downpours. And all of this, not for some special meeting, but to get to the regular weekly sessions for study of the Bible with the help of *The Watchtower*.

In many parts of Mexico the only means of transportation is one's own legs. Yet meetings are keenly appreciated by Jehovah's witnesses in that land. Attendance at the weekly *Watchtower* study averages 119 percent of the total number of Witnesses, 91 percent attend the smaller weekly meetings in private homes, and 82 percent the midweek meeting for discus-

horseback. Rain or shine they are regularly at the Kingdom Hall at the appointed time, eager for fellowship and spiritual nourishment. In another region of jagged hills Witnesses walk for hours, crossing streams on narrow logs, often wading, carrying their shoes. On arrival at the meeting place they wash their

sion and improvement of the preaching ministry. Nor are these high attendance figures the rule only in the larger cities; they apply throughout the whole country.

In rural Paraguay Jehovah's witnesses maintain regular meeting attendance despite many difficulties. A few can ride horseback or in horse-drawn carts, but the majority travel on foot. In fact, when it rains they have no choice, for all roads are closed by law until they have dried out. So the Witnesses make their way barefoot through deep mud, and on arrival at the Kingdom Hall they wash their feet and put on their shoes again.

In Costa Rica, where three-fourths of the Witnesses live in the rurals, hundreds of them walk or ride horseback for up to six hours over muddy trails to associate with one another. One Witness conducts twelve Bible studies at various locations, besides walking the six hours to attend congregation meetings. Once each month she makes a journey by canoe that takes eight hours in order to reach a remote part of the territory where interested people eagerly await the Bible lessons she conducts with them.

POVERTY NO HANDICAP

Poverty may be considered by some as a reason for missing meetings at the Kingdom Hall. Transportation costs are heavy. But this is not considered an insurmountable problem in Central and South America. Consider, for example, the case of a mother and her seven children in Asunción, Paraguay. They regularly attend Kingdom Hall meetings twice a week, even though the long bus ride costs them 36 percent of the family's average monthly wage. To them the blessings of Christian association are well worth it.

Then there is the fine example of an elderly Witness in Panama who is a source

of great encouragement to all who attend the same congregation. They know that in order to be at the Kingdom Hall she must paddle across Gatun Lake in a cayuco or homemade canoe, and then walk two miles to catch a bus ride for ten more miles. How does she pay for her bus ride? She brings along eggs wrapped individually in palm leaves and sells them to other passengers.

In Venezuela those living in the interior have to make a determined effort to enjoy regularly the benefits of association at the Kingdom Hall. But they do. Many live on small farms and have very little cash income; so it is difficult to find money for bus fares. One elderly woman living in an isolated area often walks twenty miles to the nearest Kingdom Hall. She brings with her some produce to sell at the market in order to pay her way home on the bus. Despite handicaps such as these, attendance at Kingdom Halls in Venezuela is good—95 percent of the Witnesses attend the weekly *Watchtower* study.

Along the Atlantic coast of Costa Rica the United Fruit Company laid narrow-gauge rail lines years ago for transport of bananas. Although the lines are now almost out of use, Witnesses and others use the track, traveling on flatcars drawn by mules. Of course, they have to dodge the flying mud from the mules' hoofs, and often at their destination the male Witnesses have to wash and change clothing before sharing in the program of the evening at the Kingdom Hall. They go through it all just to have fellowship with others of the same faith. Would you?

In Honduras, too, faithful Christians have that strong desire to associate with brothers in the faith. One woman, whose husband is not a Witness and who has eight children, rarely fails to attend the meetings of the congregation, though she has to walk two miles each way. And a

married couple walk four miles to the Kingdom Hall. After each meeting they set out for home through jungle-like territory in the darkness, arriving home quite often at one or two in the morning. Yet they would never dream of missing one of those upbuilding sessions with fellow Christians.

OTHER DIFFICULTIES OVERCOME

Perhaps fatigue after a day's work may seem to some good reason for staying home on meeting night. Not so the father of two small children in British Honduras. He works from dawn to dark, sometimes as late as seven o'clock. But he has organized his household so that they will not miss the many benefits of the weekly meetings. His wife prepares the children in advance and leaves early for the Kingdom Hall, since the pace of the little ones is slow and they have two miles to walk. Before leaving she sees to it that everything is in readiness for her husband to change quickly and hasten after her along the trail.

And often there is need for his presence, for heavy rains at times bring snakes out on the trails. So he has to be vigilant then to protect his family. Nevertheless, getting to the assembly of the brothers in the faith is the overriding objective. He knows how satisfying the spiritual feasts to be shared on those occasions are.

Think, too, of the case of a woman in Venezuela. She lives twelve miles from the nearest Kingdom Hall. When it rains the roads become impassable for cars, rivers overflow and in places she has to wade through water almost to the armpits. There are other hazards also. On one occasion as she made her way to the Kingdom Hall, located in a bushy area, she felt something sharp on her leg, but dismissed it as being only a sharp twig that brushed her. After a time she began to feel a

numbing sensation. She sought treatment for a snakebite at the local Medical Unit. She is now quite well and not a bit discouraged from following her regular schedule of meeting attendance.

Having a large family may tend to hinder some from being in regular attendance at weekly meetings of the congregation. However, in Central and South America there are many large families, and yet this poses no insurmountable problem. In one town in Venezuela, for example, the family group of six live one hour's walk from the nearest Kingdom Hall, yet they are regularly present for meetings. Another family group walks five miles to meetings of the Christian congregation three times a week, half of that distance being on rough trails.

Even the language barrier is not enough to deter those who appreciate the value of association with others who love God. In Mexico it often happens that Indians who come to meetings do not understand Spanish. Yet they come regularly and sit through the Spanish-language meeting until the time comes for highlights of the program to be interpreted into their own tongue. It is gratifying to note their evident pleasure at being there, even though they do not understand all that is being said. And how eagerly they drink in the explanation of the interpreter!

In the Dominican Republic during recent political disturbances the Witnesses continued to associate under great difficulty. Sometimes they had to make long detours to get to the Kingdom Hall because of barricades. Then, when the capital was cut in two by the opposing forces, many Witnesses were cut off from access to Kingdom Halls. Did they give up? No. They gathered in private homes, thus minimizing the loss of upbuilding association.

In some lands Christians are even forbidden to read the Bible and to assemble with others to study it. Does that overcome them with fear to the extent of forsaking the association with others of the same faith? Not at all. Despite human rulings to the contrary, they abide by the course counseled by the inspired apostle of Christ Jesus: 'Do not forsake the gathering of yourselves together.' (Heb. 10:25) Subsequent developments prove that they are taking the right course, for Jehovah protects and blesses them, and even when unjustly apprehended and punished, he gives them fortitude and hope to overcome and outweigh the mental and physical sufferings they may have to undergo.

With such an inspiring array of testimony about the enduring love of fellow Christians, as seen in their valuation of regular association together, is it not appropriate for each one to analyze his own view of weekly meetings of the Christian congregation? There is danger in taking

them for granted. There is danger that creature comfort could cause us to shrink from inconveniences, to consider our material wants rather than our spiritual welfare. Does it take denial to us of the right to assemble with fellow Christians to arouse us to fullest appreciation of the privilege? Surely not.

It is obvious that if we desire something keenly enough we will put forth the effort to attain it. Why, even sickly persons, weary ones, aged ones, yes, cripples and blind ones get to meetings of the Christian congregation regularly. Why is this so, in spite of their handicaps? It is because they are convinced of their need of the association and the spiritual strength to be derived from interchange of expression about God's will. (Rom. 1:12) By all means, then, build up the good habit of healthful association. Be a blessing to fellow Christians, and they will be a blessing to you.



- At Matthew 19:24 and Luke 18:25 Jesus Christ compares the difficulty of a rich man's gaining his way into the kingdom of God to the difficulty a camel would have in trying to get through the eye of a needle. Some Bible dictionaries speak of the "needle's eye" as possibly being a small gate of a walled Oriental city, and such books sometimes show pictures of small gates. Was Jesus referring to any such gate?—F. M., U.S.A.

Attempts have been made to explain Matthew 19:24, Mark 10:25 and Luke 18:25 as referring to a little gate in one of the large gates of Jerusalem. The explanation has in-

cluded the thought that, if at night the large gate was closed, this little gate could be opened, and, with difficulty, a camel could fit through it. However, at Luke 18:25 a Greek word is used that specifically refers to a sewing needle, and thus the *New World Translation* renders the text: "It is easier, in fact, for a camel to get through the eye of a sewing needle than for a rich man to get into the kingdom of God."

Various authorities on Biblical Greek, such as *An Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words* by W. E. Vine, agree with the rendering in the *New World Translation*. In Volume 3, pages 106, 107, this work explains that the Greek word found at Luke 18:25 is *belone*, which is "akin to *bēlos*, a dart, denotes a sharp point, hence, a needle." This work goes on to point out: "The idea of applying 'the needle's eye' to small gates seems to be a modern one; there is no ancient trace of it. Mackie points out (Hastings' Bib. Dic.) that 'an attempt is sometimes made to explain the words as a ref-

erence to the small door, a little over 2 feet square, in the large heavy gate of a walled city. This mars the figure without materially altering the meaning, and receives no justification from the language and traditions of Palestine."

It is reasonable that Jesus Christ meant a literal sewing needle and a literal camel and used these to illustrate the impossibility of the thing mentioned. The *New World Translation* is based on the actual language of Jesus Christ and his disciple Luke rather than on tradition. As far as sewing needles are concerned, both bone and metal needles of ancient origin have been discovered in the Holy Land, showing that they were common household objects.

● What is the Scriptural view of the use of birthstones?—M. O., U.S.A.

Whether a Christian will wear a ring with a certain gem in it is a matter for personal decision. Bible principles can aid one to make a wise decision. The Bible admonishes us: "More than all else that is to be guarded, safeguard your heart, for out of it are the sources of life." (Prov. 4:23) So, in making this decision, the Christian ought to examine his heart to see what his motive is. Is it simply that the gem that appeals to one happens also to be a so-called birthstone? Or is one, somehow,

affected by the superstitious view that certain persons have attached to them?

Many people of ancient times believed that a birthstone would bring "good luck" to the wearer. Does the Christian believe this? No, he knows that Jehovah condemns those who trust in "the god of Good Luck." (Isa. 65:11) It was also thought by some that the birthstone would influence one's personality for the better. Does the Christian believe that? No, he knows that "the new personality" is obtained by applying Scriptural principles. (Eph. 4:22-24) During the Middle Ages fortune-tellers selected a gem for each month, and it was this group that encouraged people to wear the gem of their birthday month to keep them from harm. But the Bible condemns those who seek omens and professional foretellers of events, so it would not be appropriate for Christians to follow their leading. (Deut. 18:9-12) Nor would it be appropriate for a Christian to attach special significance to the fact that a ring had a "birthstone," since the Christian witnesses of Jehovah do not celebrate birthdays, pagans being the only ones mentioned in the Bible as celebrating birthdays.—Gen. 40:20; Matt. 14:6-10.

Having these points in mind, each one can examine his own motive, consider the effects of his course both on himself and on other persons, and then make a personal decision.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FIELD MINISTRY

The thirty-second chapter of Isaiah calls attention to God's Kingdom rule as the means that will bring peace. Even now, as foretold in that chapter, peace exists among the Christian congregations of Jehovah's witnesses. They are desirous of preserving their possession of Christian peace and inviting others to share it with them. To extend this invitation to others, during September Jehovah's witnesses will be offering in their house-to-house ministry the fine Bible-study books *Life Everlasting—in Freedom of the Sons of God* and "*Things in Which It Is Impossible for God to Lie*," either one, along with a booklet, for 50c.

NEW AND REVISED

A revised edition of the fine book *Qualified to Be Ministers* was released this summer at

the "Disciple-making" District Assemblies and is now available for general distribution. It contains all the enlightening material of the original edition as to speech preparation and delivery, how to study, meetings of the congregation and ministerial and congregational activity. Now, in addition, it contains material on Progressive Speech Training for use in the congregation Theocratic Ministry Schools. Do you have your copy? Send today. Only 50c

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS
 October 8: God's Spirit and Word—Divine Provisions for Life. Page 553. Songs to Be Used: 66, 68.
 October 15: Recognizing the Part Played by Jehovah's Organization. Page 559. Songs to Be Used: 89, 49.