

DECEMBER 1, 2013

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



Do We Need God?

THIS MAGAZINE, *The Watchtower*, honors Jehovah God, the Ruler of the universe. It comforts people with the good news that God's heavenly Kingdom will soon end all wickedness and transform the earth into a paradise. It promotes faith in Jesus Christ, who died so that we might gain everlasting life and who is now ruling as King of God's Kingdom. This magazine has been published continuously since 1879 and is nonpolitical. It adheres to the Bible as its authority.

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The Watchtower (ISSN 0043-1087) is published semimonthly by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society of New York, Inc.; L. Weaver, Jr., President; G. F. Simonis, Secretary-Treasurer; 25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483, and by Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Canada, PO Box 4100, Georgetown, ON L7G 4Y4. Periodicals Postage Paid at Brooklyn, NY, and at additional mailing offices. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to Watchtower, 1000 Red Mills Road, **Walkkill, NY 12589-3299**. © 2013 Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. All rights reserved. Printed in Canada.

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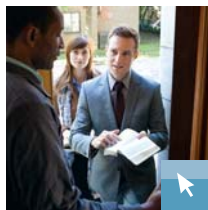
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Why the Question?

“Are you good without God? Millions are.” So read a recent billboard message paid for by an atheist group. They evidently feel that they have no need for God.

On the other hand, many who claim to believe in God make decisions as though he did not exist. Salvatore Fisichella, a Catholic archbishop, said of members of his own church: “Looking at us probably no one would recognise we are Christians today because our style of life is the same as non-believers.”

Some are too busy to worry about God. They consider him too remote or inaccessible to play any meaningful role in their lives. At best, such individuals turn to God only when they are in trouble or need something—almost as if he were a servant at their beck and call.

Others see little practical value in religious teachings or, at any rate, fail to practice what their church preaches. To cite just one example, 76 percent of the Catholics in Germany believe that it is acceptable for a man and a woman to live together before marriage—a view contrary to the teachings of both their church and the Bible. (1 Corinthians 6:18; Hebrews 13:4) Of course, Catholics are not alone in perceiving a disconnect between their religious affiliation and their way of life. Clergymen of many denominations lament that their congregants behave like “practical atheists.”

These examples logically lead to the question: Do we really need God? The issue is by no means a new one. It was first brought up in the opening pages of the Bible. In order to find the answer to the question, let us give attention to a number of issues raised in the Bible book of Genesis.



Why We Need God

Mental-health experts tell us that people need spiritual values in order to be truly happy. We see this in the fact that people want to belong to something or serve someone or some cause greater than themselves. To satisfy this need, some devote their leisure time to nature, art, music, and so on. Yet, most find no deep or lasting fulfillment in such pursuits.

The fact that humans have an inborn spiritual yearning comes as no surprise to Bible readers. The first chapters of Genesis indicate that after God created the first human couple, he spoke with them regularly, allowing them to establish a spiritual relationship with him. (Genesis 3:8-10) God did not design humans to live independently of him; they have a need to communicate with their Maker. The Bible refers to this need frequently.

Jesus, for example, stated: “Happy are those conscious of their spiritual need.” (Matthew 5:3) From those words, we may conclude that an essential ingredient of a happy and contented life is satisfying our innate spiritual appetite. How can we do that? Jesus pointed to the answer when he said: “Man must live, not on bread alone, but on every utterance coming forth through Jehovah’s mouth.” (Matthew 4:4) In what ways do God’s utterances, that is to say, God’s thoughts and instructions as found in the Bible, make it possible for us to live a happy and meaningful life? Let us consider three fundamental ways.

We Need Good Direction

Today, there are countless experts and specialists ready to offer advice on relationships, love, family life, conflict resolution, happiness, and even the very meaning of life. Yet who is best qualified to give sound, balanced direction in all these areas if not mankind’s Maker, Jehovah God?

To illustrate: When you buy a new piece of equipment, such as a camera or a computer, you



Like a user’s manual, the Bible
is a guide for life

“I, Jehovah, am your God, the One teaching you to benefit yourself, the One causing you to tread in the way in which you should walk. O if only you would actually pay attention to my commandments! Then your peace would become just like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea.”

—Isaiah 48:17, 18

expect it to come with an owner’s manual, or a handbook, that explains how to get the best use and satisfaction out of your acquisition. The Bible can be likened to such a handbook. It is a manual for human life that God, the manufacturer, as it were, has made available to us, the users. This “user’s manual” explains what the product is designed to do and how it should be used for the best results.

As with any well-written instruction manual, the Bible alerts readers to practices that may compromise the safe and reliable operation of the “product”—our life. Advice or shortcuts that others offer might sound appealing, even expedient, but is it not logical to think that we are going to get the best results and avoid problems if we follow the Maker’s directions?

Though Jehovah God provides directions and instructions, he does not force us to accept them. Rather, as a loving Benefactor, he warmly appeals to us: “I, Jehovah, am your God, the One teaching you to benefit yourself, the One causing you to tread in the way in which you should walk. O if only you would actually pay attention to my commandments! Then your peace would become just like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea.” (Isaiah 48:17, 18) In short, if we heed God’s direction, we will live well. To put it another way, to live well and be happy, we need God.

We Need Answers to Life’s Problems

Some feel that they have no need for God because they find many puzzling issues in life incompatible with belief in a loving God. For example, they may ask: ‘Why do good people have to suffer?’ ‘Why are some innocent babies born deformed?’ ‘Why is life so unjust?’ Those are serious questions indeed, and finding satisfying answers to them can have a deep impact on our life. But instead of quickly blaming God for such problems, let us see how God’s Word, the Bible, can shed light on this subject.

In the third chapter of Genesis, we find the account of Satan, who, under the guise of a serpent, attempted to get the first human couple to go against Jehovah God’s command not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and bad. “You positively will not die,” Satan told Eve. “For God knows that in the very day of your eating from it your eyes are bound to be opened and you are bound to be like God, knowing good and bad.”—Genesis 2:16, 17; 3:4, 5.

By those words, Satan not only asserted that God is a liar but also implied that God’s way of governing is unjust. The Devil contended that if mankind listened to him, things would work out better for them. How could those issues be resolved? Jehovah chose to allow events to take their course in order to enable all to see whether the accusations leveled against him were true or

false. God was in effect giving Satan and those who have taken his side the opportunity to demonstrate whether humans can live well without God.

What do you judge to be the answer to Satan's assertions? Can humans live well and govern themselves successfully without God? The suffering, injustice, sickness, and death as well as the crime, moral breakdown, wars, genocides, and other atrocities that have plagued mankind throughout the centuries are undeniable evidence that man's attempts to govern himself independently of God have been a miserable failure. Rather than showing God to be responsible for mankind's woes, the Bible points to a major cause of them: "Man has dominated man to his injury."—Ecclesiastes 8:9.

In light of this, is it not clear that we need to turn to God not only for answers to the troubling questions facing humans but also for the solution? What will God do?

We Need God's Help

People have long yearned for freedom from sickness, aging, and death. They have spent an enormous amount of time, effort, and resources in its pursuit, but to little or no avail. Some have hoped to find such freedom through the legendary elixir of life, the fountain of youth, Shangri-la, and the like. All these dreams have proved to be disappointing.

God wants humans to live well and be happy. That was his original purpose in creating humans, and he has not forgotten it. (Genesis 1:27, 28; Isaiah 45:18) We have Jehovah God's assurance that whatever he purposes to do will be done without fail. (Isaiah 55:10, 11) The Bible tells us about God's promise to restore the Paradise conditions lost by the first human couple. In the last book of the Bible, we find these words: "He [Jehovah God] will wipe out every tear from



In the Bible, we can find the direction and help that we need

their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be anymore. The former things have passed away." (Revelation 21:4) How will God bring about these wonderful conditions, and how can we benefit from this promise?

God's Son, Jesus Christ, taught his followers to pray for God's will to be done. Many people are familiar with or often repeat that prayer, which some call the Lord's Prayer. It goes this way: "Our Father in the heavens, let your name be sanctified. Let your kingdom come. Let your will take place, as in heaven, also upon earth." (Matthew 6:9, 10) Yes, God's Kingdom is the means by which Jehovah God will do away with the woeful results of human rule and bring about the righteous new world of his promise.* (Daniel

* For more information on how the Kingdom will cause God's will to be done on earth, see chapter 8 of the book *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* published by Jehovah's Witnesses and available online and for download at www.jw.org.

2:44; 2 Peter 3:13) What must we do to benefit from God's promise?

Jesus Christ points to the simple step that we must take: "This means everlasting life, their taking in knowledge of you, the only true God, and of the one whom you sent forth, Jesus Christ." (John 17:3) Yes, with God's help, unending life in the promised new world is within reach. That prospect might well convince you of yet another reason to answer yes to the question, Do we need God?

Time to Look to God

Two thousand years ago, at the Areopagus, or Mars Hill, in Athens, the apostle Paul said this about God to the freethinking Athenians: "He himself gives to all persons life and breath and all things. For by him we have life and move and exist, even as certain ones of the poets among you

have said, 'For we are also his progeny.'"—Acts 17:25, 28.

What Paul pointed out to the Athenians is still true. Our Creator provides the air we breathe, the food we eat, the water we drink. We simply could not live without the good things Jehovah has provided for our sustenance. But why has God continued to make such provisions for all people, whether they give thought to him or not? Paul said that it is "for them to seek God, if they might grope for him and really find him, although, in fact, he is not far off from each one of us."—Acts 17:27.

Would you like to know God better, that is, to learn more about his purposes and his advice for living well now and forever? If so, you are urged to speak to the person who brought you this magazine or contact its publishers. They will be pleased to assist you. ■

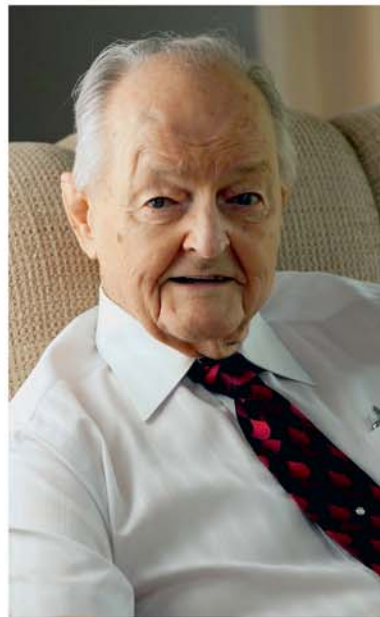
God wants humans to be happy
now and forever



Making Service to Jehovah My Career

AS TOLD BY **BILL WALDEN**

After graduating from high school in January 1937, I enrolled at Iowa State University, near where we lived in the midwestern United States. Going to classes and working to pay for my tuition left me little time for anything else. Studying tall buildings and suspension bridges had been my focus in life from my youth.



Early in 1942, shortly after the United States entered World War II, I was in my fifth year of college and was just months away from receiving my bachelor's degree in architectural engineering. I was living in a home with two roommates. One suggested that I talk with the person who "visits the boys downstairs." There I met John O. (Johnny) Brehmer, one of Jehovah's Witnesses. I was amazed at how he could find the Bible's answer to seemingly any question. Impressed, I began to study the Bible with Johnny regularly and eventually to accompany him in his preaching work whenever I could.

Johnny's father, Otto, had become a Witness while he was the president of a bank in Walnut, Iowa. Otto gave up that position to enter the full-time ministry. In time, his fine example, as well as that of his family, encouraged me to make a vital decision.

TIME FOR DECISION

One day, the dean of the university told me that my grades were slipping and that I could not graduate on my past merits. I remember praying fervently to Jehovah God, asking him to give

me direction. Soon afterward, I was called to a meeting with my engineering professor. He told me that he had received a request for an engineer and had taken the liberty to answer the telegram and say that I would accept the position. I thanked the professor but explained why I was determined to make service to Jehovah my career. On June 17, 1942, I was baptized and was almost immediately appointed to serve as a pioneer, as full-time ministers of Jehovah's Witnesses are called.

Later in 1942, I received a draft notice for military service and found myself before the draft board, explaining why I could not conscientiously share in the war. I produced affidavits from college professors who wrote regarding my good character and exceptional skills as a structural engineer. Despite such positive testimonies, however, I was eventually fined \$10,000 (U.S.) and sentenced to five years' imprisonment at the U.S. penitentiary in Leavenworth, Kansas.

MY LIFE IN PRISON

More than 230 young Witnesses had been sentenced to the Leavenworth trustee farm, a facili-

ty of the Leavenworth federal prison. This was a farm where we received work assignments under the oversight of several guards. Some of them knew about our Christian neutrality and were favorable toward our views.

A few guards cooperated with our efforts to continue our routine of holding Bible meetings. They also helped us to get Bible literature into the prison. The prison warden even subscribed to the *Consolation* (now *Awake!*) magazine!

MY RELEASE, AND MISSIONARY SERVICE

After serving three years of my five-year sentence, I was released on February 16, 1946, a few months after World War II ended. Immediately, I took up the full-time ministry again as a pioneer. My assignment was to return to the city of Leavenworth, Kansas. I dreaded the idea because prejudice against Jehovah's Witnesses ran high there. Getting a job to support myself was difficult, and finding a place to live even more so.

I remember a guard I met who shouted, "Get off my property!" When I saw the baseball bat in his hand, I gulped and quickly left. At another house, a woman said, "Wait just a minute," and she shut the door. I waited until suddenly an upstairs window opened and a cascade of dirty dishwater drenched me. Still, my ministry had its blessings. Later I learned that some who took Bible literature from me became Witnesses.



Leavenworth U.S. Penitentiary today. Some 230 of us were incarcerated there

In 1943 a new school for missionaries was established in upstate New York. I was invited to attend, and I graduated from its tenth class on February 8, 1948. The school came to be called the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead. Upon graduation I received an assignment to the Gold Coast, now known as Ghana.

When I arrived in the Gold Coast, my assignment was to preach to government officials and Europeans. On weekends I worked with a congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses and assisted its members in the house-to-house ministry. I also



Meeting with a local chief in the Gold Coast, now Ghana

visited places where isolated Witnesses were located and trained them in the ministry. In addition, I served as a traveling overseer in the nearby Ivory Coast, now known as Côte d'Ivoire.

While serving in those areas, I learned to live as the native Africans did—sleeping in a mud hut, eating with my fingers, and squatting "outside" as the Israelites did in the wilderness. (Deuteronomy 23:12-14) Doing so helped me and my fellow missionaries develop a positive reputation. Wives of some local officials began studying the

Bible with us. So when opposers made trouble for us and secured an order to revoke our visas, wives of the officials put pressure on their husbands and the decision was reversed!

As did many missionaries in Africa, I eventually came down with malaria. I suffered bouts of chills and fevers that made me delirious. At times, I even had to hold my lower jaw to keep it from shaking. Despite that, my service continued to bring me joy and satisfaction.

During my first four years in Africa, I corresponded with Eva Hallquist, whom I had met before leaving the United States. I learned that she was to graduate from the 21st class of Gilead School on July 19, 1953, at the international convention of Jehovah's Witnesses in New York's Yankee Stadium. I arranged with a ship captain to work on board his ship as compensation for passage to the United States.

After 22 days, at times in rough seas, I arrived and made my way to meet Eva at the Brooklyn headquarters of Jehovah's Witnesses. There, on a rooftop with a commanding view of the New York harbor and skyline, I proposed marriage. Later, Eva came to the Gold Coast to serve with me there.

CARING FOR FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES

After serving with Eva for several years in Africa, I received a letter from my mother, saying

that Father was dying of cancer. Upon obtaining a leave of absence from our assignment, Eva and I returned to the United States. Dad's health deteriorated quickly, and he soon died.

Later, after we had been back in Ghana for nearly four years, we learned that Mother's health had become very poor. Some friends suggested that Eva and I return home to care for her. That was the hardest decision we ever had to make. After 15 years of missionary service, 11 of them together, we returned to the United States.

Over the years, we took turns caring for Mother, helping her get to the meetings when she could. On January 17, 1976, she died at the age of 86. But an even greater blow came nine years later. Eva was diagnosed with cancer. We fought the disease in every way, but she finally lost the battle and died on June 4, 1985, at 70 years of age.

MORE CHANGES IN A SATISFYING CAREER

In 1988, I was invited to the dedication of the newly expanded branch office in Ghana. What a memorable occasion! Some 40 years earlier, when I arrived in Ghana after my graduation from Gilead, there were just a few hundred Witnesses. By 1988, there were over 34,000, and now there are nearly 114,000!

Two years after visiting Ghana, I married Eva's close friend Betty Miller on August 6, 1990. Together we have continued to make Jehovah's service our career. We long for the day when we will see our grandparents, parents, and Eva on earth again in the resurrection in Paradise.—Acts 24:15.

Tears come to my eyes when I think of the awesome privilege of having been used by Jehovah for more than 70 years in his service. I often thank him for guiding me toward making his service my career. Although I am now well into my 90's, Jehovah, the greatest architectural engineer in the universe, has continued to give me strength and courage to go on pursuing my career of serving him. ■

With Betty



“Look! I Am Making All Things New”

Do you desire good health and a long life for yourself and your family? Do you long to live in a world where pain, suffering, and death will be things of the past? Such a world is not a figment of the imagination. On the contrary, a righteous new world will soon be a reality, for Jehovah God has purposed it. Note how the fulfillment of his purpose is described at **Revelation 21:3-5**.

—Read.

“[God] will wipe out every tear from their eyes.” (Revelation 21:4) What kind of tears will he wipe out? Neither tears of joy nor the tears that protect our eyes. God’s promise refers to tears caused by suffering and sorrow. God will not merely dry off such tears; he will wipe them out completely by removing the causes of unwanted tears—suffering and sorrow.

“Death will be no more.” (Revelation 21:4) What has caused more unwanted tears than the enemy death? Jehovah will release obedient humans from the grip of death. How? By eliminating the real cause of death: sin inherited from Adam. (Romans 5:12) Jehovah will lift obedient humans to perfection on the basis of Jesus’ ransom sacrifice.* Then the last enemy, death, will be “brought to nothing.” (1 Corinthians 15:26) Faithful humans will be able to live as God purposed for them to live—forever in perfect health.

“Neither will . . . pain be anymore.” (Revelation 21:4) What kind of pain will be no more? All the mental, emotional, and physical pain that has resulted from sin and imperfection and made life miserable for countless millions will be no more.

* To learn more about Christ’s ransom sacrifice, see chapter 5 of the book *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* published by Jehovah’s Witnesses.

A life without tears, death, and pain will soon be a reality. ‘But where?’ you may ask. ‘Is God’s promise perhaps about life in heaven?’ No. Consider why not. First, the promise is introduced with the words “the tent of God is with *mankind*,” and mankind lives on earth. (Revelation 21:3) Second, the promise describes a world where “death will be no more”—a world where death once existed but will cease to exist. Death has never existed in heaven, but it has had a long existence here on earth. Clearly, then, God’s promise of a better life will be fulfilled right here on earth.

God will dry up the rivers of tears that have flowed because of suffering and sorrow

Jehovah wants us to believe his promise of a righteous new world. Right after describing the blessings to come, he guarantees his promise, saying: “Look! I am making all things new.” Then he adds: “These words are faithful and true.” (Revelation 21:5) Why not learn more about how you and your loved ones can be among the happy worshippers who will see God’s promise become a glorious reality? ■

SUGGESTED BIBLE READING FOR DECEMBER
1 Peter 1–Revelation 22

‘Out of the Mountains You Will Mine Copper’



Photograph © Israel Museum,
Jerusalem; courtesy of Israel
Antiquities Authority

An archaeological team was scouring the gorges and caves in the Judean wilderness when its members came upon a cave high above a precipitous cliff. Would they find something valuable, perhaps ancient artifacts or manuscripts like the Dead Sea Scrolls? To their surprise, they discovered a veritable treasure trove, subsequently named the Nahal Mishmar hoard.

HIDDEN in a crevice and wrapped in a reed mat, that collection, found in March 1961, consisted of over 400 objects, most of which were made of copper. Among them was an assortment of crowns, scepters, tools, maces, and other weapons. The find is of interest to Bible readers in light of the reference at Genesis 4:22 to Tubal-cain as a “forger of every sort of tool of copper and iron.”

Many questions remain concerning the origin and background of the treasure hoard. Its discovery, nonetheless, indicates that copper mining, smelting, and casting have been known in Bible lands since very early times.

COPPER SITES IN THE PROMISED LAND

When the Israelites were poised to enter the Promised Land, Moses told them: “Out of the mountains of [the land] you will mine copper.” (Deuteronomy 8:7-9) Archaeologists have discovered in Israel and Jordan a number of ancient mining and smelting sites, such as Feinan,

Timna, and Khirbat en-Nahas. What do those sites reveal?

The landscape in Feinan and in Timna is dotted with shallow pits, where miners extracted copper over a period of at least 2,000 years. Even today, a visitor can find green-speckled fragments of copper-bearing stones scattered about. The ancient miners laboriously chiseled the rock surface with stone tools to extract copper from visible veins. When those sources were exhausted, they dug deeper with metal tools, enlarging caves and carving out deep shafts and tunnels. In the Bible book of Job, we find a description of such mining operations. (Job 28:2-11) This was hard physical labor; in fact, from the third century to the fifth century C.E., Roman authorities sentenced hardened criminals and other prisoners to work in the Feinan copper mines.

Immense heaps of slag are found at Khirbat en-Nahas (meaning “Ruins of Copper”), suggesting that industrial-scale copper smelting was done there. Scholars believe that ores were brought there from nearby mines, such as Feinan and

Timna. To separate the copper from the ore, blowpipes and foot bellows were used to raise the temperature of the charcoal fires to about 2,200 degrees Fahrenheit (1,200°C) for eight to ten hours. It usually took 11 pounds (5 kg) of ore to produce about 2 pounds (1 kg) of copper ingots, which could then be cast into various objects.

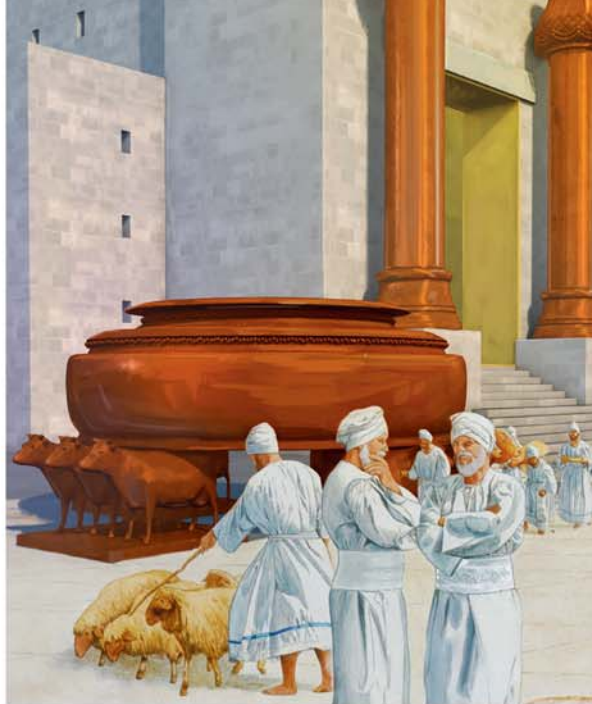
COPPER USE IN ANCIENT ISRAEL

At Mount Sinai, Jehovah God specifically directed that this locally mined lustrous metal be used in the construction of the tabernacle, and later the temple in Jerusalem was built following the same pattern. (Exodus, chapter 27) The Israelites may have had some knowledge of metal-working before they went to Egypt, or perhaps they acquired it while there. By the time of the Exodus, they were capable of fashioning a molten calf. They were also able to make the many copper items required for tabernacle service—such as the large basin, pots, pans, shovels, and forks.—Exodus 32:4.

Later in their wilderness trek, perhaps around Punon (likely modern-day Feinan), an area rich in copper, the people complained about the manna and the water supply. As punishment, Jehovah sent poisonous snakes, and many people died. After the Israelites repented, Moses interceded, and Jehovah instructed him to make a copper likeness of a serpent and raise it high on a stake. The record states: “It did occur that if a serpent had bitten a man and he gazed at the copper serpent, he then kept alive.”—Numbers 21:4-10; 33:43.

KING SOLOMON’S COPPER

King Solomon used a vast quantity of copper in furnishing the temple in Jerusalem. Much of it was obtained by his father, David, from his Syrian conquests. (1 Chronicles 18:6-8) The copper “molten sea,” the huge basin used by the priests for washing, had a capacity of 17,500 gallons (66,000 L) and may have weighed up to 30 tons. (1 Kings 7:23-26, 44-46) Then there were the two colossal copper pillars that stood at the entrance of the temple. They were 26 feet (8 m) tall and

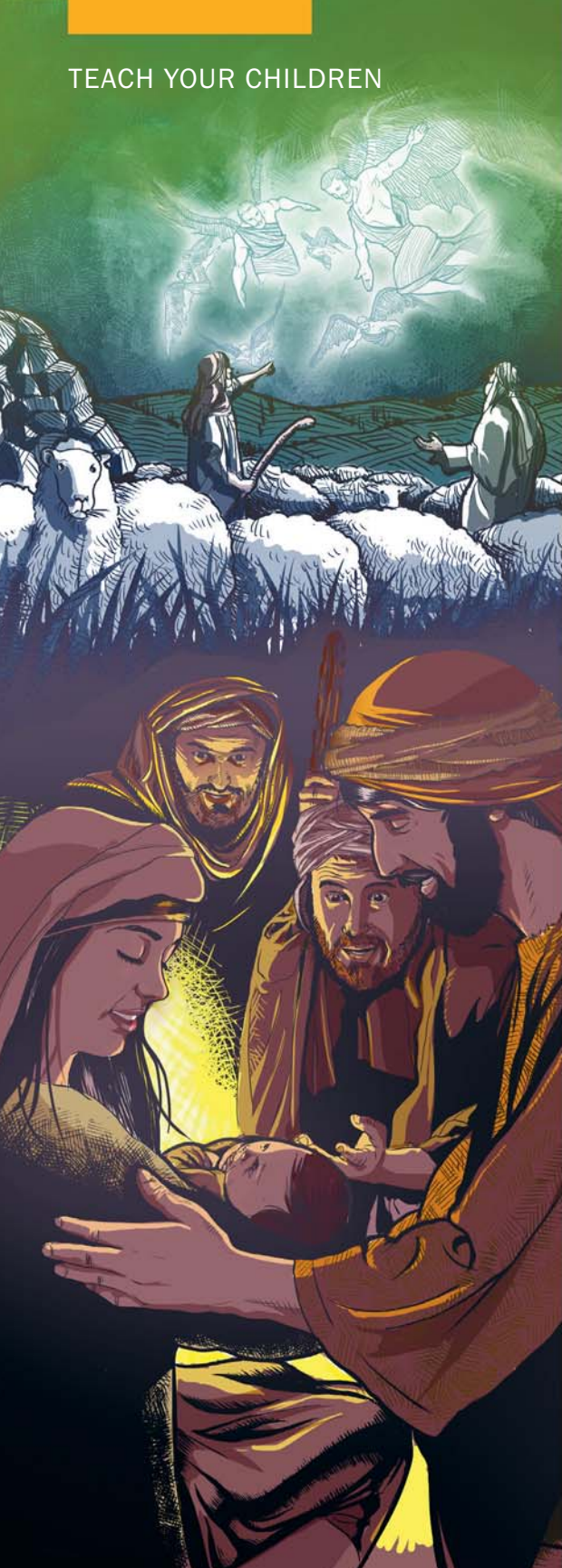


Many parts of the temple in Jerusalem were made of copper

were topped with capitals some 7.3 feet (2.2 m) in height. The pillars were hollow, with 3-inch-thick (7.5 cm) walls, and were 5.6 feet (1.7 m) in diameter. (1 Kings 7:15, 16; 2 Chronicles 4:17) It is staggering to think of the amount of copper used in making just these items.

Copper was also widely used in everyday life by people in Bible times. For example, we read of weapons, fetters, musical instruments, and doors made of copper. (1 Samuel 17:5, 6; 2 Kings 25:7; 1 Chronicles 15:19; Psalm 107:16) Jesus spoke of “copper” money for the purses, and the apostle Paul mentioned “Alexander the copper-smith.”—Matthew 10:9; 2 Timothy 4:14.

Many questions remain for archaeologists and historians to work out regarding the sources of the copper riches in Bible times, as well as the mystery of the Nahal Mishmar hoard. Nevertheless, the fact remains, as confirmed by Biblical records, that the land the Israelites inherited was indeed “a good land, . . . out of the mountains of which [they would] mine copper.”—Deuteronomy 8:7-9. ■



Jesus Christ

HOW SHOULD WE REMEMBER HIM?

In December many people around the world see pictures or images of Jesus as a baby. He is in a manger, a large box where hay is kept for animals to eat. ***But should we remember Jesus only as a baby?—**** Let us talk about a more important way to remember him. We can learn of it from what happened to a group of shepherds in the fields near Bethlehem one night.

An angel suddenly appears to the shepherds. He tells them: “There was born to you today a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.” The angel also tells them that they will find Jesus “bound in cloth bands and lying in a manger.” Right away, many other angels appear and begin “praising God.”

How would you feel if you heard angels praising God?—The shepherds are happy! “Let us by all means go clear to Bethlehem,” they say, “and see this thing that has taken place.” There they find “Mary as well as Joseph, and the infant lying in the manger.”

Soon others come to Bethlehem where Mary and Joseph are. When the shepherds tell them what happened, they all marvel. ***Are you happy to know these wonderful things?—***All of us who love God are. Now let’s see why Jesus’ birth causes so much happiness. To do that, we need to go back to the time before Mary was married.

One day an angel named Gabriel visits Mary. He promises that she will have a baby who “will be great and will be called Son of the Most High.” “He will rule as king,” Gabriel says, “and there will be no end of his kingdom.”

Mary wants to know how this can happen, since she has never had relations with a man. So Gabriel explains to her: “Power of the Most High will

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

overshadow you,” and “what is born will be called holy, God’s Son.” Taking God’s Son from heaven and putting his life inside Mary’s womb to grow into a baby—that was a great miracle!

Have you seen pictures or displays showing three “wise men” visiting the baby Jesus along with the shepherds?— At Christmastime such scenes are common. But they are not accurate. Those “wise men” were really astrologers, practitioners of what God condemns. Let’s see what happened when they arrived. The Bible says: “When they went *into the house* they saw *the young child* with Mary its mother.” So Jesus by then was no longer a baby in a manger; he was a child living with Joseph and Mary in a house!

How did the astrologers find Jesus?— They were led by a “star,” not to Bethlehem, but first to King Herod in Jerusalem. The Bible says that Herod wanted to find Jesus to kill him. Now think about this. ***Who do you think made what appeared to be a star guide the astrologers to Herod?***— It was not the true God, Jehovah, but his adversary, or enemy, Satan the Devil!

Today, Satan tries to make people think of Jesus only as a helpless baby. But the angel Gabriel told Mary: “He will rule as king . . . , and there will be no end of his kingdom.” Now Jesus is ruling as King in heaven, and he will soon destroy all of God’s enemies. That is what we should remember about Jesus, and we need to tell it to others. ■

READ IN YOUR BIBLE

Luke 1:26-35; 2:8-18

Matthew 2:7-12; 1 Peter 5:8

Revelation 19:19-21; 1 John 2:17



What is the purpose of Christ's return?

Before Jesus Christ ascended to heaven in 33 C.E., he promised to return. He likened himself to a nobleman who went away for a long time and returned with power to rule as king. The purpose of Jesus' return is to provide mankind with good government.—**Read Luke 19:11, 12.**

In what form does Christ return? He was resurrected as an invisible spirit person. (1 Peter 3: 18) Then, he went to heaven and sat at God's right hand. (Psalm 110:1) Much later, Jesus was brought before Jehovah God, "the Ancient of Days," who granted Jesus power to rule over mankind. So Jesus returns, not as a human, but as an invisible King.—**Read Daniel 7:13, 14.**

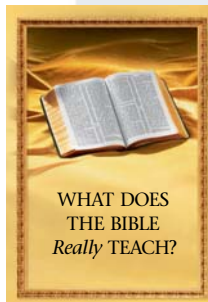
What will Jesus do when he arrives?

When Jesus arrives invisibly with his angels, he will judge mankind. He will destroy wicked people but grant everlasting life to those who accept him as King.—**Read Matthew 25:31-33, 46.**

Jesus' rule as King will transform the earth into a paradise. He will resurrect the dead so that they can enjoy life in that earthly Paradise.—**Read Luke 23:42, 43.**



Jesus will bring good government to mankind



For more information, see pages 73-85 of this book, published by Jehovah's Witnesses
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