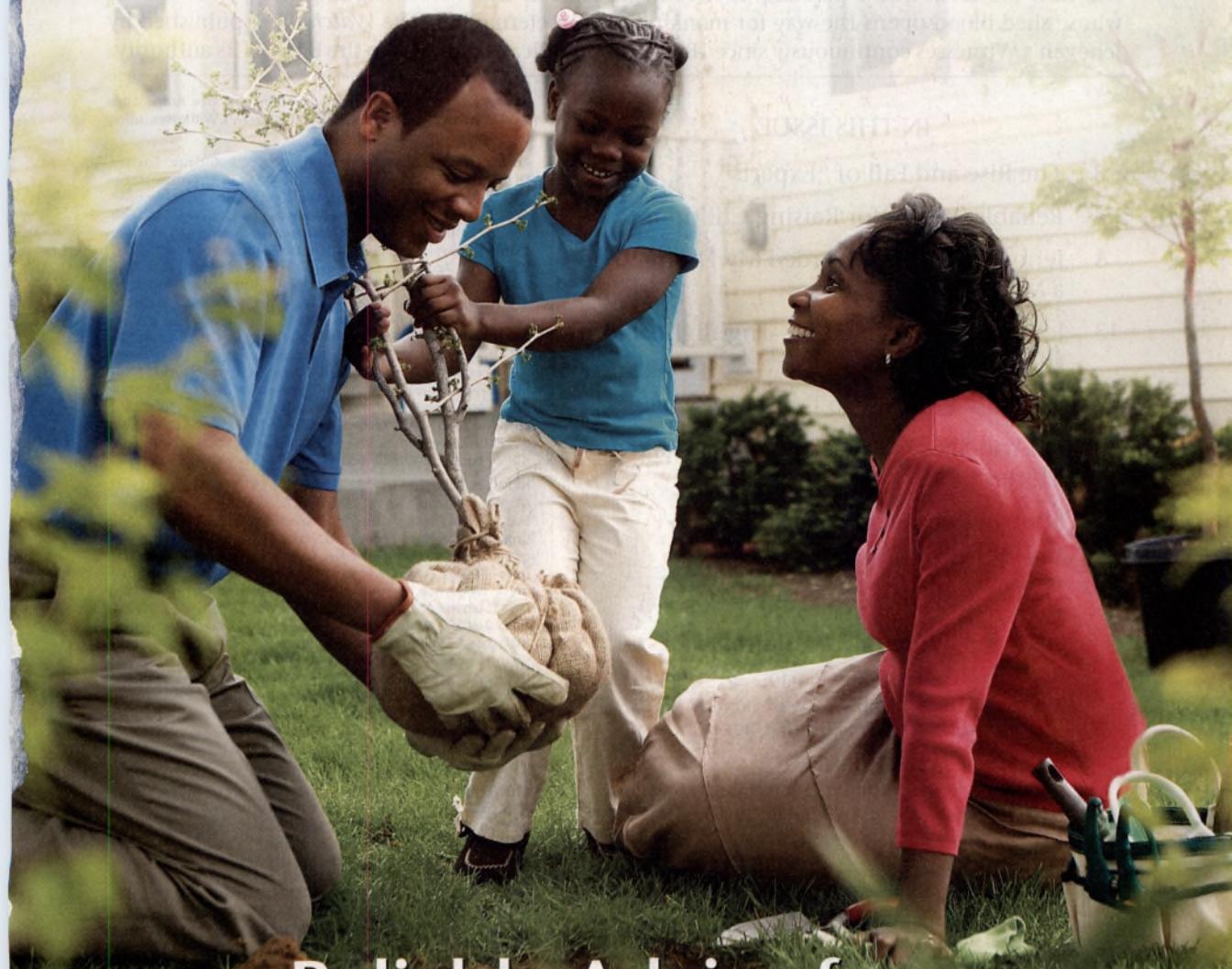


NOVEMBER 1, 2006

# THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



Reliable Advice for  
*Raising Children*

# THE WATCHTOWER®

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

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

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# The Rise and Fall of "Experts"

TYPE the words "parenting" and "advice" into one popular search engine on the Internet, and over 26 million references instantly appear. If you took only one minute to look up and read each one, your child would grow up and leave home before you could even finish.

Before the days of pediatricians, child psychologists, and the Internet, where did parents go for advice? Generally, they looked to their extended family. Mothers, fathers, aunts, and uncles were ready and able to offer guidance, financial aid, and babysitting services. But in many lands, a massive population shift from rural to city life has almost completely severed such close family ties. All too often today, mothers and fathers find themselves handling the challenges of parenting alone.

This is undoubtedly one reason why the modern child-care industry has grown so rapidly. Another reason is a widespread faith in science. By the late 1800's, the American public was already becoming convinced that science could improve every aspect of human life. Why not child rearing? So when the American National Congress of Mothers publicly bewailed "the incompetency of parents" in 1899, a parade of "scientific experts" quickly appeared on the scene. They promised to help struggling mothers and fathers find their way.

## Parenting by the Book

Yet, what have these experts accomplished? Are the parents of today less anxious and better equipped to raise their children than those of yesteryear? Not according to



one recent poll in Britain. It revealed that about 35 percent of parents with young children are still searching for advice they can trust. Others feel that they have little choice but to follow their own instincts.

In her book *Raising America: Experts, Parents, and a Century of Advice About Children*, Ann Hulbert traces the history of professional literature on child rearing. Hulbert, herself a mother of two, points out that few of the experts' findings were based on well-grounded science. Rather, their advice appears to have been influenced more by their own life experience than by any objective data. In retrospect, it seems that much of what they wrote was faddish, contradictory, and sometimes downright bizarre.

So where does that leave parents today? Frankly, many are confused, confronted as they are with more advice, opinions, and controversies than ever before. However, not all parents feel that they are adrift. Parents the world over are benefiting from an ancient source of wisdom that is still proving to be a wellspring of reliable advice, as the following article will show.

# **Reliable Advice for Raising Children**

**"I** WAS 19 years old, living far away from any family members, and totally unprepared," says Ruth of her first pregnancy. An only child herself, she had not given much thought to being a parent. Where could she go for reliable advice?

Jan, on the other hand, now a father of two grown children, remembers: "I was very confident at first. But it didn't take me long to realize that I was lacking in practical knowledge." Whether parents start out feeling lost or they get lost along the way, where can they find help to rear their children?

Today, increasing numbers search the Internet. You may be wondering, though, how reliable the advice found there can be. There is good reason to be cautious. Do you really know who is giving you advice online? How much success have they had with their own children? No doubt you want to be careful when it comes to matters affecting your family. Sometimes, as the preceding article noted, even advice from the experts turns out to be disappointing. So where can you go?

The ultimate Source of advice on raising children is Jehovah God, the Originator of the family. (Ephesians 3:15) He is the only real expert. In his Word, the Bible, he provides reliable, practical instruction that really works. (Psalm 32:8; Isaiah 48:17, 18) It is up to us, though, to apply it.

Several couples were asked to share what they had learned while raising their children to be well-adjusted and God-fearing adults. Their success, they said, was primarily a result of applying Bible principles. They found that the Bible's advice is as reliable today as it was when the Bible was first written.

## **Spend Time With Them**

When Catherine, a mother of two, was asked what advice was most helpful to her, she immediately referred to Deuteronomy 6:7. That verse says: "You must inculcate [Bible principles] in your son and speak of them when you sit in your house and when you walk on the road and when you lie down and when you get up." Catherine realized that to follow that counsel, she would have to spend time with her children.

"That is easier said than done," you might be thinking. With many families needing two incomes to make ends meet, how can busy parents spend more time with their children? Torlief, whose son is now raising a family of his own, says that the key is following the advice found in Deuteronomy. Take your children with you wherever you go, and opportunities to talk will come up naturally. "My son and I worked together on household projects," Torlief relates. "We took trips together as a family. And we ate meals together." As a result, he says, "our son always felt that he could express himself freely."

What, though, if communication breaks down and conversations become strained? This sometimes happens as the children get older. Once again, spending more time with them can help. Catherine's husband, Ken, remembers that when their daughter became a teenager, she complained that he was not listening. That is a common complaint from teens. What could he do? Ken recalls: "I decided to spend more time with her one-on-one, discussing her thoughts, feelings, and frustrations. That really helped." (Proverbs 20:5) Ken believes, however, that the reason

## What the EXPERTS Say . . . What the BIBLE Says

### On Showing Affection:

In *The Psychological Care of Infant and Child* (1928), Dr. John Broadus Watson urged parents: "Never hug and kiss" your children. "Never let them sit on your lap." More recently, however, Drs. Vera Lane and Dorothy Molyneaux pointed out in *Our Children* magazine (March 1999): "Research indicates that young children deprived of physical touch and displays of affection often fail to thrive."

In contrast, Isaiah 66:12 refers to God as showing his love for his people through expressions of parental love. Similarly, when Jesus' disciples tried to stop people from bringing young children to Jesus, he corrected them, saying: "Let the young children come to me; do not try to stop them." Then "he took the children into his arms and began blessing them."—Mark 10:14, 16.

### On Teaching Proper Values:

In a 1969 *New York Times Magazine* article, Dr. Bruno Bettelheim stressed that a child has the "right to form his own inner opinions, influenced not by [his parents'] authoritative [preaching], but only by his own direct experience with life." Almost 30 years later, though, Dr. Robert Coles, author of *The Moral Intelligence of Children* (1997), acknowledged: "Children very much need a sense of purpose and direction in life, a set of values" approved by their parents and other adults.

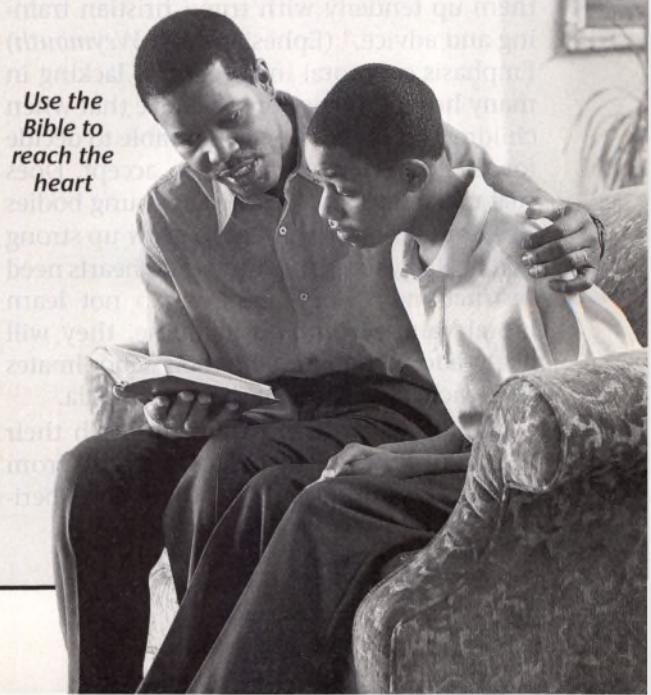
Proverbs 22:6 urges parents: "Train up a boy according to the way for him; even when he grows old he will not turn aside from it." The Hebrew word translated "train" also means "initiate" and here indicates the initiating of the first instruction of the infant. Parents are thus encouraged to start teaching

their children proper values from infancy on. (2 Timothy 3:14, 15) What they learn during these formative years is likely to remain with them.

### On Discipline:

Dr. James Dobson wrote in *The Strong-Willed Child* (1978): "Corporal punishment in the hands of a loving parent is a teaching tool by which harmful behavior is inhibited." On the other hand, in an article adapted from the seventh edition of the popular book *Baby and Child Care* (1998), Dr. Benjamin Spock said: "Spanking teaches children that the larger, stronger person has the power to get his way, whether or not he is in the right."

With regard to discipline, the Bible states: "The rod and reproof are what give wisdom." (Proverbs 29:15) However, not all children need physical punishment. Proverbs 17:10 tells us: "A rebuke works deeper in one having understanding than striking a stupid one a hundred times."



this approach worked is that communication in their home was not something new. "My daughter and I always had a good relationship," he says, "so she felt that she could speak freely to me."

Interestingly, one recent study reported that teens are three times more likely than their parents to say that parents and children do not spend enough time together. So why not follow the Bible's advice? Spend as much time as possible with your children—at rest and at work, at home and when traveling, in the morning when you get up and at night before you go to bed. If possible, take them *with you* wherever you go. As Deuteronomy 6:7 implies, there is no substitute for spending time with your children.

### Teach Them Proper Values

Mario, a father of two, similarly recommends: "Give children lots of love, and read to them." However, it is not just a matter of stimulating your children's mental faculties. You need to teach them how to discern right from wrong. Mario adds: "Have a Bible study with them."

To that end, the Bible admonishes parents: "Do not irritate your children, but bring them up tenderly with true Christian training and advice." (Ephesians 6:4, *Weymouth*) Emphasis on moral instruction is lacking in many homes today. Some believe that when children get older, they will be able to decide for themselves what values to accept. Does that make sense to you? Just as young bodies need proper nourishment to grow up strong and healthy, so young minds and hearts need instruction. If your children do not learn moral values from you at home, they will likely adopt the views of their schoolmates and teachers or those of the mass media.

The Bible can help parents to teach their children how to distinguish right from wrong. (2 Timothy 3:16, 17) Jeff, an experi-

enced Christian elder who has raised two children, recommends using the Bible to teach children proper values. He says: "Using the Bible helps children realize how the Creator feels about a matter, not just Mom and Dad. What we noticed is the Bible's unique effect on the mind and heart. To address wrong conduct or thinking, we took the time to find an appropriate scripture. Then, in a private location, we let the child read the text. Often the result was a tear or even tears streaming down the cheeks. We were amazed. The Bible had greater impact than anything we could have thought to say or do."

Hebrews 4:12 explains: "The word of God is alive and exerts power . . . and is able to discern thoughts and intentions of the heart." The message of the Bible is therefore not merely the personal views or experiences of the humans whom God used as his penmen. Rather, it represents God's thinking on moral matters. This sets it apart from all other advice. By using the Bible to teach your children, you are helping them to have God's mind on matters. Your training has greater weight, and you have a better chance of reaching your child's heart.

Catherine, mentioned earlier, agrees. She says: "The more difficult the situation, the more we sought guidance in God's Word—and it worked!" Can you make greater use of the Bible in teaching your children how to discern right from wrong?

### Be Reasonable

The apostle Paul points to another important principle that is helpful in child rearing. He urged fellow Christians: "Let your reasonableness become known to all men." (Philippians 4:5) Surely that includes letting our children see our reasonableness. And remember, reasonableness reflects "the wisdom from above."—James 3:17.

How, though, does reasonableness relate to training our children? While we give them all the help we can, we do not control their every action. For example, Mario, quoted earlier, is one of Jehovah's Witnesses, and he recalls: "We always held out baptism, the full-time ministry, and other spiritual goals to our children. But we made it clear that this was their choice to make when the time came." The result? Both their children are now serving as full-time evangelizers.

The Bible warns fathers at Colossians 3:21: "Do not be exasperating your children, so that they do not become downhearted." Catherine appreciates that verse. When a parent's patience wears thin, it is easy to get angry or demanding. But, she says, "don't demand as much from your child as you expect of yourself." Catherine too is one of Jehovah's Witnesses, and she adds: "Make serving Jehovah enjoyable."

Jeff, mentioned earlier, makes this practical observation: "As our children grew older, a good friend mentioned to us that he realized how often he had to say no to his children's requests. That frustrated them, leaving them feeling oppressed. To avoid this, he recommended that we look for ways to say yes.

"We found this to be good advice," Jeff says. "We then looked for opportunities for our children to do things with others un-

der circumstances that we approved. So we would approach them and say: 'Did you know that so-and-so is doing this or that? Why don't you go too?' Or if the kids asked us to take them somewhere, we pushed ourselves to go even if we were tired. We did it just to avoid saying no." That is the very essence of reasonableness—being fair, considerate, and yielding without compromising Bible principles.

### Benefit From Reliable Advice

Most of these couples are grandparents now. They enjoy seeing these same Bible principles help their children succeed as parents. Can you benefit from the Bible's advice?

When Ruth, mentioned at the outset, became a parent, she and her husband sometimes felt all alone. But they were not. They had the superior advice of God's Word, the Bible. Jehovah's Witnesses have produced many excellent Bible study aids that can help parents. These include *Learn From the Great Teacher*, *My Book of Bible Stories*, *Questions Young People Ask—Answers That Work*, and *The Greatest Man Who Ever Lived*. Torlief, Ruth's husband, says: "Today there is a wealth of Bible-based advice right at the parents' fingertips. If they only take advantage of it, they can have help in dealing with all areas of life as a child grows up."

**Wise parents organize recreation for their children**





## JEHOVAH RICHLY REWARDED MY DESIRE TO BE A MISSIONARY

AS TOLD BY  
**SHEILA WINFIELD DA CONCEIÇÃO**

A missionary visiting from Africa once told us that in her assignment everyone invited her in and listened attentively to the good news of God's Kingdom. 'How I would love to work in territory like that!' I thought. That conversation sowed in me, then 13 years old, the desire to be a missionary.

**H**OWEVER, our family began to learn about Jehovah much earlier. One morning in 1939, two neatly dressed young men knocked on our door at Hemel Hempstead, just outside Greater London, England. They were Jehovah's Witnesses. I was born just the year before, so I do not remember the visit. To turn them away, Mum told them that Dad might be interested but that he would not be back before 9:00 p.m. How surprised she was when they returned that very evening! After making sure of their stand on political and nationalistic issues, my father,

Henry Winfield, invited them in and accepted a Bible study. He rapidly progressed to baptism. Some years later my mother, Kathleen, also began to study. She was baptized in 1946.

In 1948, I began to have a regular share in preaching the good news of God's Kingdom. I thought that I would need a watch for accurately reporting the time I spent in the ministry. If we had behaved ourselves, we children used to get a sixpence (a coin worth six pennies) in pocket money every Saturday. I saved up my sixpence for nearly two years to

buy the cheapest watch available at that time. However, Ray, the younger of my two brothers, always asked Dad for two threepence (coins worth three pennies), never one sixpence. One day he insisted so much on having two coins that Dad got angry. Ray began to cry and said that he needed two threepence because of a secret between him and Jehovah. Finally, Ray explained: "One threepence is to be put in the contribution box, and the other threepence is for me." Mum cried with joy, Dad quickly arranged for the change, and I learned the importance of supporting the Kingdom work financially.

About this time, Dad made arrangements to move to where the need for Kingdom proclaimers was greater. In 1949 he sold his farm and the sand and ballast pit and began to pioneer, serving as a full-time minister of Jehovah's Witnesses. I was baptized on September 24, 1950, in symbol of my dedication to

Jehovah. From then on, during our summer holidays, I enrolled as a vacation (now auxiliary) pioneer, devoting 100 hours a month to the ministry. But that was only the beginning. Soon a strong desire arose in my heart to do still more in promoting pure worship.

### **My Desire to Be a Missionary**

In 1951, Dad was assigned to Bideford, North Devon. Shortly after our arrival there, the missionary who served in Africa visited our congregation, as mentioned at the outset. After that, my desire to become a missionary influenced all my decisions. The teachers at school knew of my goal and did everything they could to dissuade me, hoping that I would pursue a secular career. On my last day at school, however, when I went to the teachers' room to thank them and to say good-bye, one of them said: "Congratulations! You are the only student who really knows what you want in life. We hope you reach your goal."

Wasting no time, I found a part-time job, and on December 1, 1955, I became a regular pioneer. Later, Mum and my brothers became pioneers too. So for several years, all in the family were in full-time service.

### **To Ireland**

A year later, I received an invitation to serve in Ireland. This was a step toward reaching my goal of becoming a missionary. In February 1957, together with two other young pioneers, June Napier and Beryl Barker, I arrived in Cork, southern Ireland.

The field service in Ireland was challenging. There was much opposition from the Roman Catholic Church. We learned to make sure that there was a way out of an apartment block or a housing estate, in case we had to beat a hasty retreat. We used to hide our bicycles some distance away, but

*With my family, 1953*



*Witnessing in Ireland, 1957*



Brazil, 1959, with fellow missionaries. From left to right: Me, Inger Hatfield, Doreen Hines, and Sonia Springate



*With my husband*

often someone found them and cut the tires or removed the air from them.

Once, while Beryl and I were visiting the residents of a large housing estate, a group of children began shouting insults and throwing stones at us. So we entered a shop, part of someone's house, where milk was sold. A mob began to gather outside. As Beryl loved milk, she drank two or three glasses very slowly, hoping that the mob would disperse. It did not. Then, a young priest entered the shop. Taking us for visitors, he said that he would like to show us around. First, however, he took us into another room in the house, and as we sat silently, he administered the last rites to a dying elderly man. Then we left the house with the priest. Seeing us chatting with him, the mob dispersed.

### To Gilead

In 1958 the Divine Will International Assembly was to be held in New York.

Dad was going, and I wanted to go too, but I had no money. Then, my grandmother unexpectedly died and left me 100 pounds (\$280, U.S.). The round-trip fare to the assembly was 96 pounds, so I immediately booked my flight.

Shortly thereafter, a representative from the branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses in Britain visited us and invited all the special pioneers who were going to the assembly to apply for missionary training at the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead. I could not believe my ears! He gave applications to everyone except me. I was too young. I asked to be included, explaining that I

had already left my home country and was virtually in a missionary assignment. On seeing my determination, he gave me a form. How I prayed to be accepted! The answer came quickly, and I was invited to attend Gilead.

To my great joy, I was enrolled in the 33rd class of Gilead, together with 81 other pioneers from 14 lands. The five months of the course flew by. Toward the end, Brother Nathan H. Knorr gave us a motivating four-hour talk. He encouraged those who could remain single to do so. (1 Corinthians 7:37, 38) But for those of us who desired to get married one day, he suggested that we make a list of our personal requirements for a suitable marriage mate. Then, should a likely candidate appear, we could examine the person in the light of those requirements.

My personal list of requirements for a prospective husband included the following: He would have to be a fellow missionary and

love Jehovah, to know more about Bible truth than I did, to be willing to forgo having children before Armageddon in order to continue in full-time service, to speak English fluently, and to be older than I was. This list was a great help for me, a 20-year-old about to receive an assignment to a distant land.

### To Brazil

On Sunday, August 2, 1959, we graduated and were informed of our assignments. Vehanouch Yazedjian, Sarah Greco, Ray and Inger Hatfield, Sonia Springate, Doreen Hines, and I were assigned to Brazil. We were thrilled. I imagined forests, snakes, rubber trees, and native Indians. However, when I arrived, what a surprise! Instead of the Amazon rain forest, I found Rio de Janeiro, a sunny and modern city, at that time the country's capital.

Our immediate challenge was to learn Portuguese. During the first month, we studied 11 hours every day. After preaching in Rio and living for a while at the branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses there, I was sent to a missionary home in Piracicaba, in São Paulo State, and later to a missionary home in Porto Alegre, in Rio Grande do Sul State.

Then, early in 1963, I received an invitation to work in the Translation Department at the branch. Floriano Ignez da Conceição, who had taught us Portuguese when we first arrived, was in charge of the department. He learned the truth in 1944, when there were only about 300 Witnesses in Brazil, and he attended the 22nd class of Gilead. One day, some months later, Brother Conceição asked me to remain behind at midday, as he wanted to speak to me. At first, I was worried. Had I done something wrong? When the dinner bell finally rang, I asked him what he wanted to say to me. In reply, he asked, "Will you marry me?" I was dumbfounded. I asked for

time to think matters over and rushed down to the midday meal.

Floriano was not the first brother to express an interest in me. Up until that moment, however, nobody had met my personal requirements for a suitable marriage mate. I believe that my list helped me to avoid making a wrong decision. This time, it was different. Floriano satisfied all my requirements! So we were married on May 15, 1965.

### Facing the Challenge of Illness

Marriage has been a happy experience for Floriano and me, in spite of the challenges we have faced. One of these has been Floriano's health problems, which began shortly before our marriage. Years previously, his left lung had collapsed, and the aftereffects now began to cause him much suffering. As a result, we left Bethel and were assigned as special pioneers to the city of Teresópolis, in the mountainous region of Rio de Janeiro State. We hoped that the climate there would help him recover.

In addition, in December 1965, I received news that my mother was seriously ill with cancer. We regularly wrote to each other, but I had not seen Mum for seven years. So she paid our fare to England to see her. Mum was operated on, but the doctors were unable to remove the cancer. Although she was bedridden and very ill, she kept her desire to share in the preaching work. She had a typewriter in her bedroom so that she could dictate letters to be typed. She would also witness briefly to visitors. She died on November 27, 1966. That same month, she reported ten hours of field service! Dad continued faithful in the pioneer service until his death in 1979.

After Mum's death, Floriano and I returned to Brazil, where we have served ever since in Rio de Janeiro State. We were initially assigned to the circuit work in the state

capital, but this joy was short-lived, as once again Floriano became very ill. Then we returned to Teresópolis as special pioneers.

In 1974, after years of painful treatments, the doctors finally removed Floriano's left lung. At that time, he was unable to serve as presiding overseer or as a special pioneer, but he was able to conduct Bible studies during hospital visiting hours—one of them in English with Bob, a retired American. Bob accepted the truth and was later baptized. Floriano gradually recovered and has served as a regular pioneer ever since.

### **Jehovah Has Blessed My Ministry**

Over the years, I have continued to serve as a special pioneer, and Jehovah has blessed my ministry. In Teresópolis, I had the wonderful privilege of helping more than 60 people to dedicate their lives to Jehovah. Among these was a woman named Jupira, whom I also taught to read. In time, I studied with eight of her adult children. As a result, Jupira and more than 20 family members and relatives are actively serving Jehovah today. One is an elder, three are ministerial servants, and two are pioneers.

I have learned to maintain a positive attitude about the possibility of people learning the truth. On one occasion, I was conducting a Bible study with a young woman named Alzemira when her husband, Antônio, threatened to set two huge dogs on me if I did not leave their house immediately. After that, I had only casual contact with Alzemira until about seven years later, when I managed to get Antônio's permission to study with her again. Still, he forbade me to talk to him about the Bible. One rainy day, however, I invited Antônio to take part in the study. I then found out that his problem was that he was illiterate. From that time on, Floriano and others studied with him and taught him to read. Today Alzemira and Antônio are both

baptized. He is a great help in the congregation, accompanying many young ones in the ministry.

These are just a few of the experiences we had during the more than 20 years we served in Teresópolis. Early in 1988, we received a new assignment—the city of Niterói, where we served for the next five years before moving to Santo Aleixo. Then we were moved to the Japuíba Congregation in the heart of the state and had the privilege of starting the Ribeira Congregation.

### **A Simple but Rewarding Life**

Over the years, Floriano and I have had the privilege of helping more than 300 people to dedicate their lives to Jehovah. Currently, some of them serve at the branch, and some are pioneers, elders, and ministerial servants. How thankful I am that God by means of his holy spirit has used us to help so many people!—Mark 10:29, 30.

It is true that Floriano has had to deal with serious health problems. In spite of his condition, he remains steadfast, joyful, and confident in Jehovah. He often says: "Happiness today does not come from leading a problem-free life. It comes from having Jehovah's help to deal with our problems." —Psalm 34:19.

In 2003, cancer was found in my left eye. I underwent surgery, and my eye was replaced with an artificial one, which has to be cleaned many times a day. Despite this, Jehovah has blessed me with the energy to continue serving him as a special pioneer.

With regard to material things, I have led a simple life. Yet, Jehovah has blessed me in my assignment and has made me spiritually rich. That missionary sister's comment about the preaching work in Africa has proved to be a fitting description of our assignment in Brazil. Indeed, Jehovah has richly rewarded my desire to be a missionary!

# Jehovah's Word Is Alive

## Highlights From the Book of Ecclesiastes

**M**AN, born of woman, is short-lived and glutted with agitation," observed the patriarch Job. (Job 14:1) How vital that we do not waste our short life on worthless concerns and endeavors! What pursuits should occupy our time, energy, and resources? Which ones should be avoided? The words of wisdom recorded in the Bible book of Ecclesiastes give sound guidance in this regard. The message they convey "is able to discern thoughts and intentions of the heart" and can help us live a meaningful life.

—Hebrews 4:12.

Written by a man renowned for his wisdom, King Solomon of ancient Israel, the book of Ecclesiastes contains practical advice on what is truly worthwhile in life and what is valueless. Since Solomon refers to some of the building projects he had undertaken, he must have written Ecclesiastes after their completion and before his deflection from true worship. (Nehemiah 13:26) That places the time of writing before 1000 B.C.E., toward the end of Solomon's 40-year reign.

### WHAT IS NOT VANITY?

(Ecclesiastes 1:1–6:12)

"Everything is vanity!" says the congregator, who asks: "What profit does a man have in all his hard work at which he works hard under the sun?" (Ecclesiastes 1:2, 3) The expressions "vanity" and "under the sun" appear repeatedly in Ecclesiastes. The Hebrew word for "vanity" literally means "breath" or "vapor" and suggests a

lack of substance, permanence, or enduring value. The expression "under the sun" means "on this earth" or "in this world." Hence, everything—that is, all human strivings that ignore God's will—is vanity.

"Guard your feet whenever you go to the house of the true God," says Solomon, "and let there be a drawing near to hear." (Ecclesiastes 5:1) Engaging in the true worship of Jehovah God is not vanity. In fact, giving attention to our relationship with him is the key to living a meaningful life.

### Scriptural Questions Answered:

**1:4-10—What is there about the natural cycles that is "wearisome"?** The congregator mentions only three of the basic operations that make life on earth possible—the sun, the wind pattern, and the water cycle. In reality, the natural cycles are many, and they are very complex. One can spend a lifetime studying them and still not fully understand them. That can indeed be "wearisome." It is also frustrating to compare our short life span with the unending repetition of these cycles. Even attempts to make new discoveries are wearisome. After all, new inventions are nothing more than applications of principles that the true God has established and has already used in creation.

**2:1, 2—Why is laughter spoken of as "insanity"?** Laughter may help us to forget our troubles momentarily, and merrymaking can cause us to view our problems lightly. However, laughter does not make our difficulties disappear. Hence, the pursuit of happiness through laughter is spoken of as "insanity."

**3:11—What has God made “pretty in its time”?** Some of the things that Jehovah God has made “pretty,” or appropriate and good, at the proper time are the creation of Adam and Eve, the rainbow covenant, the covenant with Abraham, the Davidic covenant, the coming of the Messiah, and the enthronement of Jesus Christ as King of God’s Kingdom. However, there is something else that Jehovah will make “pretty” in the near future. We can be confident that the righteous new world will become a reality at its right time.—2 Peter 3:13.

**3:15b—How does ‘the true God keep seeking what is pursued?’** ‘What is pursued’ may refer to what God purposes to do. While the repetitive cycles of birth and death and of war and peace may make man feel powerless and cause him to think that history keeps repeating itself, the true God can seek and accomplish all that He wants to. (Ecclesiastes 3: 1-10, 15a) ‘What is pursued’ may also apply to the righteous, who are often pursued by the wicked. In this case, Jehovah keeps seeking righteous ones in order “to show his strength” in their behalf.—2 Chronicles 16:9.

**5:9—How is ‘the profit of the earth among them all’?** All inhabitants of the earth are dependent upon “the profit of the earth”—what the land produces. A king is no exception. To receive the produce of his field, the king has to be served by the hard work of his servants who cultivate the land.

#### **Lessons for Us:**

**1:15.** It is futile to spend time and energy trying to correct the oppression and injustice that we see today. Only God’s Kingdom can do away with wickedness.—Daniel 2:44.

**2:4-11.** Cultural activities, such as architecture, gardening, and music, as well as luxurious living are “a striving after wind” because they neither make life truly meaningful nor bring lasting happiness.

**2:12-16.** Wisdom has the advantage over folly in that it can help solve certain problems. Concerning death, however, human wisdom has no advantage. And even if one may have gained fame because of having such wisdom, one is soon forgotten.

**2:24; 3:12, 13, 22.** Enjoying the fruits of our labor is not wrong.

**2:26.** Godly wisdom, which brings joy, is given to ‘a man who is good before Jehovah.’ It is impossible to gain this wisdom without having a good relationship with God.

**3:16, 17.** To expect justice in every case is unrealistic. Rather than feel anxious about what is happening in the world today, we should wait on Jehovah to set matters straight.

**4:4.** Hard work skillfully done can bring satisfaction. Working hard simply to outshine others, however, promotes competition and can breed feelings of ill will and jealousy. Our hard work in the Christian ministry must stem from right motives.

**4:7-12.** Human relationships are more important than material possessions and should not be sacrificed in the pursuit of riches.

**4:13.** Position and age do not always win respect. Those in responsible positions should act wisely.

**4:15, 16.** “The child, who is second”—the king’s successor—may initially have the support of ‘all those people before him,’ but ‘afterward they do not rejoice in him.’ Indeed, popularity is usually short-lived.

**5:2.** Our prayers should be thoughtful and reverential, not wordy.

**5:3-7.** Preoccupation with material concerns can prompt one to daydream about selfish interests. It can also put one in a restless, dreamy state of mind at night, depriving one of sweet sleep. An abundance of words can make a person appear foolish to others.

and can cause him to make a rash vow before God. ‘Fearing the true God’ prevents us from doing either of these things.

**6:1-9.** What good are riches, glory, long life, and even a large family if circumstances prevent us from enjoying them? And “better is the seeing by the eyes,” or facing realities, than “the walking about of the soul [“soulful desire,” footnote],” that is, striving to gratify desires that are impossible to satisfy. The best way to live, then, is to be content with “having sustenance and covering” while enjoying wholesome things in life and focusing on maintaining a close relationship with Jehovah.—1 Timothy 6:8.

### COUNSEL TO THE WISE (Ecclesiastes 7:1–12:8)

How can we safeguard our good name, or reputation? What should be our attitude toward human rulers and injustices that we may witness? Since the dead are conscious of nothing, how should we use our life now? In what way can youths use their time and energy wisely? The congregator’s sound advice on these and other matters is recorded for us in chapters 7 to 12 of Ecclesiastes.

#### *Scriptural Questions Answered:*

**7:19—How is wisdom stronger than “ten men in power”?** When used figuratively in the Bible, the number ten represents completeness. Solomon is saying that the protec-

*One of the prettiest of  
God’s handiworks will become  
a reality at its right time*

tive value of wisdom is greater than a complete number of warriors guarding a city.

**10:2—What does it mean that one’s heart is “at his right hand” or “at his left hand”?** Since the right hand often denotes the position of favor, a person’s heart being at his right hand means that his heart motivates him to do good. If it moves an individual to pursue a wrong course, though, his heart is said to be at his left hand.

**10:15—How does ‘the hard work of the stupid ones make them weary’?** If someone lacks good judgment, his hard work fails to produce anything really worthwhile. He gains no satisfaction from it. Such tireless striving only makes him weary.

**11:7, 8—What is the meaning of the statement: “The light is also sweet, and it is good for the eyes to see the sun.”** The light and the sun are for the enjoyment of the living. Solomon is stating here that it is good to be alive and that we should “rejoice” before the days of darkness, or old age, rob us of vitality.

**11:10—Why are “youth and the prime of life” vanity?** If not used properly, these are vanity because, like vapor, the days of youthful vigor disappear quickly.

#### Lessons for Us:

**7:6.** Laughter at an inappropriate time is as irritating and useless as the crackling of thorns burning under a pot. We do well to guard against it.

**7:21, 22.** We should not be overly concerned about what others say.





*God's gifts include food, drink, and seeing good for all our hard work*

**8:2, 3; 10:4.** When we are criticized or corrected by a supervisor or an employer, it is wise to remain calm. This is better than to 'hurry and go out from before him,' that is, to resign hastily.

**8:8; 9:5-10, 12.** Our life can end as unexpectedly as when fish are caught in a net or birds in a trap. Moreover, no one can restrain the life force from departing at death, nor can anyone be discharged from the war that death wages against mankind. Hence, we should not idly waste time. Jehovah wants us to value life and enjoy it in a wholesome way. To do this, we should give Jehovah's service the first place in our life.

**8:16, 17.** The full scope of everything that God has done and has allowed to happen among mankind cannot be fathomed, even if we were to lose sleep over it. Worrying about all the wrongs that have been committed will only rob us of enjoyment in life.

**9:16-18.** Wisdom is to be valued even when there is a general lack of appreciation for it. The calmly spoken words of a wise person are to be preferred to the boisterous shouts of a stupid one.

**10:1.** We must be careful about our speech and actions. Just one indiscretion, such as an angry outburst, one act of the misuse of alcohol, or an incident involving unchaste sexual behavior, is enough to ruin the good reputation of a respected person.

**10:5-11.** An incompetent person in high office is not to be envied. Incompetence in performing even a simple task can have bad consequences. Rather, cultivating the ability to 'use wisdom to succeed' is advantageous. How important it is

that we become competent in the Kingdom-preaching and disciple-making work!

**11:1, 2.** We should practice wholehearted generosity. It begets generosity.—Luke 6:38.

**11:3-6.** Life's uncertainties should not make us indecisive.

**11:9; 12:1-7.** Young people are accountable to Jehovah. Therefore, they should use their time and energy in God's service before old age robs them of their vigor.

#### **"THE WORDS OF THE WISE ONES"**

#### **TO GUIDE US**

**(Ecclesiastes 12:9-14)**

How should we view "the delightful words" that the congregator sought to find and write? In contrast with the "many books" of human wisdom, "the words of the wise ones are like oxgoads, and just like nails driven in are those indulging in collections of sentences; they have been given from one shepherd." (Ecclesiastes 12:10-12) The words of wisdom given from the "one shepherd," Jehovah, have a stabilizing effect on our life.

Applying the wise counsel found in the book of Ecclesiastes will indeed help us to lead a meaningful and happy life. Moreover, we are assured: "It will turn out well with those fearing the true God." Let us, then, be firm in our determination to "fear the true God and keep his commandments."—Ecclesiastes 8:12; 12:13.



## Unitedly Building to PRAISE GOD

PEOPLE on one of the Solomon Islands were noticing a new Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses. One lady said: "In our church, we have many fund-raisers. We ask our members to give money, but we still don't have enough funds to build a new church. How do you Witnesses get your funds?" The Witness to whom she spoke replied: "We worship Jehovah as a worldwide family. Our congregation and our brothers around the world donated what was needed for the new Kingdom Hall. Jehovah has taught us to be united in all things."

You see unity among Jehovah's Witnesses in all their activities, including the building of thousands of Kingdom Halls. Such unity in carrying out these projects is not new. It has existed among God's people for millenniums. How so?

### Building the Tabernacle and the Temple

Jehovah had the nation of Israel in mind when he told Moses over 3,500 years ago: "They must make a sanctuary for me." (Exodus 25:8) Regarding the design for this construction project, Jehovah further said: "According to all that I am showing you [singular, referring to Moses] as the pattern of the tabernacle and pattern of all its furnish-

ings, that is the way you [plural, referring to the entire nation] are to make it." (Exodus 25:9) Jehovah then laid out detailed plans for the sanctuary's structure, furnishings, and accessories. (Exodus 25:10-27:19) This "tabernacle," or tent, was to be the center of true worship for all Israel.

We do not know how many people worked on the project, but all of the Israelites were invited to support it. Moses told them: "From among yourselves take up a contribution for Jehovah. Let every willing-hearted one bring it as Jehovah's contribution." (Exodus 35:4-9) How did the Israelites respond? Exodus 36:3 states: "They took from before Moses all the contribution that the sons of Israel had brought for the work of the holy service so as to do it, and, as for the latter, they still brought to him a voluntary offering morning after morning."

Soon there were piles of donated goods, and the people kept bringing more. The craftsmen doing the work finally told Moses: "The people are bringing much more than what the service needs for the work that Jehovah has commanded to be done." So Moses gave the word: "Men and women, do not produce any more stuff for the holy contribution." What was the result? "The stuff proved to be enough for all the work to be

done, and more than enough."—Exodus 36:4-7.

Thanks to the generosity of the Israelites, the tabernacle was completed within a year. (Exodus 19:1; 40:1, 2) By supporting true worship, God's people honored Jehovah. (Proverbs 3:9) In time, they would take on a much larger building project. And once again, all who wished could have a part, whether they had construction skills or not.

Almost five centuries after building the tabernacle, Israel began construction on the temple in Jerusalem. (1 Kings 6:1) This would be a magnificent, permanent structure of stones and timbers. (1 Kings 5:17, 18) Jehovah gave the architectural plans for the temple to David "by inspiration." (1 Chronicles 28:11-19) But he chose David's son Solomon to lead the building work. (1 Chronicles 22:6-10) David gave the project his whole-hearted support. He acquired stones, beams, and other materials and contributed large amounts of his own gold and silver. He also encouraged his fellow Israelites to be gener-

ous, asking them: "Who is there volunteering to fill his hand today with a gift for Jehovah?" How did the people respond?—1 Chronicles 29:1-5.

By the time Solomon began the building of the temple, he had on hand thousands of tons of gold and silver. There was so much copper and iron that there was no means of weighing those metals. (1 Chronicles 22:14-16) With Jehovah's backing and the support of all Israel, the project was finished in just seven and a half years.—1 Kings 6:1, 37, 38.

### "The House of the True God"

Both the tabernacle and the temple were called "the house of the true God." (Judges 18:31; 2 Chronicles 24:7) Jehovah has never needed the shelter of a house. (Isaiah 66:1) He had those structures built to benefit humans. Indeed, at the inauguration of the temple, Solomon asked: "Will God truly dwell upon the earth? Look! The heavens, yes, the heaven of the heavens, themselves cannot contain you; how much less,

*Our united efforts make it possible to construct beautiful Kingdom Halls worldwide*

*New Kingdom Hall  
in Ghana*



then, this house that I have built!"—1 Kings 8:27.

Jehovah said through his prophet Isaiah: "My own house will be called even a house of prayer for all the peoples." (Isaiah 56:7) The sacrifices and prayers offered up at the temple, as well as the ceremonies held there, allowed godly people—Jews and non-Jews—to draw close to the true God. They gained Jehovah's friendship and protection by worshipping at his house. The prayer that Solomon offered at the temple dedication emphasizes this truth. You can read his touching expressions to God at 1 Kings 8:22-53 and 2 Chronicles 6:12-42.

That ancient house of the true God passed off the scene long ago, but God's Word pointed to a time when people of all nations would be gathered to worship Jehovah at a far greater spiritual temple. (Isaiah 2:2) The one perfect sacrifice of God's only-begotten Son, prefigured by the animal sacrifices offered at the temple, would be the way of approach to Jehovah. (John 14:6; Hebrews 7:27; 9:12) Jehovah's Witnesses are now worshipping God in that superior way, and they are helping many others to do likewise.

### Modern Building Projects

All over the world, Jehovah's Witnesses serve the true God. They make up "a mighty nation," whose population continues to grow. (Isaiah 60:22) The principal meeting place of Jehovah's Witnesses is the Kingdom Hall.\* Thousands of these buildings are in use, and thousands more are needed.

Jehovah's Witnesses "offer themselves willingly" to build the needed Kingdom Halls. (Psalm 110:3) Often, however, local Witnesses lack the necessary building skills,

\* For the origin of the term "Kingdom Hall," see *Jehovah's Witnesses—Proclaimers of God's Kingdom*, page 319, published by Jehovah's Witnesses.

and some regions that are seeing fine increases suffer from severe poverty. In 1999 the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses instituted a program of Kingdom Hall construction to help overcome those obstacles. Through this program, Witnesses who are skilled in construction trades have traveled to distant places to train their brothers and sisters to build Kingdom Halls. Those trained workers have then continued the building work in that region. What has been the result of this special effort?

By February 2006, Jehovah's Witnesses in lands with limited resources had seen more than 13,000 new Kingdom Halls constructed. Read the words of some who are using the new Kingdom Halls.

"The congregation had an average attendance of 160. At the first meeting after the new Kingdom Hall was built, the attendance rose to 200. Now, six months later, they have an attendance of 230. Jehovah's blessing on the construction of these modest yet functional buildings is evident."—*A circuit overseer in Ecuador*.

"For years people have asked us, 'When will you ever have a Kingdom Hall like the ones we see in your publications?' Thanks to Jehovah, we at last have a presentable place of worship. We used to hold the meetings in a brother's store, with an average attendance

### IN OUR NEXT ISSUE

A School Whose Graduates Benefit People Worldwide

Christophe Plantin—A Pioneer in Bible Printing

Keep Yourself in God's Love!

of 30. At the first meeting in the new Kingdom Hall, 110 people attended.”—*A congregation in Uganda.*

“Two regular pioneer sisters report that it is more enjoyable to work the territory since the Kingdom Hall was built. People are more willing to listen in the door-to-door ministry as well as in informal settings. These sisters now conduct 17 Bible studies, and many of these Bible students attend the meetings.”—*Solomon Islands branch office.*

“A pastor who lives nearby says that the new Kingdom Hall adds to the respectability of the whole neighborhood and that local people take pride in it. Many who pass by comment on the beauty of the hall. This gives the brothers fine opportunities to wit-

ness. More and more people want to know about our worldwide brotherhood. Many who had not attended meetings for years have been motivated to associate regularly again.”—*Myanmar branch office.*

“A sister invited an interested man to the construction site in his neighborhood. The man later said: ‘I thought that the workers would not let me in. To my surprise, the Witnesses greeted me kindly. Men and women were working hard, not wasting time. There was harmony and a good spirit.’ The man accepted a Bible study and began attending the meetings. He later said: ‘My thinking has changed. I will not leave God now that I have found him.’”—*Colombia branch office.*

## WAYS IN WHICH SOME CHOOSE TO GIVE

### CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE WORLDWIDE WORK

Many set aside, or budget, an amount that they place in the contribution boxes labeled “Contributions for the Worldwide Work—Matthew 24:14.”

Each month, congregations forward these amounts to the office of Jehovah’s Witnesses that serves their respective countries. Voluntary donations of money may also be sent directly to **Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, Attention Treasurer’s Office, 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, New York 11201-2483**, or to the branch office of Jehovah’s Witnesses that serves your country. Checks sent to the above address should be made payable to “Watch Tower.” Jewelry or other valuables may be donated as well. A brief letter stating that such items are an outright gift should accompany these contributions.

### CONDITIONAL-DONATION TRUST ARRANGEMENT

Money may be placed in trust with Watch Tower for use worldwide. However, upon request the funds will be returned. For more information,

please contact the Treasurer’s Office at the address noted above.

### CHARITABLE PLANNING

In addition to outright gifts of money, there are other methods of giving to benefit Kingdom service worldwide. These include:

**Insurance:** Watch Tower may be named as the beneficiary of a life insurance policy or a retirement/pension plan.

**Bank Accounts:** Bank accounts, certificates of deposit, or individual retirement accounts may be placed in trust for or made payable on death to Watch Tower, in accord with local bank requirements.

**Stocks and Bonds:** Stocks and bonds may be donated to Watch Tower as an outright gift.

**Real Estate:** Salable real estate may be donated either by making an outright gift or, in the case of residential property, by reserving a life estate to the donor, who can continue to live therein during his or her lifetime. Contact the branch office in your country before deeding any real estate.

## Our Support Is Important

Building Kingdom Halls is an important part of our sacred service. The way in which Jehovah's Witnesses worldwide have supported that work—financially and otherwise—is truly commendable. We should remember, though, that other aspects of sacred service are also vital. From time to time, Christians are victims of natural disasters and need our help. Production of Bible literature plays a key role in supporting sacred service. Most of us have witnessed the power of a Bible-based magazine or book placed in the hands of a rightly disposed person. In addition, support for missionaries and others in special full-time service is very important. Such self-sacrificing Christians play a

key role in the expansion of the preaching work in these last days.

Those who contributed to temple building rejoiced greatly. (1 Chronicles 29:9) Today, giving support to true worship with our contributions likewise brings us happiness. (Acts 20:35) We experience that happiness when we place our contributions in the box designated for the Kingdom Hall Fund and when we contribute to the worldwide work, thus supporting other projects associated with the preaching of the good news of the Kingdom. In a wonderful way, Jehovah's Witnesses today are united in true worship. May all of us be filled with the happiness that comes from supporting that worship!

**Gift Annuity:** A gift annuity is an arrangement whereby one transfers money or securities to a designated corporation that is used by Jehovah's Witnesses. In exchange, the donor, or someone designated by the donor, receives a specified annuity payment every year for life. The donor receives an income-tax deduction for the year in which the gift annuity is established.

**Wills and Trusts:** Property or money may be bequeathed to Watch Tower by means of a legally executed will, or Watch Tower may be named as beneficiary of a trust agreement. A trust benefiting a religious organization may provide certain tax advantages.

As the term "charitable planning" implies, these types of donations typically require some planning on the part of the donor. To assist individuals desiring to benefit the worldwide work of Jehovah's Witnesses through some form of charitable planning, a brochure has been prepared in English and Spanish entitled *Charitable Planning to Benefit Kingdom Service Worldwide*. The brochure was written to provide information on a variety of ways that gifts may be made either



now or through a bequest at death. After reading the brochure and conferring with their own legal or tax advisers, many have been able to help support the religious and humanitarian activities of Jehovah's Witnesses worldwide and maximize their tax benefits while doing so. This brochure may be obtained by requesting a copy directly from the Charitable Planning Office.

For more information, you may contact the Charitable Planning Office, either in writing or by telephone, at the address listed below, or you may contact the branch office of Jehovah's Witnesses that serves your country.

### Charitable Planning Office

Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society  
of Pennsylvania  
100 Watchtower Drive  
Patterson, New York 12563-9204  
Telephone: (845) 306-0707

# DO YOU SHARE JEHOVAH'S VIEW OF SACRED THINGS?

*"Carefully watching . . . that there may be no fornicator nor anyone not appreciating sacred things."—HEBREWS 12:15, 16.*

THE world in general pays less and less attention to sacred things. French sociologist Edgar Morin stated: "All the foundations upon which morals are based—God, nature, homeland, history, reason—have lost their unquestionable nature. . . . People pick and choose their values." This reflects "the spirit of the world," or "the spirit that now operates in the sons of disobedience." (1 Corinthians 2:12; Ephesians 2:2) That irreverent spirit is not shared by those who have dedicated themselves to Jehovah and who willingly submit to his rightful sovereignty. (Romans 12:1, 2) Rather, God's servants realize the vital place that sacredness, or holiness, has in their worship of Jehovah. What things in our life should be sacred? This article will consider five things that are holy to all of God's servants. The next article will focus on the sacredness of our Christian meetings. But what does the word "holy" really mean?

<sup>2</sup> In Biblical Hebrew, the word "holy" conveys the thought of separateness. In worship, "holy" applies to that which is separated from common use, or held sacred. Jehovah is holy in the absolute sense. He is called "the Most Holy One." (Proverbs 9:10; 30:3) In ancient Israel, the high priest wore fastened to his turban a gold plate engraved with the words "Holiness belongs to Jehovah." (Exo-

1. What current attitude is not shared by Jehovah's servants?

2, 3. (a) How do the Scriptures highlight Jehovah's holiness? (b) How do we hold Jehovah's name as something holy?

dus 28:36, 37) Heavenly cherubs and seraphs stationed about Jehovah's throne are depicted in the Scriptures as proclaiming: "Holy, holy, holy is Jehovah." (Isaiah 6:2, 3; Revelation 4:6-8) This repetition emphasizes that Jehovah is holy, clean, and pure to the superlative degree. He is, in fact, the Source of all holiness.

<sup>3</sup> Jehovah's name is sacred, or holy. The psalmist exclaimed: "Let them laud your name. Great and fear-inspiring, holy it is." (Psalm 99:3) Jesus taught us to pray: "Our Father in the heavens, let your name be sanctified [or, "be held sacred; be treated as holy," footnote]." (Matthew 6:9) Jesus' earthly mother, Mary, proclaimed: "My soul magnifies Jehovah . . . the powerful One has done great deeds for me, and holy is his name." (Luke 1:46, 49) As servants of Jehovah, we hold his name as something holy and avoid doing anything that might bring reproach upon that holy name. Furthermore, we share Jehovah's view of sacredness, that is, we consider sacred the things that he holds sacred. —Amos 5:14, 15.

## Why We Have Deep Respect for Jesus

<sup>4</sup> As the "only-begotten son" of the holy God, Jehovah, Jesus was created holy. (John 1:14; Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:1-3) He is therefore called "the Holy One of God." (John 6:69) He retained his holiness when his life was transferred from heaven to

4. Why does the Bible describe Jesus as "the Holy One"?

earth, for it was under the power of the holy spirit that Mary gave birth to Jesus. An angel had told her: "Holy spirit will come upon you . . . what is born will be called holy, God's Son." (Luke 1:35) In prayer to Jehovah, Christians in Jerusalem twice referred to God's Son as "your holy servant Jesus."—Acts 4:27, 30.

<sup>5</sup> Jesus had a sacred mission to fulfill while on earth. At his baptism in 29 C.E., Jesus was anointed as High Priest of Jehovah's great spiritual temple. (Luke 3:21, 22; Hebrews 7:26; 8:1, 2) In addition, he was to die a sacrificial death. His shed blood would provide the ransom through which human sinners could be saved. (Matthew 20:28; Hebrews 9:14) We therefore hold Jesus' blood as something sacred, "precious."—1 Peter 1:19.

<sup>6</sup> Showing that we hold our King and High Priest, Christ Jesus, in deep respect, the apostle Paul wrote: "God exalted [his Son] to a superior position and kindly gave him the name that is above every other name, so that in the name of Jesus every knee should bend of those in heaven and those on earth and those under the ground, and every tongue should openly acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." (Philippians 2:9-11) We demonstrate that we share Jehovah's view of sacred

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5. What sacred mission did Jesus fulfill on earth, and why is his blood precious?

6. What is our attitude toward Christ Jesus, and why?

*In ancient Israel, the priesthood, the tabernacle, and its furnishings were to be held sacred*

things by joyfully submitting ourselves to our Leader and reigning King, Christ Jesus, the Head of the Christian congregation.—Matthew 23:10; Colossians 1:18.

<sup>7</sup> Submission to Christ also involves our showing proper respect for the men used by him to take the lead in the work he is now directing. The role of the spirit-anointed ones who make up the Governing Body and of the overseers appointed by them in the branches, districts, circuits, and congregations should be recognized as a sacred responsibility. This arrangement therefore commands our deep respect and submission.—Hebrews 13:7, 17.

### A Holy People

<sup>8</sup> Jehovah made a covenant with Israel. This relationship conferred upon that new nation a special status. They were sanctified, or set apart. Jehovah himself told them: "You must prove yourselves holy to me, because I Jehovah am holy; and I am proceeding to divide you off from the peoples to become mine."—Leviticus 19:2; 20:26.

<sup>9</sup> At the very founding of the nation of Israel, Jehovah impressed upon the Israelites the principle of sacredness. Under pain of death, they were not even to touch the mountain where the Ten Commandments

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7. How do we show our submission to Christ?

8, 9. (a) In what way were the Israelites a holy people? (b) How did Jehovah impress on the Israelites the principle of sacredness?



were given. Mount Sinai was then in a sense considered sacred. (Exodus 19:12, 23) The priesthood, the tabernacle, and its furnishings were also to be held sacred. (Exodus 30: 26-30) What is the situation in the Christian congregation?

<sup>10</sup> The Christian congregation of anointed ones is sacred in Jehovah's eyes. (1 Corinthians 1:2) In fact, the entire group of anointed Christians on earth at any one time is likened to a holy temple, although they do not constitute Jehovah's great spiritual temple. Jehovah inhabits that temple by means of his holy spirit. The apostle Paul wrote: "In union with [Christ Jesus] the whole building, being harmoniously joined together, is growing into a holy temple for Jehovah. In union with him you, too, are being built up together into a place for God to inhabit by spirit."—Ephesians 2:21, 22; 1 Peter 2:5, 9.

<sup>11</sup> Paul further wrote to anointed Christians: "Do you not know that you people are God's temple, and that the spirit of God dwells in you? . . . The temple of God is holy, which temple you people are." (1 Corinthi-

10, 11. Why can it be said that the Christian congregation of anointed ones is sacred, and what effect does this have on the "other sheep"?

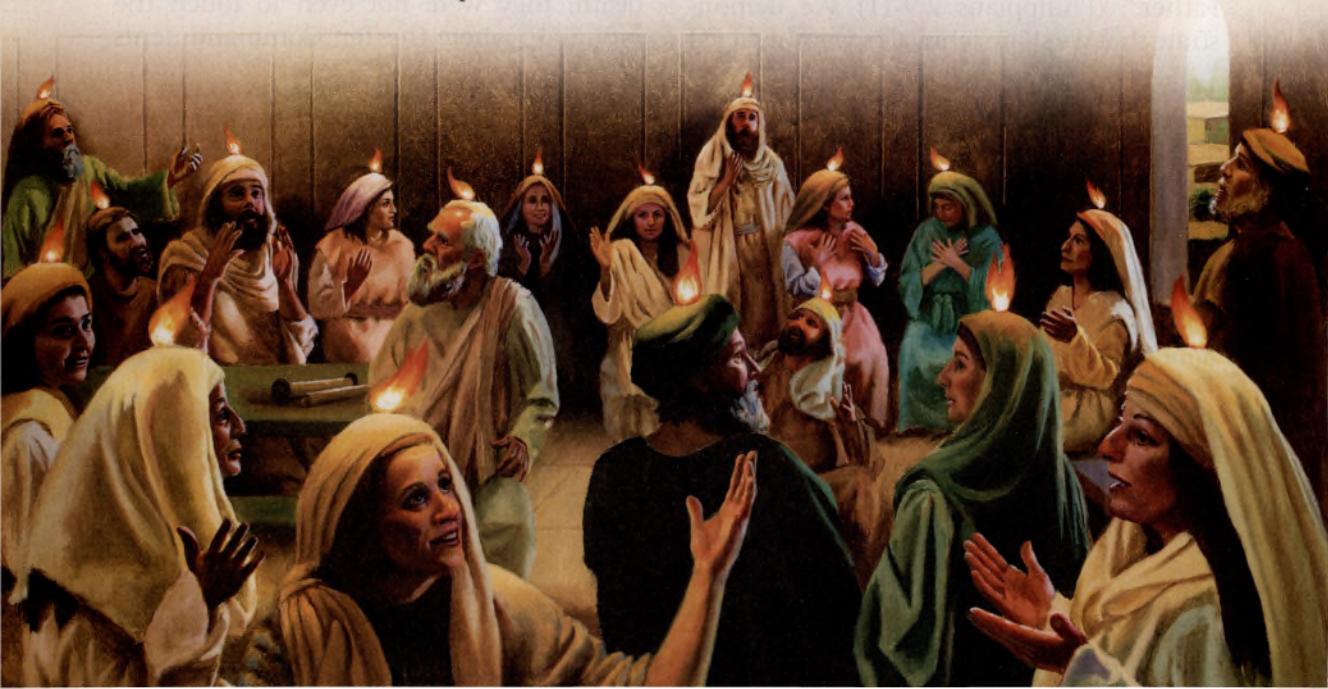
ans 3:16, 17) By means of his spirit, Jehovah 'resides' among the anointed and 'walks among them.' (2 Corinthians 6:16) He continually guides his faithful "slave." (Matthew 24:45-47) The "other sheep" cherish their privilege of being associated with the "temple" class.—John 10:16; Matthew 25: 37-40.

### Sacred Things in Our Christian Lives

<sup>12</sup> Not surprisingly, many things related to the lives of anointed members of the Christian congregation and their companions are held sacred. *Our relationship with Jehovah* is something sacred. (1 Chronicles 28:9; Psalm 36:7) It is so precious to us that we allow nothing and no one to come between us and our God, Jehovah. (2 Chronicles 15:2; James 4:7, 8) *Prayer* plays an important part in our maintaining a close relationship with Jehovah. Prayer was so sacred to the prophet Daniel that even at the risk of his life, he

12. What things are sacred in our lives, and why?

### Anointed Christians on earth form a holy temple





**Prayer and our public ministry are sacred privileges**

our lives.—Ephesians 4:30.

<sup>14</sup> The privilege we have of bearing the name of the holy God, Jehovah, and of being his Witness-

es is something else that we hold sacred. (Isaiah 43:10-12, 15) Anointed Christians have been qualified by Jehovah “to be ministers of a new covenant.” (2 Corinthians 3: 5, 6) As such, they are commissioned to preach “this good news of the kingdom” and to “make disciples of people of all the nations.” (Matthew 24:14; 28:19, 20) They are faithfully carrying out this commission, and millions of sheeplike people are responding, symbolically saying to the anointed: “We will go with you people, for we have heard that God is with you people.” (Zechariah 8:23) These joyfully serve in a spiritual sense as “farmers” and “vinedressers” for the anointed “ministers of our God.” In that way, the other sheep greatly assist the anointed ones in accomplishing their ministry on a worldwide scale.—Isaiah 61:5, 6.

<sup>15</sup> The apostle Paul, for one, considered his *public ministry* to be something sacred, or holy. He spoke of himself as “a public servant of Christ Jesus to the nations, engaging in the holy work of the good news of God.” (Romans 15:16) Writing to Christians in Corinth, Paul referred to his ministry as a “treasure.” (2 Corinthians 4:1, 7) Through our public ministry, we make known “the

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14. What privilege do the anointed hold as sacred, and how is this privilege shared by the other sheep?
  15. What activity did the apostle Paul hold sacred, and why do we have the same view?

continued faithful in his custom of praying to Jehovah. (Daniel 6:7-11) “The prayers of the holy ones,” or anointed Christians, are likened to incense used in temple worship. (Revelation 5:8; 8:3, 4; Leviticus 16:12, 13) This symbolism underscores the sacredness of prayer. What a privilege it is to be able to communicate with the Sovereign of the universe! No wonder prayer is held sacred in our lives!

<sup>13</sup> There is a force in the lives of anointed Christians and their companions that they by all means hold sacred—*holy spirit*. That spirit is Jehovah’s active force, and since it always acts in harmony with the will of the holy God, it is properly called “holy spirit,” or “the spirit of holiness.” (John 14:26; Romans 1:4) By means of holy spirit, Jehovah provides his servants the power to preach the good news. (Acts 1:8; 4:31) Jehovah gives his spirit to “those obeying him as ruler,” to those who “keep walking by spirit,” not according to fleshly desires. (Acts 5:32; Galatians 5:16, 25; Romans 8:5-8) This powerful force enables Christians to produce “the fruitage of the spirit”—fine qualities—and “holy acts of conduct and deeds of godly devotion.” (Galatians 5:22, 23; 2 Peter 3: 11) If the holy spirit is something sacred to us, we will avoid doing anything that might grieve that spirit, or obstruct its action in

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13. What force is holy, and how should we allow it to operate in our lives?

sacred pronouncements of God." (1 Peter 4:11) Therefore, whether of the anointed or of the other sheep, we consider it a sacred privilege to share in the work of bearing witness.

### "Perfecting Holiness in God's Fear"

<sup>16</sup> The apostle Paul warned his fellow Christians against becoming people "not appreciating sacred things." Rather, he counseled them to 'pursue sanctification,' "carefully watching . . . that no poisonous root may spring up and cause trouble and that many may not be defiled by it." (Hebrews 12:14-16) The expression "poisonous root" refers to those few in the Christian congregation who may find fault with the way things are done. For instance, they might disagree with Jehovah's views on the sacredness of marriage or the need for moral cleanliness. (1 Thessalonians 4:3-7; Hebrews 13:4) Or they might share in apostate talk, "empty speeches that violate what is holy," proffered by those who "have deviated from the truth."—2 Timothy 2:16-18.

<sup>17</sup> To his anointed brothers, Paul wrote: "Beloved ones, let us cleanse ourselves of every defilement of flesh and spirit, perfect-

16. What will help us to avoid becoming people "not appreciating sacred things"?

17. Why is constant effort required on the part of the anointed to reflect Jehovah's view of holiness?

### By Way of Review

- What worldly view is not shared by Jehovah's servants?
- Why is Jehovah the Source of all that is holy?
- How do we show that we respect Christ's holiness?
- What things should we hold sacred in our lives?

ing holiness in God's fear." (2 Corinthians 7:1) This statement shows that anointed Christians, "partakers of the heavenly calling," must put forth constant effort to prove that they reflect Jehovah's view of holiness in every aspect of their lives. (Hebrews 3:1) Similarly, the apostle Peter exhorted his spirit-begotten brothers: "As obedient children, quit being fashioned according to the desires you formerly had in your ignorance, but, in accord with the Holy One who called you, do you also become holy yourselves in all your conduct."—1 Peter 1:14, 15.

<sup>18</sup> What of the members of the "great crowd," who will survive "the great tribulation"? They too must prove that they share Jehovah's view of sacred things. In the book of Revelation, they are represented as rendering Jehovah "sacred service" in the earthly courtyard of his spiritual temple. They have put faith in Christ's ransom sacrifice, symbolically 'washing their robes and making them white in the blood of the Lamb.' (Revelation 7:9, 14, 15) This gives them a clean standing before Jehovah and places them under obligation to "cleanse [themselves] of every defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in God's fear."

<sup>19</sup> An important feature in the lives of anointed Christians and their companions is that of regularly meeting to worship Jehovah and study his Word. Jehovah considers gatherings of his people as something sacred. How and why we should share Jehovah's view of sacred things in this vital area will be considered in the following article.

18, 19. (a) How do the members of the "great crowd" show that they share Jehovah's view of sacred things? (b) What other sacred feature of our Christian lives will be considered in the following article?

# SHOWING RESPECT FOR OUR SACRED GATHERINGS

*"I will also bring them to my holy mountain and make them rejoice inside my house of prayer."*—ISAIAH 56:7.

**J**EHOVAH has gathered his people, anointed Christians and their companions, to worship him at his “holy mountain.” He is making them rejoice inside his “house of prayer,” his spiritual temple, which is “a house of prayer for all the nations.” (Isaiah 56:7; Mark 11:17) These developments indicate that Jehovah’s worship is holy, pure, and elevated. By showing proper respect for our meetings for study and worship, we prove that we share Jehovah’s view of sacred things.

<sup>2</sup> In ancient Israel, the place that Jehovah chose for his worship was to be held sacred. The tabernacle and its furnishings and utensils were to be anointed and sanctified ‘that they might indeed become most holy.’ (Exodus 30:26-29) The two compartments of the sanctuary were called “the Holy Place” and “the Most Holy.” (Hebrews 9:2, 3) The tabernacle was later replaced by the temple in Jerusalem. As the seat of Jehovah’s worship, Jerusalem was called “the holy city.” (Nehemiah 11:1; Matthew 27:53) During his earthly ministry, Jesus himself showed due respect for the temple. He was incensed at the people for the disrespectful way that they used the temple area for commercial purposes and as a shortcut.—Mark 11:15, 16.

1. What Scriptural reasons do we have for showing proper respect for our meetings?
2. What indicates that Jehovah held as sacred the place he chose for his worship, and how did Jesus show that he too did so?

<sup>3</sup> The Israelites assembled regularly to worship Jehovah and to listen to the reading of his Law. Certain days of their festivals were called holy conventions or solemn assemblies, indicating the sacred nature of these gatherings. (Leviticus 23:2, 3, 36, 37) At a public assembly in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah, the Levites “were explaining the law to the people.” Since “all the people were weeping as they were hearing the words of the law,” the Levites “were ordering all the people to be silent, saying: ‘Keep quiet! for this day is holy.’” The Israelites then celebrated the seven-day Festival of Booths with “very great rejoicing.” Furthermore, “there was a reading aloud of the book of the law of the true God day by day, from the first day until the last day; and they went on holding the festival seven days, and on the eighth day there was a solemn assembly, according to the rule.” (Nehemiah 8:7-11, 17, 18) These were truly holy occasions requiring respectful attention on the part of those in attendance.

## Our Meetings Are Sacred Gatherings

<sup>4</sup> True, today Jehovah has no literal holy city on earth, with a special temple dedicated to his worship. Nevertheless, we should not lose sight of the fact that meetings for the worship of Jehovah are sacred

3. What illustrates the sacred nature of Israel’s assemblies?
- 4, 5. What features of our meetings prove that they are sacred gatherings?

gatherings. Three times a week, we meet in order to read and study the Scriptures. Jehovah's Word is "expounded," and as in Nehemiah's time, there is "a putting of meaning into it." (Nehemiah 8:8) All our meetings begin and end with prayer, and at most of them, we sing songs of praise to Jehovah. (Psalm 26:12) The congregation meetings are truly a part of our worship and call for a prayerful attitude and respectful attention on our part.

<sup>5</sup> Jehovah blesses his people as they meet together to worship him, study his Word, and enjoy sweet Christian fellowship. When the time comes to attend a meeting, we can be sure that it is there that 'Jehovah commands the blessing to be.' (Psalm 133:1, 3) We share in that blessing if we are present and attentively follow the spiritual program. Moreover, Jesus stated: "Where there

are two or three gathered together in my name, there I am in their midst." In context, this statement applies to Christian elders who are meeting to handle serious problems between individuals, but in principle, it also applies to our meetings. (Matthew 18:20) If Christ, by means of holy spirit, is present when Christians meet together in his name, should not such gatherings be considered sacred?

<sup>6</sup> It is true that Jehovah does not dwell in man-made temples. Nevertheless, our Kingdom Halls are places of true worship. (Acts 7:48; 17:24) We meet there to study Jehovah's Word, pray to him, and sing his praises. That is also true of our Assembly Halls. Larger facilities rented for our conventions —such as auditoriums, exhibition halls, or

6. What can be said of our meeting places, both large and small?

**Meetings to worship Jehovah are sacred gatherings wherever they are held**



sports stadiums—become places of worship while being used for our sacred gatherings. These occasions for worship, large and small, deserve our respect, and that should be reflected in our attitude and behavior.

### Ways to Show Respect for Our Gatherings

<sup>7</sup> There are tangible ways that we can show respect for our gatherings. One way is by being present for the singing of Kingdom songs. Many of these are worded as prayers and should therefore be sung reverentially. Quoting Psalm 22, the apostle Paul wrote of Jesus: “I will declare your name to my brothers; in the middle of the congregation I will praise you with song.” (Hebrews 2:12) Hence, we should make it a point to be in our seats before the chairman introduces the song and then to concentrate on the meaning of the words while singing. May our singing reflect the feelings of the psalmist who wrote: “I shall laud Jehovah with all my heart in the intimate group of upright ones and the assembly.” (Psalm 111:1) Yes, singing praises to Jehovah is one very good reason to arrive early at our meetings and to stay until the end.

<sup>8</sup> Another feature that spiritually enhances all our meetings is heartfelt prayer offered on behalf of all those assembled. On one occasion, first-century Christians in Jerusalem met together and “with one accord raised their voices to God” in fervent prayer. As a result, they continued—in spite of persecution—“speaking the word of God with boldness.” (Acts 4:24-31) Can we imagine any of those present letting their mind wander during that prayer? No, they prayed

7. In what tangible way can we show respect for our gatherings?

8. What example in the Bible shows that prayers at our meetings merit our respectful attention?

“with one accord.” Prayers uttered at our meetings reflect the feelings of all in attendance. They merit our respectful attention.

<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, we can show how deeply we respect the sacred nature of our gatherings by the way we dress. Our appearance with respect to both our clothing and our hairstyle can do much to add to the dignity of our meetings. The apostle Paul counseled: “I desire that in every place the men carry on prayer, lifting up loyal hands, apart from wrath and debates. Likewise I desire the women to adorn themselves in well-arranged dress, with modesty and soundness of mind, not with styles of hair braiding and gold or pearls or very expensive garb, but in the way that befits women professing to reverence God.” (1 Timothy 2:8-10) When we attend large conventions held in open-air stadiums, our dress can be appropriate to the weather conditions and still be dignified. In addition, our respect for the occasion will lead us to refrain from eating or chewing gum during the sessions. Proper dress and behavior at our gatherings honor Jehovah God, his worship, and our fellow worshippers.

### Conduct Befitting God’s Household

<sup>10</sup> In 1 Corinthians, chapter 14, we find the apostle Paul’s wise counsel on how Christian meetings should be conducted. He concluded by saying: “Let all things take place decently and by arrangement.” (1 Corinthians 14:40) Our meetings are an important part of the activity of the Christian congregation, and they require a level of conduct that befits Jehovah’s household.

9. How can we show our respect for sacred gatherings by our dress and behavior?

10. How did the apostle Paul show that a high standard of conduct is required at our Christian meetings?

<sup>11</sup> Children, in particular, need to be taught how to behave at our meetings. Christian parents should explain to their children that the Kingdom Hall and the Congregation Book Study location are not places to play. They are places where we worship Jehovah and study his Word. Wise King Solomon wrote: "Guard your feet whenever you go to the house of the true God; and let there be a drawing near to hear." (Ecclesiastes 5:1) Moses taught the Israelites to assemble together adults and "little ones." He said: "Congregate the people . . . in order that they may *listen* and in order that they may *learn*, as they must fear Jehovah your God and take care to carry out all the words of this law. And their sons who have not known should *listen*, and they must *learn* to fear Jehovah."—Deuteronomy 31:12, 13.

<sup>12</sup> Similarly today, our young ones attend meetings with their parents primarily to *listen* and to *learn*. Once they are able to follow along and to understand at least basic

11, 12. (a) What should be impressed upon the minds of children who attend our meetings? (b) In what appropriate way can children express their faith at our meetings?

### By Way of Review

- What shows that the gatherings of Jehovah's people should be held sacred?
- What features of our meetings prove that they are sacred gatherings?
- How can children show that they respect the sacred nature of our meetings?
- Why should we make regular meeting attendance a permanent feature of our lives?

Bible truths, children can also make a "public declaration" of their faith by participating with brief comments. (Romans 10:10) A young child may start by saying a few words in answer to a question he understands. At first, he may have to read the answer, but in time, he will try to express himself in his own words. This is beneficial and enjoyable for the child, and such spontaneous expressions of faith delight the hearts of older ones in attendance. Naturally, parents set the example by giving comments themselves. Where possible, it is good for children to have their own Bible, songbook, and copy of the publication that is being studied. They should learn to show proper respect for such publications. All of this will impress on the minds of the children that our meetings are sacred gatherings.

<sup>13</sup> Of course, we do not want our meetings to resemble Christendom's church services. These can be either cold and sanctimonious or boisterous like rock concerts. We want the meetings at our Kingdom Halls to be warm and inviting but not to the point of resembling a neighborhood social club. We meet in order to worship Jehovah, so our meetings should always be dignified. Our desire is that after listening to the material presented and observing our behavior and that of our children, those attending for the first time will say: "God is really among you."—1 Corinthians 14:25.

### A Permanent Feature of Our Worship

<sup>14</sup> As stated before, Jehovah is gathering his people and making them rejoice inside his "house of prayer," his spiritu-

13. What is our hope with regard to those attending our meetings for the first time?

14, 15. (a) How can we avoid 'neglecting the house of our God'? (b) How is Isaiah 66:23 already being fulfilled?

*Our little ones attend meetings  
to listen and to learn*

al temple. (Isaiah 56:7) The faithful man Nehemiah reminded his fellow Jews that they should show proper respect for the literal temple by supporting it materially. He stated: "We should not neglect the house of our God." (Nehemiah 10:39) Furthermore, we should not neglect Jehovah's invitation to worship him inside his "house of prayer."

<sup>15</sup> Showing the need for regularity in meeting together to worship, Isaiah prophesied: "'It will certainly occur that from new moon to new moon and from sabbath to sabbath all flesh will come in to bow down before me,' Jehovah has said." (Isaiah 66:23) This is happening today. Regularly, every week of every month, dedicated Christians come together to worship Jehovah. They do this by, among other things, attending Christian meetings and engaging in the public ministry. Are you one of those who regularly 'come and bow down before Jehovah'?

<sup>16</sup> Isaiah 66:23 will fully apply to life in Jehovah's promised new world. At that time, "all flesh will," in a literal sense, week by week and month by month, "come in to bow down before," or worship, Jehovah throughout eternity. Since meeting together to worship Jehovah will be a permanent feature of our spiritual lives in the new system of things, should we not make regular

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16. Why should regular meeting attendance be a permanent feature of our lives now?



attendance at our sacred gatherings a permanent feature of our lives now?

<sup>17</sup> As the end draws near, we should be more determined than ever to attend our Christian gatherings for worship. Out of respect for the sacred nature of our meetings, we do not allow secular work, school homework, or evening schooling to cause us to miss out on meeting regularly with our fellow believers. We need the strength that comes through association. Our congregation meetings provide us with the opportunity to get to know one another, to impart encouragement, and to incite one another to "love and fine works." We need to do this "all the more so as [we] behold the day drawing near." (Hebrews 10:24, 25) May we, therefore, always show proper respect for our sacred gatherings by regular attendance, appropriate dress, and fitting behavior. By doing so, we show that we share Jehovah's view of sacred things.

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17. Why do we need our meetings "all the more so as [we] behold the day drawing near"?

# DANIEL AND HIS CONVENTION BADGE

JESUS rebuked self-righteous religious leaders who became indignant when they observed young boys publicly praising God. Appropriately, Jesus asked them: "Did you never read this, 'Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings you have furnished praise'?"—Matthew 21: 15, 16.

Six-year-old Daniel, associated with a Russian-language congregation in Germany, offers proof that young people are still praising Jehovah. With his mother and sister, he attended a convention of Jehovah's Witnesses in Duisburg. This was the first time that they attended such a large convention. Everything was new: the hotel, the large audience, sitting still for three days, the baptism, not to mention the drama.



And Daniel? His conduct was exemplary.

On the Monday after the convention, at home once again, Daniel got up early to go to kindergarten. But what was still on his jacket? The badge that identified him as a convention delegate! His mother explained to him: "The convention is over. Today you can remove the badge." But Daniel said: "I want everyone to see where I was and to know what I learned." So all day at kindergarten, he proudly wore his badge. When his teacher asked him about it, he described the convention program to her.

By doing so, Daniel was following the example of thousands of boys and girls who over the centuries have publicly given praise to Jehovah.