

The **WATCHTOWER**

SEPTEMBER 15, 1965

Semimonthly

MARRIAGE IN THE
NEW WORLD SOCIETY

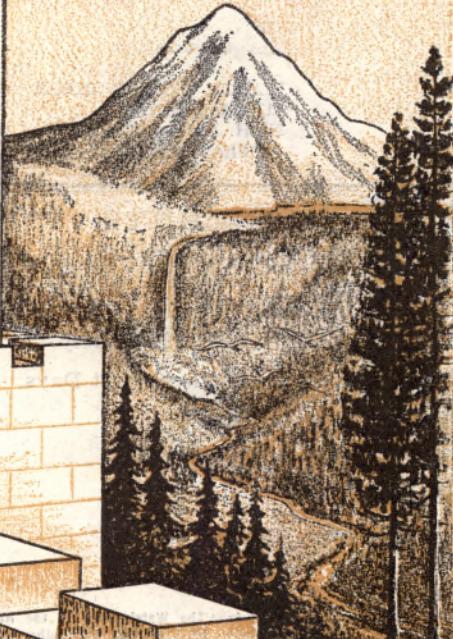
WEIGHING WEDLOCK
IN THESE LAST DAYS

DOES GOD HAVE A SON?

WHY CONTINUE TO PREACH?

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Announcing
**JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM**



"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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The WATCHTOWER

Announcing
JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM

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The Worthy Art of

PAYING ATTENTION

YEARS ago a five-year-old boy fell off a horse. For many years thereafter he suffered from an extremely poor memory. Yet he found a way to improve his memory so well that he eventually became a teacher. How did he do it? One thing that helped him immensely was his paying close attention to everything he wanted to remember. If he listened to a lecture, he attentively followed every word. When he studied, he noted every detail. He overcame his handicap to a great extent by means of the worthy art of paying attention.

We may not have a severe handicap like that boy, but we all can profit from the art of paying attention. So important is this art that some view it as indispensable for success in any endeavor. If, for example, we want to profit from reading something, we need to pay attention. Attention stimulates interest, and interest is the heart of both a good memory and the ability to concentrate.

Yet too often persons find that after they have read a paragraph of material they have almost no notion of what they read. They might read a passage over several times in a state of inattention and still not

be able to repeat the sense of it. Does that ever happen to you?

If it does, what can be done? If the inattention is caused by tiredness, you may need sleep; then pick a time to read when you are not so tired. Or if it is fairly late at night, it may be that the material you are reading is too weighty; pick up some lighter material. Then, too, if you read with the desire to remember, it will help you to pay attention, and you will be able to remember much more of what you read. Repeating to yourself the main points of what you read also helps you to remember and keeps you mentally alert. And by thinking to yourself, Where can I use this material? and then reading with the thought of using it, you further develop the art of paying attention.

If one is in a lecture hall to listen to a teacher or speaker, he also needs to pay attention. Then he will get the most out of it. It will help to listen carefully from the very start, keeping one's eyes on the speaker. Taking notes also helps.

Whatever we are doing, we need to learn to dismiss mental and physical distractions. We must not place a welcome mat before our mental door, as it were, offering hospitality to all things that would distract us. When distracting thoughts knock on the door, we ought to remind ourselves that we have no room for them

in our mental home. And we can also learn to dismiss physical distractions, even such noises as the roar of the street, the ring of telephones and the din of typewriters and the whistling and humming of co-workers. These physical distractions need not claim us if we refuse to give them our attention.

Since definite benefits come from paying attention, what is the reason for the widespread problem of inattention? It is often just a case of paying attention too well to the wrong things. Hence, one must know what *not* to pay attention to. Many persons who are unable to remember much or who are said to be absentminded or who get little accomplished are simply suffering from a case of paying attention to the wrong things. Consider a student in school. Johnny may be staring out of the schoolroom window looking at the bright sunshine outside on the grass. The teacher notices his dreamy, faraway look and calls out sharply: "Pay attention, Johnny!" It may be that he *is* paying attention—to thoughts of going fishing or playing or other things he will do after school. He is paying attention, but to the wrong things.

This is the way it is with the person who is easily distracted. If that person is supposed to be listening to a speaker, he cannot really pay attention well to what is said if he is observing a dogfight through a window or is watching the clouds to predict the weather. His mind is wandering; he is paying attention to wrong things.

The world in general is that way. Their attention is occupied, but not with the matters that are of the greatest concern. They are like the people who lived before the flood of Noah's day, "eating and drinking, men marrying and women being given in marriage, until the day that Noah en-

tered into the ark; and they took no note until the flood came and swept them all away." After using the inattention of those antediluvians as a warning example, Jesus Christ said: "So the presence of the Son of man will be." (Matt. 24:38, 39) Do we pay attention to that warning prophecy?

It is necessary to pay even more than the usual attention to it, especially in view of its source. The writer of the Bible book of Hebrews pointed this out after showing that, while in times past God had spoken to them by means of the prophets, now he had sent his Son Jesus Christ as his spokesman. "That is why it is necessary for us to pay more than the usual attention to the things heard by us, that we may never drift away."—Heb. 2:1.

Since Jehovah God exalted the Lord Jesus Christ "to a superior position and kindly gave him the name that is above every other name," the words of the Son of God carry special weight. So we need to pay "more than the usual attention" to this highest God-appointed Authority in the universe rather than to other persons and to what they say or write. And why is this so vital? Because our salvation is involved. "How shall we escape if we have neglected a salvation of such greatness in that it began to be spoken through our Lord?" We do not want to be found, then, paying attention to the wrong things, the way the world does, when salvation depends on paying more than the usual attention to what God's Son has spoken.—Phil. 2:9; Heb. 2:3.

Yes, the worthy art of paying attention often means the difference between failure and success. And especially when it comes to the matter of whether we gain God's approval for salvation. It hinges on paying attention to the Son of God, responding to God's commandments spoken "through our Lord." Since this means your very life, pay more than the usual attention.

WHEN Moslems insist, in the words of the Koran (5:76-79), that "there is no God but one God," Christians heartily agree, for the Bible itself declares, at 1 Corinthians 8:6, that "there is actually to us one God the Father, out of whom all things are." In the Koran God is "Allah," for in Arabic the word *Allah* means "the God." The Bible gives us his name, saying "*Jehovah* our God is one *Jehovah*."—Mark 12:29.

But when Christians use the expression "the Son of God," Moslems vehemently protest, "God has no son." They quote the Koran, which says, at Suras 4:169; 6:101; 19:36: "God is only one God! Far be it from His glory that He should have a son!" "How, when He hath no consort, should He have a son?" "It beseemeth not God to beget a son."

Of course, it would be foolish for anyone to limit the power of God by saying, 'God cannot have a son.' Truthfully, the Koran proclaims, "Verily, God is Almighty." (2:19) He is the Creator of the universe, of heaven and earth and of the creatures in them. As God said to Abraham, that man of faith recognized by both Christians and Moslems, "Is anything too extraordinary for Jehovah?" A person who really is in submission to the Omnipotent God must agree with the prophet who said, "With God all things are possible."—Gen. 18:14; Matt. 19:26.



No Moslem denies that it is God who created humans and endowed them with power to have sons. Yes, God created Adam with power to have sons. Now, was it a blind man who invented and made the first camera? Or was it a deaf man who first thought of and fashioned the telephone? No, reasons Sir Isaac Newton, the English mathematician, physicist and astronomer. He said, "Was the eye contrived without skill in optics, or the ear without knowledge of sounds?" In support of the obvious answer the Bible says: "Understand, you who are unreasoning

among the people; and as for you stupid ones, when will you have any insight? The One planting the ear, can he not hear? Or the One forming the eye, can he not look?" (Ps. 94:8, 9) The One who gave man power to have sons, can He not have a son? "Verily, God is Almighty." The logical answer is an indisputable Yes, and that is why Abraham believed when God told him that he would have a son. With just elementary insight a reasoning person must agree: God can have a son.

ADAM, "THE SON OF GOD"

The word "son" means "a human male considered with reference to his parents or either of them; a male descendant." Every male child or person has to be the son of someone who as father produced or generated his life. Thus, because Abdallah begot or generated the life of the one who be-

came the prophet Mohammed, Mohammed is said to be "the son of Abdallah." Now, what about the first forefather of Mohammed and of us all, the first man Adam—who was his father? Adam had no *human* father, but still he had to be the son of someone. Of whom? God was his father. Hence Adam must have been the son of God. Correctly, the Book containing the most ancient history of the human race says, at Luke 3:38, that Adam was "the son of God."

Long before the creation of his *human* son Adam, God already had countless *spirit* sons, angels, all of whom got their life from the Father without sexual reproduction and birth. Jehovah asked Job: "Who is this that is obscuring counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up your loins, please, like an able-bodied man, and let me question you, and you inform me. Where did you happen to be when I founded the earth? Tell me, if you do know understanding. Who set its measurements, in case you know, or who stretched out upon it the measuring line? Into what have its socket pedestals been sunk down, or who laid its cornerstone, when the morning stars joyfully cried out together, and *all the sons of God* began shouting in applause?" (Job 38:1-7) Thus the Bible says Jehovah God has many sons, both angelic and human. (Gen. 6:4; Job 1:6; Luke 3:38) Would you deny it? "Have you come to know because at that time you were being born, and because in number your days are many?"—Job 38:21.

More than 1,500 years before the son of Abdallah was born at Mecca, about 570 C.E., the Bible recorded that God has a Son who is preeminent among all other sons of God. Now, suppose there is a dispute in your town about a person's line of descent, some persons saying he is the son of So-and-So but others vehemently denying. The matter is referred for settlement.

"Yes, he *is* the son of So-and-So," says a very old man who is respected because he kept the village records before any of the disputants were born. "No," asserts a councilor whose grandfather was the old historian's playmate, "So-and-So had no son." Whose testimony would you accept as authoritative? The councilor's, just because he now happens to be a man of influence or perhaps because he is a relative of yours? Certainly not! You would rather believe the word and written evidence of the old historian, wouldn't you? Sensibly! The Bible predates all other books; we should accept its answer to the question, Does God have a Son?

WHAT IS HIS NAME?

God has many sons, you agree. But is there an outstanding one we might properly call *the Son of God*? And why? If you are disturbed or disappointed, do not be prejudiced if the book you consider holy does not specifically give the name of the true *Allah* or the name of his Son. On these vital questions the Holy Bible can challenge all other holy books with the question: "Who has gathered the wind in the hollow of both hands? Who has wrapped up the waters in a mantle? Who has made all the ends of the earth to rise? What is his name and what *the name of his son*, in case you know?"—Prov. 30:4.

This preeminent Son is the one of whom the Koran says God decreed "His name shall be, Messiah Jesus the son of Mary, illustrious in this world, and in the next." (3:40) Yes, as a human he was the son of Mary, but who was the father responsible for Mary's pregnancy, so that the child would be his son? Some stumble here by taking a carnal viewpoint. They imagine there was only one way for Mary to conceive and that was by having sexual relations, and 'God is not a man to have

sexual relations with a woman.' But even the Koran teaches that Jesus was conceived by an act of the divine will.

Whose act resulted in the life of Adam, the son of God? God's. Hence Sura 3:52 says: "Verily, Jesus is as Adam in the sight of God." Neither of them had a human father. Hence, inasmuch as Adam was a son of God, so is Jesus.

But Jesus did not first become a son of God when he was born of the chaste virgin Mary. He was foremost among the spirit sons of God who shouted for joy at the creation of the earth, as we read at Proverbs 8:22-31. (John 1:2, 3) After Adam was created Adam sinned and lost his sonship. "But when the full limit of the time arrived, God sent forth his Son, who came to be out of a woman." (Gal. 4:4) Note that the one God sent forth was his Son, whom the Koran says that God "conveyed into Mary." So the one who until then had been a spirit Son of God now became his *human* Son. "When he commenced his work, [Jesus] was about thirty years old, being the son, as the *opinion* was, of Joseph," but at his baptism God's voice "came out of heaven: 'You are *my* Son, the beloved.'" (Luke 3:21-23) He proved himself a man of faultless integrity down to the day of his death as a man. The Koran (3:48) says: "God said, 'O Jesus! verily I will cause thee to die, and will take thee up to myself and deliver thee.'" So, three days after his death this "Son, who sprang from the seed of David according to the flesh, . . . with power was declared God's Son according to the spirit of holiness by means of resurrection from the dead—yes, Jesus Christ our Lord." (Rom. 1:3, 4) Yes, a spirit Son again, but now because of his proved, faultless integrity Jesus Christ was appointed by Jehovah as his Vindicator and the Chief Agent of life toward mankind.

JESUS, "THE" SON OF GOD

Does God have a Son? The Book, the oldest history book on earth, the truthful Word of God, the Holy Bible, says Yes! In its authentic record, named witnesses identify this preeminent Son as Jesus Christ. Solomon wrote down Jesus' prehuman autobiography as a spirit son. (Prov. 8: 22-31) Isaiah prophesied God would use a virgin to produce him as a human son. (Isa. 7:14) Gabriel told Mary to call his name Jesus. (Luke 1:26-33) Simeon and Anna glorified God on account of this miraculous birth. (Luke 2:25-38) Thirty years later John the Baptist actually heard God acknowledge Jesus as his Son. (Matt. 3:17; John 1:29-34) James and Peter testified that with a third companion they heard God repeat, "This is my Son, the beloved, whom I have approved; listen to him." (Matt. 17:5) Caiaphas pronounced Jesus guilty because he admitted on oath that he is the Son of God. (Mark 14:61-64) Jesus' bosom friend John wrote a whole book to prove that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, and John was a witness of these things. (John 20:31) In symbolic drama Abraham showed how God would let his Son die. (Gal. 3:16) Jesus' mother and two other women named Mary saw him die as the innocent Lamb of God. (John 19:25) Paul wrote that he knew of five hundred witnesses of Jesus' resurrection. (1 Cor. 15:6) Stephen in vision caught sight of God's glory and of the resurrected Jesus at God's right hand (Acts 7:55), where David said he would wait until God's time to send him forth as a King ruling in the midst of his enemies. (Ps. 110:1, 2) All of this was written down by ancient historians of truthful events. Five hundred years afterward, if certain writers denied that Jesus is the Son of God, should we set aside the overwhelming testimony of credible witnesses whose names are given by named writers

of the Holy Bible? Never! Why, that Jesus is the Son of God was admitted by the Roman soldiers who impaled him and by the demons themselves! And these were his enemies!

BEFRIEND THE SON OF GOD NOW ENTHRONED

But that was long ago. Concerning the Son of God in our day, David foretold that Jehovah would say:

"I, even I, have installed my king upon [heavenly] Zion, my holy mountain.' Let me refer to the decree of Jehovah; He has said to me [Jesus Christ]: 'You are my son; I, today, I have become your father. Ask of me, that I may give nations as your inheritance and the ends of the earth as your own possession. You will break them with an iron scepter, as though a potter's vessel you will dash them to pieces.' And now, O kings, exercise insight; let yourselves be corrected, O judges of the earth. Serve Jehovah with fear and be joyful with trembling. Kiss the son, that He may not become incensed and you may not perish from the way, for his anger flares up easily. Happy are all those taking refuge in him."—Ps. 2:6-12.

Enemy or friend, which will you be when the Son wields his "iron scepter"? Will you choose to be dashed to pieces just because your forefathers embraced a certain religion, or because you are of a certain tribe or race? Those who accept and

"For there has been a child born to us, there has been a son given to us; and the princely rule will come to be upon his shoulder. And his name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. To the abundance of the princely rule and to peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom in order to establish it firmly and to sustain it by means of justice and by means of righteousness, from now on and to time indefinite."—Isa. 9:6, 7.

follow Jesus become his friends. They kiss the Son by submitting to his kingdom. They are in line for blessings in Paradise. You, yes, *you* can be one!

That Jesus is the Son of God is a truth as unassailable as a rock-mass. Will you build on it wisely? His friends in Africa, in Arabia, in the East and in the West, in 194 lands so far, are thus building and taking refuge in him.

The hope of eternal life through the Son makes these friends happy. (John 3:16-18) His enemies stubbornly stumble on God's Son as on a stone of stumbling and a rock-mass of offense. But they are due to be pulverized when the Son obeys his Father's command at Psalm 110. Do not you stumble over this Stone and be crushed by it. (Luke 20:18) Why make God angry with you so that you perish from the way? (Ps. 2:12) Exercise insight and live!

Make an impartial examination of the Bible. Study it carefully, with the aid of Bible literature and the teaching organization of Jehovah's witnesses. Flee out of Babylon the Great, that worldwide empire that includes the false religions both inside and outside of Christendom.

In the name of God, Jehovah, the Compassionate, the Merciful, the Father of Jesus Christ, turn now 'from the authority of the darkness to the kingdom of the Son of his love.'—Col. 1:13.

COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- Putting Up a Hard Fight for the Faith.
- Execution of Judgment upon the Ungodly.
- Do Evil Spirits Exercise Power over Man?
- Personal Help to Answer Your Bible Questions.

Marriage

in the NEW WORLD SOCIETY

SOMEWHERE in the "Cradle of Civilization" and perhaps in what is modern-day Armenia there once existed a magnificent garden. There mankind and marriage had their start. If we could but turn back the pages of time and view that paradise home of the first man and woman, Adam and Eve, what a marvelous sight we would behold! There they were together, man and wife, in a tranquil, pleasant garden, with its streams, its trees, its luxuriant foliage—those things required to make life possible and delightful. In the skies above, graceful birds winged their way. And on land, animals of many kinds were found—none harmful, none a threat to man. In earth's waters, aquatic creatures moved about. But best of all, Adam and Eve were there together and they could bring forth their kind to populate the earth and spread their paradise home in joyful companionship. United, perfect man and woman could "be fruitful and become many and fill the earth and subdue it," in keeping with the blessing of their heavenly Father, Jehovah.—Gen. 1:26-28.

1. Describe the beginning of marriage.

"A man will leave his father and his mother and he must stick to his wife and they must become one flesh."

—Gen. 2:24.



² Today men and women are far removed from that perfect state, and paradise has long since vanished. (Rom. 5:12) For millions, though, these words have proved true: "A man will leave his father and his mother and he must stick to his wife and they must become one flesh." (Gen. 2:24) Yes, there have been problems, for these arise among imperfect creatures. Yet Christians, with the Word of God in hand and heart, are able to surmount these, for the psalmist David declared: "Good and upright is Jehovah. That is why he instructs sinners in the way. He will cause the meek ones to walk in his judicial decision, and he will teach the meek ones his way. All the paths of Jehovah are loving-kindness and trueness for those observing his covenant and his reminders."—Ps. 25: 8-10.

FILLING YOUR ROLE IN MARRIAGE

³ Many problems would easily be overcome if the husband and wife both had a keen appreciation of their proper respec-

2. How can married Christians surmount problems?
3. (a) How do many men deal with their wives? What about Christian husbands? (b) With what does the Christian wife comply?

tive positions within the marital union. The reminders of Jehovah, recorded in his Word, make clear their status and responsibilities. To husbands, the apostle Paul wrote: "You husbands, keep on loving your wives and do not be bitterly angry with them." (Col. 3:19) Many men lord it over their wives, subjecting them to unkind words and deeds. Not so the real Christian husband. Neither would a male Christian place the female on a pedestal, according her undue admiration and honor. Nor would the Christian woman expect that, She herself wisely complies with the apostle's inspired words: "You wives, be in subjection to your husbands, as it is becoming in the Lord." (Col. 3:18) When men and women, united in wedlock, show regard for Jehovah's reminders, problems are fewer and happiness is attainable.

⁴ In sentencing sinful Eve back in the Garden of Eden, God declared: "Your craving will be for your husband, and he will dominate you." (Gen. 3:16) How true this has been! Imperfect husbands have dominated their wives, often in cruel, harsh ways. Surely, though, these words of Jehovah are no authorization to husbands to tyrannize over their wives. All Christian husbands should know that they "ought to be loving their wives as their own bodies." (Eph. 5:28) In ancient Israel some men dealt treacherously with their wives, divorcing them after they tired of them. But Jehovah stated: "You people must guard yourselves respecting your spirit, and with the wife of your youth may no one deal treacherously. For he has hated a divorcing." Never would a Christian husband act in such a manner. In fact, in no way would he deal treacherously with his wife, for he would heed Jehovah's reminder: "You must guard yourselves respect-

ing your spirit, and you must not deal treacherously."—Mal. 2:13-16.

⁵ Are you a Christian husband? Then show your good qualities as the head. Be loving and considerate, never harsh and dictatorial. Do not make demands of your wife just to assert your authority. Think about her problems. As the head of the household, after weighing all the facts, you must make the final decisions in family matters. With Jehovah's aid the husband will always see to it that the spiritual interests of the entire family are met. Remember this: You are responsible for your home's spiritual state, whether it is good or bad. Your lead in love is necessary, because subjection on the part of your wife and children should not have as its basis a morbid fear of you. All should fear Jehovah. No Christian should forget that "the fear of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom" and that "love builds up."—Ps. 111:10; 1 Cor. 8:1.

⁶ Are you a Christian wife? Then just think of the wonderful contribution to wedded happiness you can make. You can be tender, compassionate, loving. Proverbs 12:4 says: "A capable wife is a crown to her owner, but as rottenness in his bones is she that acts shamefully." Never would you wish to act shamefully. For a woman to be a capable, submissive wife who is industrious and who loves Jehovah is fine, and commendation will flow from her husband, indeed, from others too. Many are the submissive, faithful Christian women who have stood loyally at their husbands' sides, cooperating with them in godly deeds, in good times and in bad. If you are among these, then of you it may be said: "There are many daughters that have shown capableness, but you—you have ascended above them all. Charm may be

4. Though some men dealt treacherously with their wives in ancient Israel, how will the Christian husband act?

5. How can the Christian husband measure up as the family head?

6. How can the Christian wife contribute to wedded happiness? What do the Scriptures say of such a woman?

false, and prettiness may be vain; but the woman that fears Jehovah is the one that procures praise for herself. Give her of the fruitage of her hands, and let her works praise her even in the gates.”—Prov. 31: 29-31.

⁷ For lasting happiness in marriage, regard must be shown for Jehovah’s reminders, as set forth in the Bible. Both the husband and the wife must do their part, filling their respective roles. There is a particular area of life in which they must show love and understanding. Regarding it the apostle Paul wrote: “Let the husband render to his wife her due; but let the wife also do likewise to her husband. The wife does not exercise authority over her own body, but her husband does; likewise, also, the husband does not exercise authority over his own body, but his wife does. Do not be depriving each other of it, except by mutual consent for an appointed time, that you may devote time to prayer and may come together again, that Satan may not keep tempting you for your lack of self-regulation.”—1 Cor. 7:3-5.

⁸ Authority over the body of a marriage mate does not mean that a Christian is justified in throwing off all restraint in intimate matters. The husband should be considerate of his wife, and she should not employ her attractiveness to her husband in some selfish way. In his Word, Jehovah has shown consideration for a woman’s limitations, and the Christian husband should do the same. He should not be oblivious to his wife’s cycles and vicissitudes. He should deal with her as with a weaker vessel, dwelling with her according to knowledge. (Lev. 18:19; 1 Pet. 3:7) A balanced marital relationship and loving consideration will bring you happiness in wedlock.

7, 8. (a) What advice did the apostle Paul give at 1 Corinthians 7:3-5? (b) How may consideration be shown in the marital relationship?

PRESERVING “WHAT GOD HAS YOKED TOGETHER”

⁹ At times, serious marital problems may arise among imperfect humans, so much so that separation is contemplated. But Jesus Christ said: “Did you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female and said, ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and his mother and will stick to his wife, and the two will be one flesh’? So that they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has yoked together let no man put apart.” Obviously, then, earnest efforts should be made to preserve “what God has yoked together.” So, should matrimonial problems spring up, do not immediately view separation as the only solution. It is better to think of the day of your marriage and the joy it brought both of you. Your problem can be solved if love is allowed to enter again.—Matt. 19:4-6.

¹⁰ In essence, the Scriptures counsel married persons to remain together. Paul put it this way: “If any brother has an unbelieving wife, and yet she is agreeable to dwelling with him, let him not leave her; and a woman who has an unbelieving husband, and yet he is agreeable to dwelling with her, let her not leave her husband.

. . . For, wife, how do you know but that you will save your husband? Or, husband, how do you know but that you will save your wife?” (1 Cor. 7:12-16) From this it is evident that a Christian should not even consider separating from a marriage partner unless the case is critical. Extreme physical abuse, actual threat to life, or the absolute imperiling of one’s spirituality, might give rise to a consideration of separation. But even in these instances the mature Christian would separate from a mate only as a last resort.

9, 10. (a) When matrimonial problems arise, why is separation not the only solution? (b) What circumstances might give rise to a consideration of separation? Even then, what view should be taken?

¹¹ Intense effort should be put forth to hold a marriage together. Hence, if separation threatens, turn to Jehovah. Prayerfully consider every aspect of the matter. "Persevere in prayer." (Rom. 12:12) Throw your burden upon Jehovah and he will surely uphold and direct you. (Ps. 37: 5) In addition to praying, work hard to preserve your union. Do not overlook the fact that separation itself may pose problems you had not anticipated, problems with respect to child care, funds, housing, and so forth. Then, too, your own physical and emotional needs, seemingly insignificant at a time of heated argument leading to a separation, may assert themselves if separation does take place. How terrible it would be if you were to yield to passion and act immorally under the pressure of a separation, perhaps self-imposed!

¹² To avoid separation at a time of strained relations, subject yourself, not just your mate, to personal scrutiny. Ask yourself: What am I doing to make this marriage work? Am I as considerate as I should be? Do I really display the fruits of God's spirit? Think! Among these fruits are love and self-control. (Gal. 5:22, 23) Do you exercise self-control when your mate is irritable? Or do you make issues of matters of little significance? If you do, stop doing so. It may save your marriage. Make sure that you are doing all within your power to cope with your problems and that you are permitting Jehovah's spirit to govern your life.

¹³ Sadly, it sometimes occurs that conditions become strained in a union where both mates are dedicated to Jehovah. Here especially is separation hardly wise or necessary. Dedicated Christian couples should

be able to resolve their problems in love. And why not? "Love never fails." (1 Cor. 13:8) If there is some domestic disagreement, handling it privately will usually suffice. Jesus said: "Moreover, if your brother commits a sin, go lay bare his fault between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother." (Matt. 18:15) Surely, you should be able to gain your dedicated Christian husband or wife, if only you will try.

¹⁴ To do this it will be necessary to discuss matters. So consider the problem as it is covered in the Bible and as it has been treated in *The Watchtower* or other Christian publications. Sit down together, take the Bible in hand and talk over the problem dispassionately. Be honest enough to admit a weakness or the wrong you did. As a wife, you may have failed to be submissive in some respect. As a husband, you may not have been considerate on a certain occasion. The *Watch Tower Publications Index* has helped many persons to locate a discussion of their problem in *The Watchtower* or other Christian publications. Perhaps consideration of the relative positions of the husband, wife and children within the family circle would be beneficial. You might consult *The Watchtower* of August 1, 1962, containing articles entitled "Building a Happy Family" and "Role of Wife and Children in a Happy Family." Also, do not bypass the article entitled "When Marriage Ties Are at the Breaking Point," appearing in *The Watchtower* of September 15, 1963. If you do not have these copies, maybe you can get them at the Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's witnesses. Spend an evening or more studying such material together as husband and wife. Pay attention to Jehovah's reminders. Will you feel like separating thereafter? It is not likely that you will.

11. (a) If separation threatens, then what? (b) In what ways may separation itself pose problems?

12. What questions might a married person ask at a time of strained relations?

13. Why is separation neither wise nor necessary where both mates are dedicated to Jehovah? What course should be followed?

14. In discussing a problem, what procedure is suggested to married persons?

¹⁵ But there is something else of great importance. Prayer together will unify Christian mates. Centuries ago humble David earnestly petitioned Jehovah: "Search through me, O God, and know my heart. Examine me, and know my disquieting thoughts, and see whether there is in me any painful way, and lead me in the way of time indefinite." (Ps. 139:23, 24) Why not make a similar fervent request? After joining in prayer to Jehovah concerning your problem, will you be able to treat each other harshly or coolly? No. Prayer will undoubtedly bring you together. After all, with a lowly mind you will have opened your hearts to Jehovah, kneeling perhaps. And you will have done so together. Can you then act contrary to your supplications? Hardly!

AIDING UNBELIEVING MATES

¹⁶ In a household that is divided religiously hardship may be encountered, even outright opposition. (Matt. 10:32-39) But if you endure this for the sake of God's kingdom, you may win your husband or wife over to true Christianity. The Christian apostle Peter wrote: "In like manner, you wives, be in subjection to your own husbands, in order that, if any are not obedient to the word, they may be won without a word through the conduct of their wives, because of having been eyewitnesses of your chaste conduct together with deep respect." (1 Pet. 3:1, 2) And this does happen. How do we know?

¹⁷ Well, on the island of Madeira in the Atlantic Ocean west of Morocco there lives a Christian woman who can testify to this. Consider this account of what happened in her case: "When a study [of the Bible] was started in her home, this caused great difficulty, as her husband was violently opposed and did all in his power to stop it.

However, the study progressed, and soon the woman was attending meetings and going out in the service. As her interest in the truth increased, so did her husband's opposition, until finally the sister determined to separate from her husband. The advice of the brothers was to continue living with him and be a model wife, as stated in 1 Peter 3:1, 2, so as to win him over to the truth. This she did, continually praying to Jehovah for his help and guidance. The result was that some months later her husband suddenly asked to have one of Jehovah's witnesses come to the house to study with him. Due to this sister's faithfulness and patience both she and her husband were baptized at the last assembly and both are now dedicated witnesses of Jehovah." (1963 Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses, page 243) What a fine outcome! By heeding Jehovah's reminders in a divided household separation may be avoided and that often with splendid results.

¹⁸ Actually, among unbelieving mates of believers there exists a great potential for building up the Christian congregation. Sometimes women embrace true Christianity first; so an opportunity remains to aid their husbands to become Christians. In time, some of these men may dedicate themselves to God and advance to spiritual maturity. As Jehovah God prospers the work of his people, new congregations are formed and there is a need for additional overseers and ministerial servants for these. Eventually some who were once unbelieving mates of believing women may fill such positions. Also, with the acceptance of true Christianity by a husband who was formerly an unbeliever, religious disunity within a household is overcome. The family bond is strengthened and a woman who may once have been opposed

15. How will prayer unify Christian marriage mates?
16, 17. If a married Christian endures hardship in a divided household, what may be the result? Give an example.

18. (a) What potential for building up the Christian congregation exists among unbelieving mates of believers? (b) How will the former unbeliever's acceptance of Christianity benefit the believing mate?

by her mate then receives his aid. For her this may mean an improved and expanded ministry. There may also be children who will benefit. So there is good reason to aid unbelieving mates of believers. That is true, of course, whether they are men or women.

¹⁹ If your mate is now an unbeliever, remember that as Christians we owe those nearest to us a debt of love. (Rom. 13:8) Recall Rahab? She had to gather those of her household together into her house so that they might all experience preservation when the Israelites marched against Jericho. (Josh. 2:17-21) You may be able to do something similar in these last days. So work to aid your unbelieving mate to become a Christian. Sometimes an unbelieving marriage partner is not really opposed to true Christianity. He may simply misunderstand. Though he is not neglected by his believing wife, he may feel that way. She attends Christian meetings and engages in the ministry, and in this her husband does not join her. Formerly, they did most things together. Now, even though she does well in caring for her household duties and is considerate, the unbeliever finds things changed. Can you do something about this? Yes. Show your mate even more love and consideration than might be considered normal. Naturally, if he begins to take an interest in true Christianity, you have cause for joy. By all means treat him with great kindness and understanding.—Col. 3:12.

²⁰ An unbelieving marriage mate may be favorably impressed if a Christian married couple visits his home. Possibly the visiting Christian husband can establish a genuinely friendly relationship with the unbeliever. For example, if the believing mate is ill, a dedicated couple could make

19. Why might an unbelieving marriage partner feel neglected? What can the Christian mate do about that?

20. What opportunities exist to establish a friendly relationship with an unbelieving mate?

a call, thus showing Christian concern. Or the unbeliever may be sick. Would it not be a fine thing if these Christians showed interest in him? Certainly. Well, then, why not call at such times and give aid, if possible. Be helpful on other occasions too. You may thus have opportunities to offer Biblical comfort and encouragement. These words may be received with appreciation by one whose ears and heart were once unresponsive.

²¹ Should the opportunity to discuss the Bible present itself, what then? Do not wrangle with the unbelieving mate. Let him express himself. This will enable you to determine how you can assist him. Show an understanding of his position. Have empathy, putting yourself in his place. Try to view matters from his standpoint. Commend him where that is possible. For example, he may not see why Jehovah's witnesses will not accept blood transfusions. You might point out that many persons who are now Jehovah's witnesses once felt the same way. If you did personally, tell him so. Perhaps you can then explain that you had his viewpoint until you learned what the Bible says about blood. It may then be beneficial to direct his attention to what is said in God's Word in such texts as Genesis 9:3, 4 and Acts 15:28, 29. By your kindness and patience you may be able to aid this person very much.

²² At a suitable time you might also show the unbelieving mate that he owes it to himself and to his wife to look into what she believes. It may be desirable to explain what dedication to God means and why his dedicated Christian wife must fulfill the vow she has made to Jehovah to do his will in her life. (Eccl. 5:4, 5) At another time you might explain that Jehovah's wit-

21. How should the Christian proceed if the opportunity presents itself to discuss the Bible with an unbelieving mate?

22. What might be explained to the unbeliever regarding dedication to God and the purpose of Jehovah's witnesses? What prospect exists?

nesses teach Bible truths so that persons can act with knowledge. (Rom. 10:13-15) Point out that if he will consider what the Scriptures teach he will be benefited. Then he can intelligently choose the course he will follow. If things progress to the point where a Bible study is started with the unbelieving mate, he may feel more at ease if his wife is not present for the study, for a while, at least. Let the circumstances govern this. But, just think! If you show this keen Christian interest, some day this person may be instructing others from the "word of life," joining you and his mate in proclaiming the everlasting good news. What a grand prospect!—Rev. 14:6; Phil. 2:16.

²³ After considering Jehovah's remind-

23. What quality should be exercised in marriage? Why heed Jehovah's reminders?

ers, then, what may be said of wedlock? Indeed, that marriage in the New World society can bring true happiness. If problems arise, however, be determined to resolve them in love by applying Biblical principles. Work to preserve what God has yoked together. Give sincere aid to unbelieving mates. And grace your marriage with love, for no quality eclipses it. "Many waters themselves are not able to extinguish love, nor can rivers themselves wash it away." (Song of Sol. 8:7) As a man and woman united in matrimony, continue to display your love for each other by words and deeds. Heed Jehovah's reminders. Then you will be happy. And how splendid is Christian wedlock when love prevails and when the Bible is the guide!

WEIGHING WEDLOCK

in

THESE LAST DAYS

"He also that gives his virginity in marriage does well, but he that does not give it in marriage will do better."

-1 Cor. 7:38.

FOR Adam, the first man, choosing a wife was no problem at all. She was made for him. Man had named the many animals, but for him "there was found no helper as a complement of him." "Hence," we are told in the Biblical account, "Jehovah God had a deep sleep fall upon the man and, while he was sleeping, he

1. Why was the choice of a wife no problem for Adam?

took one of his ribs and then closed up the flesh over its place. And Jehovah God proceeded to build the rib that he had taken from the man into a woman and to bring her to the man." Just imagine Adam's joy at this! He was moved to exclaim: "This is at last bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. This one will be called Woman, because from man this one

was taken." No wonder man would stick to his wife. In her sinless state, this woman was his perfect complement.—Gen. 2:18-25.

² Today, among imperfect humans, a problem facing some Christians is that of selecting a marriage mate. In this a devoted servant of Jehovah will wisely heed the apostle Paul's inspired admonition that dedicated Christians should marry believers, thus marrying "only in the Lord." (1 Cor. 7:39) This is Jehovah's will for Christians who choose to wed. Centuries prior to Paul's day, when God's people, the Israelites, were to come in contact with the heathen of Canaanland, they were sternly warned: "You must form no marriage alliance with them. Your daughter you must not give to his son, and his daughter you must not take for your son." Dire consequences would follow disobedience, as God so clearly stated: "For he will turn your son from following me, and they will certainly serve other gods." Not only would the son or daughter thus yoked fare badly, but parents arranging such a union would incur Jehovah's wrath, for it was said: "And Jehovah's anger will indeed blaze against you, and he will certainly annihilate you in a hurry!"—Deut. 7:3, 4.

³ Earlier, in patriarchal times, parents devoted to Jehovah were distressed when a grown son personally made a marriage alliance with pagans. When Esau took Judith and Basemath, Hittite women, as wives, "they were a source of bitterness of spirit to Isaac and Rebekah." On one occasion Rebekah lamented: "I have come to abhor this life of mine because of the daughters of Heth. If Jacob ever takes a wife from the daughters of Heth like these from the daughters of the land, of what good is life to me?" (Gen. 26:34, 35; 27:

2. Show Scripturally what Jehovah's will is for Christians who choose to marry.

3. What examples from patriarchal times should a Christian parent remember?

46) Happily, Jacob entered into no marital union that would embitter a godly parent and displease Jehovah. Before this, when Abraham arranged for the selecting of Isaac's wife, there was no bad choice of a heathen woman. (Genesis, chapter 24) Should you, as a Christian parent today, arrange the marriage of your son or daughter? Surely not like some parents have done. Remember the warning to Israel and these fine parental examples from patriarchal days.

⁴ You may be a Christian parent who will arrange a marriage for your son or daughter. Or you may be an adult dedicated servant of Jehovah God who plans to marry. In either case, let the words of faithful Ezra ring in your ears, his earnest supplication at a time of national wrongdoing. The Jews had been delivered from captivity to Babylon. They had the Scriptures and good examples from the past. These they ignored, and great was their guilt before Jehovah. But how had they sinned? This Ezra revealed as he pleaded: "And after all that has come upon us for our bad deeds and our great guiltiness—for you yourself, O our God, have underestimated our error, and you have given us those who have escaped such as these—shall we go breaking your commandments again and forming marriage alliances with the peoples of these detestable things? Will you not get incensed at us to the limit so that there will be none remaining and none escaping? O Jehovah the God of Israel, you are righteous, because we have been left over as an escaped people as at this day. Here we are before you in our guiltiness, for it is impossible to stand before you on account of this." (Ezra 9: 13-15) The Jews put away their foreign wives in the days of Ezra, in recognition of their great guiltiness before God. Do not forget that they had sinned against

4. How did the Jews of Ezra's day sin against Jehovah?

Jehovah by intermarrying with the pagan Canaanites. Never minimize the gravity of disobeying God with respect to wedlock.

⁵ As a Christian dedicated to Jehovah God you undoubtedly hold the Bible in high esteem and you wish to abide by its righteous principles. Well, then, take to heart also these words of the prophet Malachi: "Is it not one father that all of us have? Is it not one God that has created us? Why is it that we deal treacherously with one another, in profaning the covenant of our forefathers? Judah has dealt treacherously, and a detestable thing has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah has profaned the holiness of Jehovah, which He has loved, and he has taken possession of the daughter of a foreign god as a bride. Jehovah will cut off each one that does it, one who is awake and one who is answering, from the tents of Jacob, and one who is presenting a gift offering to Jehovah of armies." (Mal. 2: 10-12) Those Jews certainly did not please Jehovah by taking "the daughter of a foreign god as a bride." In doing so, they had profaned His holiness. Earlier, Solomon had married many foreign women. Because of them he sinned. For Jews of Nehemiah's day who had married pagan women, Nehemiah used Solomon as an example of a wrongdoer. (Neh. 13:25-27) Christians today realize, therefore, that they could never please Almighty God by marrying an unbeliever.

⁶ Despite the passing of time, Jehovah's view of marriage alliances for his servants has never changed. "Do not become unevenly yoked with unbelievers," wrote the apostle Paul to the Corinthians. "For what sharing do righteousness and lawlessness have? Or what fellowship does light have with darkness? Further, what harmony is

there between Christ and Belial? Or what portion does a faithful person have with an unbeliever?" (2 Cor. 6:14, 15) Obey Jehovah, the unchanging God. Do not go against his will in matters relating to wedlock and risk your spirituality and life itself by becoming unevenly yoked with an unbeliever.—Mal. 3:6.

⁷ Incidentally, in view of the foregoing, it would be a mistake to assume that the Watch Tower Society or the Christian congregation advocates the marriage of a dedicated Christian to an unbeliever, even if such a marriage has been performed in a Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's witnesses. Naturally, the congregation service committee is responsible for deciding whether the congregation's Kingdom Hall will be used for a particular marriage ceremony or not.

AVOIDING AN UNEVEN YOKE

⁸ A person may realize that, as a Christian, he should marry "only in the Lord." Yet school activities, secular employment, and the like, may throw a dedicated single Christian into contact with unbelievers of the opposite sex. What then? Well, while attending school is not something to be avoided, the Christian student assuredly does not have to engage in extracurricular school activities, regularly attending school dances and other functions that will place him in unnecessary contact with unbelievers. Similarly, one may have to work with worldly persons in the same office, but that does not mean that the mature Christian will attend office parties at which he may become emotionally involved with an unbeliever, even running the risk of falling into immorality. To avoid these things, watch your associations. Be firm, resolute.

7. (a) Does either the Watch Tower Society or the Christian congregation advocate the marriage of a dedicated Christian to an unbeliever? (b) Who decides whether the Kingdom Hall will be used for a particular marriage ceremony or not?

8. How can a Christian avoid becoming emotionally involved with an unbeliever at school? At his place of employment?

5. According to Malachi 2:10-12, in what way had the Jews profaned Jehovah's holiness? What conclusion must a Christian therefore reach?

6. What is Jehovah's unchanging view of marriage for his servants?

In your determination to do what is right, Jehovah will surely uphold you.—1 Cor. 15:33.

⁹ Ardent prayer to Jehovah is also in order. Refraining from association and courtship with an unbeliever may not be easy. But Jehovah can help you. The apostle Peter wrote: “Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time; while you throw all your anxiety upon him, because he cares for you.” (1 Pet. 5:6, 7) The psalmist admonished: “Throw your burden upon Jehovah himself, and he himself will sustain you. Never will he allow the righteous one to totter.” (Ps. 55:22) And again we read: “Blessed be Jehovah, who daily carries the load for us, The true God of our salvation.” (Ps. 68:19) Despite the hardship, stick close to Jehovah in prayer and you will be able to shun an uneven marital yoke.

¹⁰ In addition to your prayers, exercise self-control. It is a fruit of God's spirit, for which a Christian should pray. By permitting Jehovah's spirit to operate on you, you can display self-control. Yes, you may already be infatuated with an unbeliever. But you can stop associating with this person. You may have to alter your plans and activities. Doing this will be the course of wisdom. You will be avoiding an uneven yoke, one that merits Jehovah's disapproval. Then, too, consider the moral dearth of modern society. Why, your wise, though difficult, action may even result in the preservation of your virtue! (Prov. 5:3-14) With God's aid, then, wait! Wait till wedlock with a dedicated person is possible. Yes, wait until you can marry a lover of Jehovah. Then wedlock will bring you happiness, not sorrow and spiritual difficulty.

9. To avoid an uneven marital yoke, what is required? 10. Besides praying, what else must you do to avoid an uneven yoke? With what results?

¹¹ But what if a person is now showing some interest in Bible study? Well, to rush into marriage is never wise. So here again, wait! Stop, look and listen! Stop and think about the seriousness of marriage. Look at the individual, not through the beclouded eyes of infatuation, but objectively. Yes, and listen too. Is this person really seeking righteousness and meekness? (Zeph. 2:2, 3) Does he, or she, speak from the heart with loving expressions of praise to God? Has this person made a dedication to Jehovah, symbolizing it by water baptism? Have you evidence that he is progressing toward Christian maturity? Is he serving Jehovah wholeheartedly? Has he the necessary spiritual qualifications for the ministry and for Christian marriage? Time will tell. It will take time to learn the facts about such a newly interested one. After this person makes a dedication, is baptized, is carrying out that dedication to God in faithfulness and has spiritual qualifications, it is soon enough to begin considering him, or her, as a possible marriage mate.

MARRY WHEN?

¹² But what about you? Are you really ready for marriage? If you desire to wed, first consider your own qualifications for matrimony. As a woman, be determined to enhance your worth. King Lemuel of old made this appraisal: “A capable wife who can find? Her value is far more than that of corals.” (Prov. 31:10) That makes her someone of real value, someone to be cherished by a loving husband. It is that way with the Christian woman who develops her spirituality. But what of a man? He should be mature and considerate, capable of loving his wife as he does himself. (Eph. 5:33) Many will be his responsibilities.

11. What course is advisable even if a person is showing some interest in Bible study?

12. (a) As a woman, what should you do if you desire to marry? (b) What will be required of a man who marries?

ties. But if he displays Christian maturity and spirituality, think how he may well appear to his beloved. Do you recall the beautiful Shulammite girl of the Song of Solomon? In her eyes her shepherd lover was the very epitome of all that was good and wonderful in a man. "Like an apple tree among the trees of the forest," said she, "so is my dear one among the sons." (Song of Sol. 2:3) As a Christian man, have you such qualities that you could justifiably be viewed in that way?

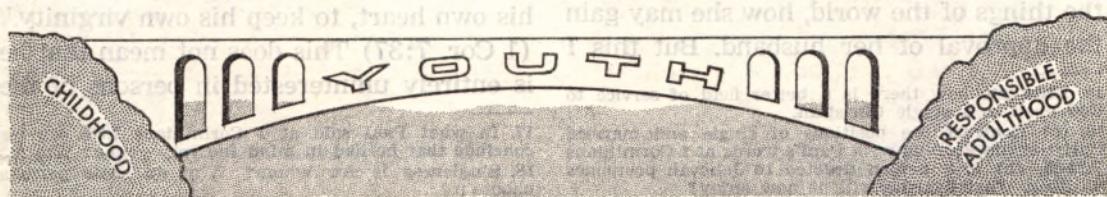
¹³ But when does a person attain the desired qualities for matrimony? Individuals vary, yet surely the time of attainment is not during youthful years prior to adulthood. In Biblical days there were some early marriages, but at that time most persons were adults before they entered wedlock. Consider Isaac. He took Rebekah as his wife when he was a mature individual. He fell in love with her, too, for the Bible tells us so. (Gen. 24:62-67) He did not just become infatuated with Rebekah. Today some young persons become infatuated with ones of the opposite sex, only to find that interest wanes and their feelings change in a short time. So do not mistake sexual attraction for love. As a young person, why not put off marriage until you have your feet firmly set on life's pathway as a Christian minister? Wait until you are sure of yourself and can better analyze your feelings. Isaac was forty years old when he got married. (Gen. 25:20) Remember, too, that Rebekah was no mere

girl when she became a wife, for she was called, not a child, but a "young woman," "a virgin." (Gen. 24:16) So by postponing wedlock for a while, you will not lose out. You will profit. In the meantime, you can work to develop emotional and spiritual maturity.

¹⁴ Young Christians, now is the time to "remember . . . your grand Creator." (Eccl. 12:1) Therefore, why emulate the majority of youthful mankind of our day? Caught up, as they are, in worldly pursuits, they desire sleek and powerful automobiles, or wish to be among the financially prosperous, with good-paying jobs. They "date" early in life and marry while still young. Those who are mere boys attempt to assume burdens they are as yet unprepared to shoulder. Girls often become mothers while very young. Many individuals never truly savor youthful freedom from marital responsibility or an adult life of singleness. Actually, several years may be required to change youths into serious-minded adults. As a young person, you now have the opportunity to observe those already married. In this way you can receive valuable schooling that is free. To some extent you can learn what burdens go with adult life and how these may be discharged. Youth is a period in which to enrich life and lay a good foundation for the future by pursuing the interests of God's kingdom, putting them first in life. (Matt. 6:33) In youth and young adulthood you can enjoy what singleness has to

13. (a) What may be learned from the case of Isaac and Rebekah? (b) If one postpones wedlock, what should he do?

14. (a) Why is youthful marriage undesirable? (b) A young, single person has what opportunity?



offer in the way of lighter demands and greater freedom from distractions. These years are like a bridge, one to be crossed naturally. Permit yourself to traverse it gradually and your life will be happier, fuller, more rewarding.

BETTER FIELD OF SERVICE FOR THOSE SINGLE

¹⁵ There is also a better field of service to God open to a single Christian. This may not necessarily be so from the standpoint of privileges that can be enjoyed, though it often is. For example, one who is married may not be able to serve at a Bethel home of the Watch Tower Society, whereas a single person may be so blessed. Singleness will also spare you tribulation in the flesh. The apostle Paul wrote: "If a virgin person married, such one would commit no sin. However, those who do will have tribulation in their flesh." (1 Cor. 7:28) Let us illustrate. When illness strikes a family, this means increased concern, responsibility and expense for the married person. If you are single, you are spared such anxieties regarding a mate and children.

¹⁶ Fittingly, therefore, Paul said: "Indeed, I want you to be free from anxiety. The unmarried man is anxious for the things of the Lord, how he may gain the Lord's approval. But the married man is anxious for the things of the world, how he may gain the approval of his wife, and he is divided. Further, the unmarried woman, and the virgin, is anxious for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in her body and in her spirit. However, the married woman is anxious for the things of the world, how she may gain the approval of her husband. But this I

15. Illustrate how there is a better field of service to God open to a single Christian.

16. (a) Contrast the positions of single and married Christians in keeping with Paul's words at 1 Corinthians 7:32-35. (b) If a person devoted to Jehovah postpones wedlock, what benefits will he now enjoy?

am saying for your personal advantage, not that I may cast a noose upon you, but to move you to that which is becoming and that which means constant attendance upon the Lord without distraction." (1 Cor. 7:32-35) So, as a single young man or young woman devoted to Jehovah, can you postpone wedlock? If you do so, you can now enjoy a life free from the anxieties that go with marriage in these last days. You can serve Jehovah without such distractions. Unhampered, you can come and go as you please. This can be a blessing in the ministry. Take advantage of it!

¹⁷ Paul did go on to say, however: "But if anyone thinks he is behaving improperly toward his virginity, if that is past the bloom of youth, and this is the way it should take place, let him do what he wants; he does not sin. Let them marry." (1 Cor. 7:36) Obviously, one who is but a youth or even a young adult, is not "past the bloom of youth." So, rather than impulsively move ahead into early marriage, a younger Christian wisely considers these words of the apostle: "Now I say to the unmarried persons and the widows, it is well for them that they remain even as I am"—unmarried. (1 Cor. 7:8) The apostle allows for marriage, if the need exists, but it is apparent that he does not have in mind the very young.—1 Cor. 7:9.

¹⁸ Yet singleness is not to be maintained at all costs. Single Christians must lead clean, upright, moral lives to Jehovah's honor. (1 Cor. 10:31) Singleness is for one who "stands settled in his heart, having no necessity," one who has "authority over his own will and has made this decision in his own heart, to keep his own virginity." (1 Cor. 7:37) This does not mean that he is entirely uninterested in persons of the

17. In what Paul said at 1 Corinthians 7:36, can we conclude that he had in mind the very young? Why?

18. Singleness is for whom? Why do some persons choose it?

opposite sex. No, but such a person has no necessity and has authority over his own will because of exercising self-control. He "has made this decision in his own heart, to keep his own virginity." His determination is to remain single at the present time. Some are eunuchs, not by reason of physical mutilation, but "on account of the kingdom of the heavens." (Matt. 19:12) Such persons choose singleness, perhaps in early life, so that they may now pursue Kingdom interests with fewer distractions.

¹⁹ Some have the gift of singleness, but they must work for it. To keep it, they must not yield to passionate inclinations of the fallen flesh. Then, too, since marriage is something for which each normal adult has a proper desire, a single life may at times be lonely, even trialsome. Hence, if you are single, fill any void in your life with study of God's Word and Christian publications. Have "plenty to do in the work of the Lord," keeping your mind centered, not upon fleshly desires, but upon spiritual matters and your career as a minister. (1 Cor. 15:58) Be sensible in habits and develop a balanced way of life. Think on things that are upbuilding and "be vigilant with a view to prayers." (Phil. 4:8; 1 Pet. 4:7) Rely heavily on Jehovah. (Isa. 40:28-31; Phil. 4:13) Others can aid you, too—parents, servants in the Christian congregation and fellow praisers of Jehovah in general—as they offer encouragement to all persons who are pursuing a life of singleness for the sake of the Kingdom. Of course, if you wish to remain single, you cannot think only of what others are doing. You must disown yourself and follow Christ's steps closely. (Heb. 12:1-3) Incidentally, Jesus Christ furnished the single Christian minister a striking example. He himself did not marry.

19. How can one work for the gift of singleness? Can others help?

²⁰ What a time this is for joyful service to Jehovah! God's kingdom rules! The end of this system of things will occur in our very own generation! "The time left is reduced." (1 Cor. 7:29) The field of ministerial activity is large and the harvest is great. (Matt. 9:37, 38) There is so much to be done in the work of preaching the everlasting good news right now by "you young men and also you virgins"—yes, and others too. (Ps. 148:12, 13) For these reasons, many happily pursue singleness today. Some enter the full-time ministry as pioneers, others as missionaries. Still others are privileged to serve in a Bethel home. No, they are obligated to take no vow of celibacy. (1 Tim. 4:1-3) Someday the majority of them will marry. So then, what about you? As a single young man or young woman, can you also postpone marriage and have a greater share now in the preaching work? It is not as though you will never marry. You will just wait until you are older. Of course, whether you are young or old, if you can now remain single, do so. Dedicated Christian ministers who have put off wedlock till later in life have not been losers. They have received richly of Jehovah's bounties. Possibly you can be among them and can thus reap the satisfying reward that goes with greater service in these last days, to the praise of our heavenly Father.—Mal. 3:10; 2 Tim. 3:1-5.

²¹ Indeed, many centuries have passed since Jehovah formed the first woman, brought her to the man, Adam, and instituted human wedlock. Since then millions of persons have chosen marriage mates, some with good results, others with bad. If you, as a modern-day Christian, intend to wed, marry "only in the Lord."

20. For what reasons do many pursue singleness today, and what privileges are theirs? Will the majority of them never marry?

21. If you marry, what should be your course? What should be the determination of Christians whether single or married?

(1 Cor. 7:39) This will have God's approval. On the other hand, you may choose singleness at present, perhaps as a youth or a young adult. You have many years ahead of you, an eternity if you remain faithful to God. Without the responsibilities associated with matrimony, you can

now devote yourself more fully to the work of preaching the good news of God's established kingdom. (Matt. 24:14) But, whatever your decision, as a faithful Christian, single or married, bend every effort to walk with God and win Jehovah's smile of approval.—Isa. 30:21; Mic. 6:8.

A PIVOTAL DATE *in History*

JEHOVAH GOD is an accurate timekeeper. He sets the times for events in the carrying out of his purposes, and sees to it that they take place exactly on time. He gives us an accurate record, timewise, of his dealings with mankind. Not only does this serve for historical purposes, but it also enables us to determine the time for the fulfillment of some of his prophecies. It also helps us to check our understanding of prophecy by adding chronological testimony to the evidence of the physical facts, the things we see taking place before our eyes.

The Bible gives us chronological information on all of its important events. In order to know when these events occurred in relation to our time, we must reliably and unmistakably fix a Bible event with a date in history. In other words, we must find a Bible event that happened on a certain date according to our calendar. Having fixed that point of time, we can then take the Bible chronology from there, figuring forward or backward, and establish

the many other dates to which the Bible makes reference.

Considering the events that are recorded in the ancient Hebrew Scriptures, there is one date that fully satisfies these requirements for a pivotal date. About other historical events mentioned in those times there are many disputes, but this date is one that can be well established from historical records. It provides us with a starting point by which we can place in our calendar the events referred to in the Hebrew Scriptures and also have corroboration for the fulfillment of some of the prophecies. That date is 537 B.C.E., the date of the decree of Cyrus the Persian giving permission to the Jews to return to their native land. The record of this event is found at Ezra 1:1-4:

“And in the first year of Cyrus the king of Persia, that Jehovah's word from the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, Jehovah roused the spirit of Cyrus the king of Persia so that he caused a cry to pass through all his realm, and also in writing, saying: ‘This is what Cyrus the king of

Persia has said, "All the kingdoms of the earth Jehovah the God of the heavens has given me, and he himself has commissioned me to build him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Whoever there is among you of all his people, may his God prove to be with him. So let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and rebuild the house of Jehovah the God of Israel—he is the true God—which was in Jerusalem. As for anyone that is left from all the places where he is residing as an alien, let the men of his place assist him with silver and with gold and with goods and with domestic animals along with the voluntary offering for the house of the true God, which was in Jerusalem."'"

WHEN KING CYRUS' REIGN BEGAN

The Bible relates that 42,360 Jews left Babylon, along with 7,337 men slaves and slave girls, and 200 male and female singers. (Ezra 2:1-67) This decree concerning Jerusalem could be made by Cyrus, because, in conquering Babylon in 539 B.C.E., he got possession, not only of Babylonia itself, but also of all its foreign holdings, including Syria, Palestine and the part of Assyria that Cyrus did not already hold. But it did not apply to the fugitive Jews in Egypt, for it was not added to the Persian Empire until after Cyrus' death, in the days of his son and successor Cambyses. Secular historians give us the date 539 B.C.E. as marking the downfall of Babylon, the Third World Power, to the Medes and Persians, the Persian Empire becoming the Fourth World Power. At Daniel 5:30, 31 it is shown that Darius the Mede ruled first at Babylon immediately after its fall. Daniel, at Babylon, speaks of the "first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus of the seed of the Medes, who had been made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans." (Dan. 9:1; 11:1; 6:1, 6, 9, 25, 28) The liberation decree was not made in this year, for it was in this year that Daniel studied the release to come at the end of the seventy years. (Dan. 9:1-18) So with at least one year and possibly a part of a second year

for Darius the Mede, the first year of King Cyrus the Persian may not have begun until the year 538 B.C.E., to extend into the following year, 537 B.C.E.*

The Jews, of course, left Babylon as quickly as possible after Cyrus' decree, for, by reason of their knowledge of Jehovah's prophecies by Jeremiah and Isaiah, they had prepared in advance for departure. But it would take some time to complete all preparations for 49,897 people, and it was a good four months' journey back to the land of Judah. They arrived there just before the seventh month, Tishri. (Ezra 2:70; 3:1) Therefore, the decree of Cyrus must have been made toward the close of winter and the beginning of spring of 537 B.C.E.† This date plays a very important role for all Bible students, for by it we can fix the time of the beginning of the desolation of the land of Judah and the beginning of the "times of the Gentiles," or, "the ap-

* On page 404 of Volume 4, *The Jewish Encyclopedia* says: "Cyrus always conformed to the traditions of the thrones he usurped, and, together with his son Cambyses, rendered homage to the native deities. On the first day of the year, Nisan 1 (March 20), 538, in conformity with Babylonian custom, he grasped the hands of the golden statue of Bel-Marduk, and thus became consecrated as monarch. From this ceremony dates the first year of his reign as 'King of Babylon, King of all the Lands.'" Cyrus thus had himself proclaimed as king of Babylon and as the legitimate successor to the deposed King Nabonidus. By doing this he did not have to reconquer the Babylonian Empire. Babylon's foreign possessions, Syria, Phoenicia, Palestine and the borderlands of the desert, all came to be tributary to Cyrus.—See *The Westminster Historical Atlas to the Bible* (1956), page 75, paragraph 3.

† If we proceed according to the cuneiform inscriptions, rather than the Bible, we have to take the position that Darius the Mede and Cyrus the Persian reigned concurrently for a time. According to this, the accession year (an incomplete lunar year) of Cyrus as king of Babylon began on October 23 of 539 B.C.E., when he entered the city (by day) after its capture by his troops. Hence his first regnal year (a full lunar year) began on Nisan 1 of 538 B.C.E., or on March 17/18 of 538 B.C.E., Gregorian time.

The cuneiform tablet entitled "Strassmaier, Cyrus No. 11" mentions Cyrus' first regnal year. By this tablet it is calculated that this year began March 17/18, 538 B.C.E., and it ended on March 4/5 of 537 B.C.E., Gregorian time. So Cyrus' second regnal year began the next day, on March 5/6, 537 B.C.E. In this case Cyrus' decree must have been made before this latter date, that is, late in the year 538 or early in 537 B.C.E. See pages 14, 29 of *Babylonian Chronology 626 B.C. - A.D. 75*, edition of 1956, by Parker and Dubberstein.

pointed times of the nations."—Luke 21:24, AV; NW.*

That the seventy years of desolation were to be ended as a result of Cyrus' decree is plainly stated at 2 Chronicles 36:20-23:

"Furthermore, [Nebuchadnezzar] carried off those remaining from the sword captive to Babylon, . . . to fulfill Jehovah's word by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had paid off its sabbaths. All the days of lying desolated it kept sabbath, to fulfill seventy years. And in the first year of Cyrus the king of Persia, that Jehovah's word by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, Jehovah roused the spirit of Cyrus the king of Persia, so that he caused a cry to pass through all his kingdom, and also in writing. . . ."

Cyrus' decree was recorded in the official records of Persia, as shown in Ezra 6:1-5, where Darius I the Persian, successor to Cambyses the son of Cyrus, had the records searched and found the scroll with the decree written within it, at Ecbatana (Achmetha, AV), which was the former capital of Media and the summer residence of King Cyrus, northeast of Babylon.

WHEN THE SEVENTY-YEAR DESOLATION ENDED

Did the decree of Cyrus itself end the seventy-year desolation of Jerusalem and the land of Judah? No. Why not? The exiled Jews had to take advantage of the decree and leave Babylon and go back to their homeland and reoccupy it in order to end this desolation. For various reasons, such as old age, some Jews were not able to go back; but many others had become well established in highly materialistic Babylonia, and they preferred to remain in comfort rather than to exert themselves

* For further details on the authenticity of the date 537 B.C.E. and the desolation of Judah and "times of the Gentiles," see the books "*Babylon the Great Has Fallen!*" God's Kingdom Rules! and "*Your Will Be Done on Earth*" by Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society, Brooklyn, New York.

and suffer the hardships of traveling across a forbidding terrain to a land absolutely desolate. But the remnant of faithful Jews that returned were eager to obey Jehovah's command. They were zealous for true worship at the place where he had put his name. They wanted to get away from unclean Babylon in order to be clean to bear Jehovah's sacred vessels of worship back to the site of his holy temple.—Isa. 52:11; Jer. 50:8; 51:6.

Cyrus appointed Sheshbazzar as governor of the returning Jews and entrusted him with the delivering of the sacred utensils. At Ezra 3:2, 8 Sheshbazzar is identified with Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, a descendant of King David. (Matt. 1:6-13) The Jewish high priest Joshua (or Jeshua) the son of Jehozadak accompanied Governor Zerubbabel back to the site of Jerusalem.

When the Jews returned to Judah there was no one in the land to keep them out, for God had by his power preserved the land unoccupied in order that it might enjoy the sabbath years of complete rest as it deserved, with no one on it to cultivate it. Every year of its lying desolate was the equivalent of a sabbath year according to Jehovah's law through Moses. (Lev. 25:1-12) How was this an exactly accurate fulfillment of the seventy-years time prophecy? Well, it was in the seventh month of the year of Jerusalem's destruction that the land of Judah was left completely desolate by the flight of the poor Jews who had not been deported by Nebuchadnezzar. In the seventh month they fled, taking the prophet Jeremiah with them down to Egypt. (2 Ki. 25:22-26; Jer. 41:1 to 43:8) That was also the very month in which sabbath years and Jubilee years began, namely, "in the seventh month on the tenth of the month; on the day of atonement." (Lev. 25:9, 10) The statement at Ezra 3:1: "When the seventh

month [Tishri] arrived the sons of Israel were in their cities," gives official corroboration of the exact fulfillment of this prophecy.

WHEN JERUSALEM'S DESOLATION BEGAN

Bible students are concerned with the time of the desolation of Judah and Jerusalem. With this pivotal date established, it is easy to go back seventy years from the seventh month of the year 537 to the seventh month of 607 B.C.E. as the time of the desolation of Jerusalem and Judah. In 607 B.C.E., the month of Tishri began on September 22/23, the day for the observance of the festival of the new moon. It was in that month of 607 B.C.E. that the "seven times," or, "the times of the Gentiles," "the appointed times of the nations," began. (Dan. 4:16, 23, 25, 32; Luke 21:24, AV; NW) This was two months after Jerusalem had been destroyed and its temple plundered, wrecked and burned down, after which its two principal priests were killed.—2 Ki. 25:5-21.

If we follow the accurate timekeeping of Jehovah God as recorded in his Word, we see that the desolation of Judah ran from 607 to 537 B.C.E. and will thereby avoid making the mistake of the chronologers of Christendom who ignore the prophecy of the seventy years' desolation and date Jerusalem's destruction as occurring in 587 B.C.E. They limit the desolation of Jerusalem and the land of Judah to merely fifty years, accepting the unreliable calculations of pagan historians rather than the infallible Word of God.—2 Chron. 36:19-23.

Eleven years before Jerusalem was destroyed and the land of Judah was desolated, Jeremiah saw the returning remnant in a vision as a basket of "good figs." The zealous repatriates were like these figs, because they went back to reestablish the pure worship of Jehovah in the place where he had put his name. At Jeremiah 24:1-7 Jehovah says: "I shall certainly

cause them to return to this land. And I will build them up, and I shall not tear down; and I will plant them, and I shall not uproot. And I will give them a heart to know me, that I am Jehovah; and they must become my people, and I myself shall become their God, for they will return to me with all their heart."

TRUE WORSHIP REINSTITUTED

As foretold 200 years beforehand, at Isaiah 44:28, Cyrus had, in effect, shepherded Jehovah's sheep back to their proper fold in the land of Judah. Jehovah here also foretold the laying of the temple foundation. In the seventh month, just after their arrival, it was too early to have the foundation laid, but this did not delay the resumption of Jehovah's worship. They were surrounded by bitter enemy nations, but they went ahead first with building an acceptable altar, as we read:

"And Jeshua the son of Jehozadak and his brothers the priests and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and his brothers proceeded to rise up and build the altar of the God of Israel, to offer up burnt sacrifices upon it, according to what is written in the law of Moses the man of the true God. So they established the altar firmly upon its own site, for fright came upon them because of the peoples of the lands, and they began offering up burnt sacrifices to Jehovah upon it, the burnt sacrifices of the morning and of the evening. Then they held the festival of booths according to what is written, with the burnt sacrifices day by day in number according to the rule of what was due each day. And afterward there was the constant burnt offering and that for the new moons and for all the sanctified festival seasons of Jehovah and for everyone that willingly offered a voluntary offering to Jehovah."—Ezra 3:2-5.

At Ezra 3:6 it is stated: "From the first day of the seventh month on they started to offer up burnt sacrifices to Jehovah, when the foundation of Jehovah's temple itself had not yet been laid." This would be, according to the Gregorian Calendar,

on September 28/29, of 537 B.C.E.* So on the first day of the month they celebrated the new moon of the seventh month of that year. (Num. 10:10; 28:11; 1 Sam. 20:5, 18, 24) On the fifteenth day of that month they kept God's law by beginning the seven-day festival of the booths, the festival of the ingathering. (Lev. 23:33-43; Ex. 23:16; 34:22) These "holy conventions" were undoubtedly most joyful celebrations for the faithful remnant of Jews, along with their companions the Nethinim who had returned with them, and who served in connection with the altar by procuring wood and water.—Ezra 2:70.

TEMPLE FOUNDATION LAID

Now Jehovah's prophecy had to come true concerning the temple: "You will have your foundation laid." It did:

"And in the second year [536 B.C.E.] of their coming to the house of the true God at Jerusalem, in the second month [Ziv or Iyyar, the month in which King Solomon had begun building the first temple], Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel and Jeshua the son of Jehozadak and the rest of their brothers, the priests and the Levites, and all those who had come out of the captivity to Jerusalem started; and they now put in positions the Levites from twenty years of age upward to act as supervisors over the work of the house of Jehovah. . . . When the builders laid the foundation of the temple of Jehovah, then the priests in official clothing, with the trumpets, and the Levites the sons of Asaph, with the cymbals, stood up to praise Jehovah according to the direction of David the king of Israel. . . . And many of the priests and the Levites and the heads of the paternal houses, the old men that had seen the former house [built by Solomon], were weeping with a loud voice at the laying of the foundation of this house before their eyes, while many others were raising the voice in shouting for joy." This confusion of sounds was heard far away.—Ezra 3:8-13.

* Or, according to the Julian Calendar, October 4/5, 537 B.C.E. See *Babylonian Chronology 626 B.C. - A.D. 75* (edition of 1956), by Parker and Dubberstein, page 29.

But this work was not done without difficulty. Only clean, dedicated hands could have a share in rebuilding Jehovah's house, so the people of the lands round about were denied a share in the work. They began to interfere with the building. They used every possible means to "frustrate their counsel all the days of Cyrus the king of Persia down till the reign of Darius the king of Persia." (Ezra 4:1-5) Finally they procured an edict from the king of Persia ordering the Jews to stop building. "It was then that the work on the house of God, which was in Jerusalem, stopped; and it continued stopped until the second year of the reign of Darius the king of Persia." (Ezra 4:6-24) This is, of course, not Darius the Mede, but King Darius I the Persian, who began ruling the empire in 522 B.C.E.

In our next two issues we shall see that the enemies of God could not really thwart the rebuilding of the temple and of Jerusalem itself, also accurately timed by Jehovah. But the foregoing is sufficient to prove that the date 537 B.C.E. is a very important one. To Jehovah's mind and likewise to the faithful remnant of Jews who returned from Babylon, it was important at that time. It is important to Bible students, for by means of it they can determine the length of time that man has been on the earth, the time of the flood of Noah's day, of the making of the Abrahamic covenant, of the Exodus from Egypt, of the forty years' wandering of Israel in the wilderness and of numerous other vitally important Bible events. It is important to *every one of us*, for by it we can corroborate the evidence of the physical facts taking place showing the end of the "seven times," "the appointed times of the nations" and the establishment of God's kingdom under Christ, in the heavens, in 1914 C.E.

Why Continue to PREACH ?



HOW often when going from house to house in their ministry Jehovah's witnesses meet the question, "Why do you continue coming? We are not interested." And in some territories where the majority of persons are definitely not interested, some who have been preaching a few years may themselves begin to ask the same question, "Why do I continue to preach? What is the use? People are not interested."

Finding the right answers to these questions is vital. It means life for yourself and those who listen to you. (1 Tim. 4:16) It is the Creator, Jehovah God, who foretold the preaching work of our time, it is Jehovah who foretold that a growing crowd of men and women would take part in it, and it is Jehovah who has provided the purpose, the means, the incentive and his spirit to facilitate the accomplishing of the preaching work in our time.

It is true that the preaching of the good news has as one of its purposes the aiding of sincere persons to salvation, but that is not the only purpose. Hence, when many persons in a territory reject the message, this is no reason to quit. The preaching work today has many purposes: (1) aiding those who hear to gain salvation, (2) giving Jehovah's ser-

vants on earth an opportunity to demonstrate their love and to prove their integrity, (3) preaching a message of warning to all men concerning God's coming execution of judgment against wrong-doers, and (4) publicizing and vindicating the great name and purpose of Jehovah God throughout the world.

AIDING OTHERS TO SALVATION

That the preaching activity is a means of salvation to those who will hear is clear both from Joel 2:28-32 and Romans 10:13-15, where it is foretold that those who call on the name of Jehovah will be saved, and in order for men to do this someone must preach to them. So the burning desire to aid other men to get saved should be an incentive that encourages Jehovah's witnesses to continue preaching. And when sincere persons respond and seek to learn God's will, this is all the encouragement the Witnesses need to continue. But what if one does not get these positive results, is unable to have good discussions with people? First, the Witness should analyze his own teaching methods and endeavor to improve such. He will ask if he is well prepared to give good sermons. Is he friendly, enthusiastic at the door? Does he give the other person a chance to speak and does he respond to what the other person has

said? Are his words always upbuilding? That much depends upon the one preaching as to whether he will get good results is shown in the advice to Timothy to employ the "art of teaching."—2 Tim. 4:2; 2:24, 25.

The Christian witness will remember too that people who are not interested or even opposed to hearing his message today may react otherwise the next time he calls. The repeated visits by Jehovah's witnesses with their faith-inspiring words and works can gradually build up a picture of God's purposes in the mind of the hearer and so arouse interest. Also, world conditions change and the lives of individuals are constantly going through changes that give rise to new attitudes, all of which can result in a favorable reaction to the preaching of the good news. But if Jehovah's witnesses were to stop preaching from house to house merely because a majority are opposed, there would be no opportunity for these persons to benefit from their change of mind. So we must continue to "search out who . . . is deserving." (Matt. 10:11) The number of persons newly associating with Jehovah's witnesses each year at their assemblies, public talks and other special meetings shows that there are thousands upon thousands yet to be gathered. To stop preaching because many now reject the message would in a sense be a passing of judgment upon all these deserving ones as undeserving. May we never do that.

PROOF OF LOVE AND INTEGRITY

Another purpose of witnessing is to give the Christian an opportunity to demonstrate his love for Jehovah and his fellowman, a chance to prove his integrity under testing. To gain God's approval, one must be thankful for life and its blessings. Thankfulness produces love for God, and

this motivates the Christian to have freedom of speech in telling of God's goodness. "This is how love has been made perfect with us, that we may have freedom of speech in the day of judgment." (1 John 4:17) Surely it is the quality of love that motivates persons to carry out the command: "Sing to Jehovah, bless his name. From day to day tell the good news of salvation by him. . . . Ascribe to Jehovah the glory belonging to his name."—Ps. 96:2-8; 115:1.

But what about those who may worry because they feel they are lacking in thankfulness and love? These should form the habit of reflecting on the marvelous blessings they have received from God—conscious existence, thinking ability, sight, hearing, and many others. Such meditation causes one to grow in love for God. Also, continued preaching, combined with self-examination and aid by God's spirit, helps one to purify his motives and cultivate love. Though continued preaching can become a trial, we should remember that trials can result in endurance, which can 'make us complete in all respects, not lacking in anything.' (Jas. 1:3, 4) "Let us exult while in tribulations, since we know that tribulation produces endurance; endurance, in turn, an approved condition; the approved condition, in turn, hope, and the hope does not lead to disappointment; because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the holy spirit, which was given us." (Rom. 5:3-5) "Pursue love" say the Scriptures. (1 Cor. 14:1; 1 Tim. 6:11, 12; 2 Tim. 2:22) Love is a quality we can cultivate by our "contributing in response all earnest effort." (2 Pet. 1:5-7) It is demonstrated by our obedience to the truth.—1 John 5:3.

A MESSAGE OF WARNING

A third reason for continuing to preach even though opposed is to warn those who

will not change of the coming judgment. Even if they have taken their stand, they must be continually warned. A judgment message should be preached. The majority of persons may not want to hear. They may want to shut out the judgment message and thereby retain their "peace"; yet they must be made aware of their responsibility. They may view this as 'disturbing their privacy,' as did the Israelites who tired of Isaiah's preaching and of whom it is written: "It is a rebellious people, . . . sons who have been unwilling to hear the law of Jehovah; who have said to the ones seeing, 'You must not see,' and to the ones having visions, 'You must not envision for us any straightforward things. Speak to us smooth things; envision deceptive things. Turn aside from the way; deviate from the path. Cause the Holy One of Israel to cease just on account of us.'" (Isa. 30:9-11) But the preaching of God's coming judgment must continue so that their disregard of his purposes and laws comes to full growth.

We are to preach not only "good news to the meek ones" and "the year of good will on the part of Jehovah" but also "the day of vengeance on the part of our God." (Isa. 61:1, 2; Rev. 14:6-12) Like Ezekiel, Jehovah's witnesses must continue to preach to persons "whether they will hear or will refrain," even in the face of opposition. "They will not want to listen to you, for they are not wanting to listen to me . . . You must not be afraid of them, and you must not be struck with terror at their faces." (Ezek. 2:5-7; 3:4, 7-9) The same prospects of indifference and opposition were experienced by Isaiah and Jeremiah. (Isa. 6:9, 10; Jer. 1:17-19) Yet these three prophets mentioned continued preaching in the face of opposition for at least 22, 43 and 67 years respectively.

MAKING KNOWN JEHOVAH'S NAME AND PURPOSE

And finally, in connection with these reasons, our fourth purpose for the preaching work to be considered here is the most important of all, namely, the making known of Jehovah's name and purpose. This is emphasized in the expression, "They will have to know that I am Jehovah," which appears in Ezekiel's prophecy at least sixty times. Jehovah's declaration in Exodus 9:16 must be fulfilled in the time of the end; his name is to be "declared in all the earth." It is necessary to continue preaching so that all persons continue to hear of Jehovah, his name, his loving qualities and merciful provisions for man as well as his requirements of righteousness and justice. Even though the majority want to forget about Jehovah, it is the job of his witnesses to maintain public awareness of the Creator. The good news of the Kingdom is a witness to all men and a basis for their judgment, so this must continue to be preached by the worldwide society of Jehovah's witnesses, who demonstrate their love for Jehovah and their zeal for righteousness by doing this work. The words "You are my witnesses" apply to dedicated Christians, spiritual Israelites, in this time of the end. (Isa. 43:10-12) Never may any of us be like a faithless witness who refuses to testify for truth and righteousness at the crucial point of an important court case because of fear of opposition. This does not mean that at the doors we will insist on talking when persons definitely say they are not interested, but it does mean we will continue to call back to see if we can arouse interest.

Today our preaching is accomplishing its purpose. Thousands of persons each year are being gathered out of this world and taught how to serve Jehovah and gain everlasting life, and there is still a great potential of persons to be gathered. Wheth-

er others wish to listen or not, whenever the name of Jehovah is mentioned, people automatically think of a people who go from house to house preaching of everlasting life on a paradise earth, the last days, Jehovah's destruction of the wicked at Armageddon, the end of the appointed times of the nations and the second presence of Jesus Christ beginning in 1914. They think of a people who hold fast to the Bible's moral standards with regards to marriage and divorce, family life and business; a people who maintain neutrality in the political and military affairs of this world; a people who practice Christian love worldwide; a people who strive to maintain clean, pure worship and hold fast to their religion at the risk of their freedom or their very lives; a people who hold fast to God's requirements as to the use of blood. This proves that the conduct as well as the preaching of Jehovah's witnesses makes men responsible for knowing the will of God. It is just as it was with Noah, whose godly conduct and works of faith and preaching "condemned the world."—Heb. 11:7.

But people today are constantly bombarded with propaganda of all sorts, political, commercial and otherwise. If Jehovah's name were not constantly held

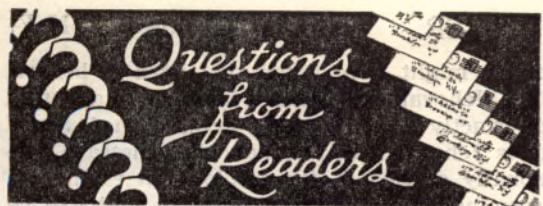
before them they would soon forget it in favor of the names of well-known personalities in the political, sports or entertainment fields. If the preaching were to stop, the message of God's kingdom would soon be forgotten by people subjected to wave after wave of propaganda, ranging from empty political generalities to banal drama and toothpaste commercials. But let the preaching continue, and whenever there is an unexpected knock at the door, people will think it may be Jehovah's witnesses. When they think of Jehovah's name they think of his purpose and coming judgments, even if only to ridicule.

A part of Jehovah's merciful provision for salvation is the maintaining of a continued preaching campaign. Even those who do not believe must be told of the impending execution of divine judgment. And it is the privilege of Jehovah's witnesses to do this preaching. Yes, that is why Jehovah's witnesses must continue to preach until Jehovah himself brings about the termination of this work at Armageddon. "How long, O Jehovah?" As stated in Isaiah 6:11, 12: "Until the cities actually crash in ruins, to be without inhabitant, and the houses be without earthling man, and the ground itself is ruined into a desolation."

Value of Funeral Talks

The value of funeral talks is highlighted by the experience of a Witness in Saskatchewan, Canada: "I was a vacation pioneer last summer and worked in unassigned territory. I called at a house where the lady said they had never talked with Jehovah's witnesses at all. Then she said, 'Will you come in for a drink of water? It is so hot outside.' As I went into the kitchen her husband called from the other room, 'Who is it?' She said, 'One of those Jehovah's witness' girls.' So he said, 'Tell her to come in.' I went into the living room and they told me there had been a funeral of a Witness, who had lived in this isolated territory, a couple of weeks before. A brother from Saskatoon had given

the funeral talk. The man said the talk presented real hope. Some of the scriptures he had never heard before. He said, 'You folks call yourselves preachers, don't you? Well, you sit down and give us a sermon.' So I went through the sermon and then the back-call sermon. I took out the book *From Paradise Lost to Paradise Regained* and placed it with them. I explained why these books were printed and then we studied part of the first chapter. Before we left they commented that in all their years of going to church they had never read the scriptures about God's new order of righteousness. This call has been turned over to Witnesses in a nearby congregation."



Questions from Readers

- At 2 Thessalonians 3:14, 15, was the apostle Paul discussing disfellowshiping?—P.W., U.S.A.

Apparently not. He was telling the congregation how to deal with professed Christians who, although they did not deserve to be completely cut off from the congregation, were not good company. This is borne out by the context.

In verse 6 he says: "Now we are giving you orders, brothers, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, to withdraw from every brother walking disorderly and not according to the tradition you received from us." Of what did that disorderliness consist? The apostle Paul said that they were 'not working at all but were meddling with what did not concern them.' He urged them as members of the congregation not to be lazy, expecting other people to supply their physical needs and using their time to meddle in affairs that did not concern them, but to show that they were willing to work and to provide their own necessities.

Then to the faithful ones in Thessalonica he said: "For your part, brothers, do not give up in doing right. But if anyone is not obedient to our word through this letter, keep this one marked, stop associating with him, that he may become ashamed. And yet do not be considering him as an enemy, but continue admonishing him as a brother." (2 Thess. 3: 13-15) If one who professed to be a Christian was not obedient to the teachings of the Christian congregation, but preferred to hold to his own personal ideas and to conduct himself in a way that promoted his own selfish purposes, the responsible ones in the congregation should take note of that person, they should "keep this one marked." He should not be given assignments that would put him before the congregation as a teacher or as an example for others to follow.

Such a person would not be one that a spiritually-minded Christian would choose as his close companion. Listening to the ideas of one who had such an outlook would not be upbuilding, and spending time with him might

lead to picking up his habits. So the apostle urged the brothers to avoid his company, both for their own protection and so that he might come to realize that the faithful ones did not approve of his course.

Yet Paul did not say, as did the apostle John of persons who forsook Christian teachings, that they should not even say a greeting to him. (2 John 9-11) No, he was still their brother, and they were to "continue admonishing him as a brother," urging him to make his mind over in harmony with God's Word.

However, if that person insisted on spreading his ideas in the congregation, so causing disunity, then what? When writing to Titus the apostle Paul gave this counsel: "As for a man that promotes a sect, reject him after a first and a second admonition; knowing that such a man has been turned out of the way and is sinning, he being self-condemned."—Titus 3:10, 11.

So the congregation is not anxious to expel individuals from its midst. It endeavors to help them, if possible; but when they persist in a course specifically condemned by the Scriptures, then, out of respect for Jehovah God and for the protection of His people, the responsible servants must take action to keep the organization clean.

- Since millions of persons in China and other places have never heard the Kingdom message, will these people be preserved through the destruction of Babylon the Great and the war of Armageddon, or perhaps be resurrected later?—H.S., U.S.A.

It is important to understand what the Bible says about the destruction to come at the end of this system of things. In his illustration of the sheep and the goats Jesus indicated that a separating work would be done "when the Son of man arrives in his glory," and that persons would be classed as either "sheep" or "goats." (Matt. 25:31-46) In part, the basis for the separation would be the reaction of people to the preaching of the good news of the established kingdom. That preaching work is now being done by Jehovah's witnesses. Jesus explained that those on earth who favorably responded to that message and treated kindly its bearers would be classed as "sheep" and would enter into "everlasting life." The rest of mankind who did not respond favorably to the preaching work and offered no aid to those who carried the Kingdom message would

be classed as "goats" and would go, not into a temporary death, but into "everlasting cutting-off" at the time when judgment is executed.

But some persons, appreciating that millions of people are to be resurrected and given an opportunity to serve God, wonder if the millions of individuals living today who apparently have never heard the Kingdom message preached will be everlasting destroyed without ever having had a witness about God's purposes. It is true that at present it appears that there are vast numbers of mankind who have not heard the Kingdom preaching. Also, from what the Bible says and from conditions in the world, we know that we are in the "last days." But we do not know just how much more will be accomplished in preaching the Kingdom message before the end comes. (2 Tim. 3:1-5; Matt. 24:3-13) If at the end of the second world war someone had said that the Kingdom preaching would be carried out, by more than a million publishers, in over 190 lands, including communistic countries,

many might have found that hard to believe. Yet, Jehovah has blessed his people, and that is exactly what is being accomplished. So, if it is Jehovah's will to have this message personally carried to the millions on earth who seemingly have not yet heard it, that will be accomplished. If he chooses, he could see to it that this message is spread in ways that we cannot yet imagine. Jesus did foretell that "this good news of the kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations; and then the end will come." (Matt. 24:14) We can rest assured that God will see that the preaching work is done to his satisfaction. After that "the end" comes.

Then those who correspond with "goats," whether in China or elsewhere, will be pronounced "cursed" and will not be permitted to survive that "end" into God's new order of things. Since these go into symbolic "fire" (like the Devil and his angels), their punishment will be everlasting. They will never be resurrected.—Matt. 25:41-46.

"Just a little while longer, and the wicked one will be no more; and you will certainly give attention to his place, and he will not be. But the meek ones themselves will possess the earth, and they will indeed find their exquisite delight in the abundance of peace."—Ps. 37:10, 11.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

HOW IS YOUR LIFE AFFECTED?

Today many persons sincerely believe that religion has no part in their lives. Do you? You will be surprised to learn then that, whether you consider yourself religious or not, your own life is affected by false worship that has grown up over the centuries and has fastened itself on every phase of man's activity the world over. How has it come about? What is your protection? Obtain and read the 704-page hardbound book "*Babylon the Great Has Fallen!*" *God's Kingdom Rules!* Send only 75c.

FIELD MINISTRY

A person who believes God's Word has every reason to speak boldly when he shares its mes-

sage with others. This does not mean that he lacks kindness and consideration for others, but he is not apologetic about the teachings of the Bible. He knows that they are the truth, and he confidently shares them with others. This Jehovah's witnesses will continue to do during September as they call on people everywhere to share with them the good news that the Bible contains, doing so both by their spoken word and by offering Bible literature to interested persons on a small contribution.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS
October 10: Marriage in the New World Society. Page 553.

October 17: Weighing Wedlock in These Last Days. Page 559.