

JANUARY 1, 2014

THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



DOES DEATH END IT ALL?

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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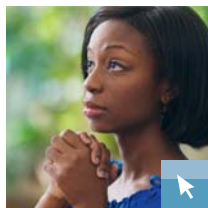
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The Sting of Death

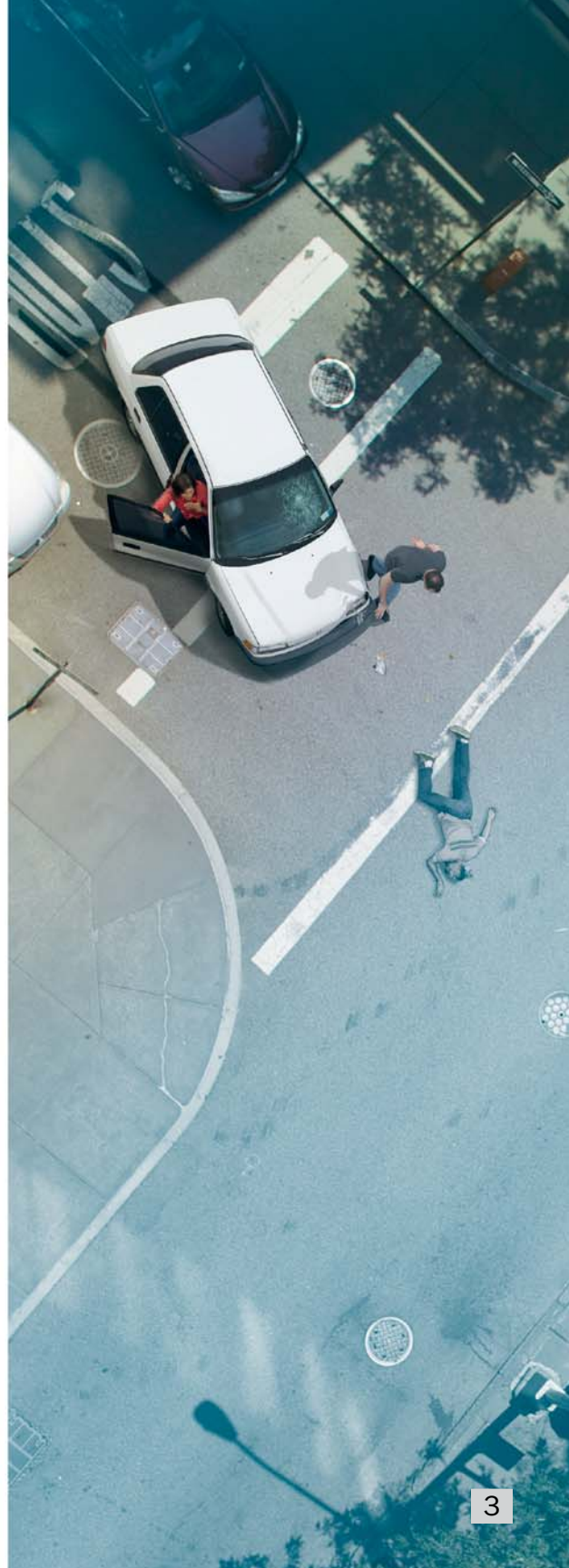
Death is an uncomfortable subject. Many people prefer not to talk about it. But sooner or later, we must confront it. And the sting of death is sharp and painful.

Nothing can fully prepare us for the loss of a parent, a spouse, or a child. A tragedy may strike unexpectedly or unfold relentlessly. Whatever the case, the pain of death cannot be eluded, and its finality can be devastating.

Antonio, who lost his father in a road accident, explains: "It is like somebody sealing up your house and taking away the keys. You cannot return home, even for a moment. You are left with only your memories. This is the new reality. Although you try to deny it—since it seems so unfair—there is nothing you can do."

When faced with a similar loss, Dorothy, who became a widow at the age of 47, resolved to find some answers. As a Sunday-school teacher, she never felt that death ended it all. But she had no clear answers. "What happens to us when we die?" she asked her Anglican minister. "No one really knows," he replied. "We will just have to wait and see."

Are we condemned merely to "wait and see"? Is there any way we can know for sure whether death ends it all?





PHARAOH KHUFU

EMPEROR QIN SHI HUANG

Mankind's Fight Against Mortality

Death is a fearsome enemy. We fight it with all our might. We may try to deny it when it strikes someone dear to us. Or, in the exuberance of youth, we may imagine that the enemy will never come to claim us—a delusion we cling to as long as we can.

Few thought more about immortality than the ancient Pharaohs. They spent much of their own lives—as well as the lives of thousands of workers—in an attempt to conquer death. The pyramids they built testify to their quest—and to their failure.

Chinese emperors followed a similar dream of immortality, albeit through a different route—that of the mythical elixir of life. Emperor Qin Shi Huang demanded that his alchemists find a magic potion that could keep death at bay. But many of their concoctions contained toxic mercury, and one of their mixtures likely killed him.

In the 16th century C.E., the Spanish explorer Juan Ponce de León sailed the Caribbean reportedly in search of a fountain of youth. He discovered Florida, U.S.A., in the process but died a few years later after a skirmish with Native Americans. And no fountain of youth has ever been found.

The Pharaohs, emperors, and explorers all sought to conquer death. And who of us would have belittled their goal, even if we disliked their methods? Deep down, practically all of us want to keep living.

CAN DEATH BE CONQUERED?

Why do we rebel against death? The Bible explains the reason. Regarding our Creator, Jehovah God,* it says: “He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has even put eternity in their [mankind’s] heart.” (Ecclesiastes 3:11) We

* Jehovah is the name of God as revealed in the Bible.



EXPLORER PONCE DE LEÓN

would like to enjoy earth's beauty forever, not for a mere 80 years or so. (Psalm 90:10) That is our heart's desire.

Why did God put "eternity" in our hearts? Merely to frustrate us? That is unthinkable. On the contrary, God promises us that there will come a victory over death. The Bible repeatedly speaks about the elimination of death and God's promise of everlasting life.—See the accompanying box, "Victory Over Death."

Jesus Christ himself clearly stated: "This means everlasting life, their coming to know you, the only true God, and the one whom you sent, Jesus Christ." (John 17:3) So the battle against death is not a hopeless one. Jesus confirms, however, that only God can win that battle for us.

Victory Over Death

"He will swallow up death forever,
and the Sovereign Lord Jehovah will
wipe away the tears from all faces."
—Isaiah 25:8.

"This is the will of my Father, that every-
one who recognizes the Son and exercises
faith in him should have everlasting life."
—John 6:40.

"The last enemy, death, is to be brought to
nothing."—1 Corinthians 15:26.

"[We have the] hope of the everlasting
life that God, who cannot lie, promised long
ago."—Titus 1:2.

"He will wipe out every tear from their eyes,
and death will be no more."—Revelation
21:4.

Death Does Not End It All!

Bethany was a small village that lay two miles (3 km) from Jerusalem. (John 11:18) A tragedy unfolded there a few weeks before Jesus' death. Lazarus, one of Jesus' close friends, unexpectedly became seriously ill and died.

When Jesus first heard the news, he told his disciples that Lazarus was asleep and that he intended to awaken him. (John 11:11) But Jesus' disciples did not grasp his meaning, so Jesus told them plainly: "Lazarus has died."—John 11:14.

Four days after the burial, Jesus arrived at Bethany and sought to comfort Martha, a sister of the deceased. "If you had been here, my brother would not have died," Martha said. (John 11:17, 21) "I am the resurrection and the life," Jesus replied. "The one who exercises faith in me, even though he dies, will come to life."—John 11:25.

To demonstrate that those words were not an empty promise, Jesus then approached the tomb and cried out: "Lazarus, come out!" (John 11:43) And to the astonishment of the onlookers, the dead man emerged.

Jesus had performed at least two resurrections previously. On one occasion he raised a young girl from the dead—the daughter of Jairus. Right

before Jesus resurrected her, he also described her as being asleep.—Luke 8:52.

Notice that regarding the death of both Lazarus and Jairus' daughter, Jesus compared death to sleep. That is a fitting comparison. Why? Sleep is an unconscious state and suitably conveys the idea of rest from pain and suffering. (Ecclesiastes 9:5; see the accompanying box, "Death Is Like a Deep Sleep.") Jesus' early disciples clearly understood the true condition of the dead. "To the followers of Jesus death was a sleep, and the grave



Death Is Like a Deep Sleep

"Give light to my eyes, so that I may not fall asleep in death."—Psalm 13:3.

"'Lazarus our friend has fallen asleep, but I am traveling there to awaken him.' The disciples then said to him: 'Lord, if he is sleeping, he will get well.' Jesus, however, had spoken about his death."—John 11:11-13.

"David, on the one hand, rendered service to God in his own generation [and] fell asleep in death."—Acts 13:36.

"Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep in death."—1 Corinthians 15:20.

"We do not want you to be ignorant about those who are sleeping in death, so that you may not sorrow as the rest do who have no hope."—1 Thessalonians 4:13.

"Lazarus, come out!"





The Dead Will Rise

“Your dead will live. My corpses will rise up. Awake and shout joyfully!”—Isaiah 26:19.

“Many of those asleep in the dust of the earth will wake up.”—Daniel 12:2.

“The hour is coming in which all those in the memorial tombs will hear his voice and come out.”—John 5:28, 29.

a resting-place . . . for those who had died in the faith,”* states the *Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics*.

It comforts us to know that the dead are asleep in the grave and are not suffering. Death thereby loses its mystery and no longer needs to cause us dread.

“IF A MAN DIES, CAN HE LIVE AGAIN?”

But while we appreciate a good night’s rest, who wants to go to sleep forever? What hope do we have that the dead who lie asleep in the grave will return to life—as Lazarus and Jairus’ daughter did?

The patriarch Job raised that very question when he felt near to death. “If a man dies, can he live again?” he asked.—Job 14:14.

Addressing Almighty God, Job answered his own question, saying: “You will call, and I will answer you. You will long for the work of your hands.” (Job 14:15) Job felt sure that Jehovah longed for the day when He would resurrect His faithful servant. Was that mere wishful thinking on Job’s part? Not at all.

The resurrections performed by Jesus offered clear proof that God gave Jesus power over death. In fact, the Bible says that Jesus now possesses “the keys of death.” (Revelation 1:18) So Jesus will unlock the gates of the grave, just as he ordered that the stone of Lazarus’ tomb be rolled away.

The Bible repeats this resurrection promise time and again. An angel assured the prophet Daniel: “You will rest, but you will stand up for your lot at the end of the days.” (Daniel 12:13) Jesus told the Sadducees, Jewish leaders who denied the resurrection promise: “You are mistaken, because you know neither the Scriptures

nor the power of God.” (Matthew 22:23, 29) The apostle Paul said: “I have hope toward God . . . that there is going to be a resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous.”—Acts 24:15.

WHEN WILL THE DEAD ARISE?

When will this resurrection of the righteous and the unrighteous occur? The angel told righteous Daniel that he would rise up “at the end of the days.” Martha likewise believed that her brother, Lazarus, would “rise in the resurrection on the last day.”—John 11:24.

The Bible connects this “last day” with Christ’s Kingdom rule. Paul wrote: “For he [Christ] must rule as king until God has put all enemies under his feet. And the last enemy, death, is to be brought to nothing.” (1 Corinthians 15:25, 26) This is a powerful reason why we should pray for God’s Kingdom to come and for God’s will to be done on the earth.*

As Job well knew, God’s will is to resurrect the dead. When that day arrives, death will truly be brought to nothing. And never again will anyone wonder, ‘Does death end it all?’ ■

* The English word “cemetery” comes from a Greek word meaning “sleeping place.”

* To learn more about God’s Kingdom, see chapter 8 of the book *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* published by Jehovah’s Witnesses. Also available at www.jw.org.

Why Does God Allow Suffering?

The following is a typical conversation that one of Jehovah's Witnesses might have with a neighbor. Let us imagine that a Witness named Michelle has come to the home of a woman named Sophia.



HOW DOES GOD FEEL ABOUT OUR SUFFERING?

Michelle: Hi, Sophia. I'm happy I found you at home.

Sophia: Me too.

Michelle: The last time I was here, we discussed how God feels about our suffering.* You mentioned that this is something you have wondered about for a long time, especially after your mother was injured in a car crash. By the way, how has your mother been doing?

Sophia: She has good days and bad days. Today, she's doing OK.

Michelle: I'm glad to hear that. It must be a real challenge to keep your head up in a situation like this.

Sophia: It is. Sometimes I wonder how much longer she will have to suffer.

Michelle: That's a natural response. You may recall that at the end of our last visit, I left you with a question about why God has allowed suffering to continue if he has the power to end it.

Sophia: Yes, I remember.

Michelle: Before we consider the Bible's answer, let's review a few of the points we covered last time.

Sophia: OK.

* See "A Conversation With a Neighbor—Does God Care About Our Suffering?" in the July 1, 2013, issue of this magazine. Also available at www.jw.org.

Michelle: For one thing, we learned that even a faithful man in Bible times wondered why God allows suffering. Yet, God never scolded him for asking about it, nor did God tell him that he simply needed more faith.

Sophia: That was a new thought to me.

Michelle: We also learned that Jehovah God hates to see us suffer. For example, the Bible says that when his people were going through distress, "it was distressing to him."* Isn't it comforting to know that God feels for us when we suffer?

Sophia: Yes, it is.

Michelle: Finally, we agreed that considering the vast amount of power our Creator possesses, surely he has the ability to step in and end suffering at any moment.

Sophia: That's what I don't understand. Why does God let all these bad things happen when he has the power to stop them?

WHO WAS TELLING THE TRUTH?

Michelle: We can start to find the answer to your question by turning to the first book of the Bible, Genesis. Are you familiar with the account of Adam and Eve and the forbidden fruit?

Sophia: Yes, I learned that story in Sunday school. God said not to eat from a certain tree, but they went ahead and ate from it anyway.

* See Isaiah 63:9.

Michelle: That is correct. Now, let's focus on the events that led up to Adam and Eve's sin. Those events have a direct bearing on the question of why we suffer. Would you please read Genesis chapter 3, verses 1 through 5?

Sophia: OK. "Now the serpent was the most cautious of all the wild animals of the field that Jehovah God had made. So it said to the woman: 'Did God really say that you must not eat from every tree of the garden?' At this the woman said to the serpent: 'We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden. But God has said about the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden: "You must not eat from it, no, you must not touch it; otherwise you will die."' At this the serpent said to the woman: 'You certainly will not die. For God knows that in the very day you eat from it, your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and bad.'"

Michelle: Thank you. Let's examine these verses for a moment. First, notice that a serpent spoke to the woman, Eve. Another part of the Bible shows that it was really Satan the Devil who was speaking to her through the serpent.* Satan asked Eve about God's command regarding a certain tree. Did you notice what God had said the penalty would be if Adam and Eve ate from it?

Sophia: They would die.

Michelle: Correct. Then, with his very next words, Satan made a major accusation against God. Notice what he said: "You certainly will not die." Satan was calling God a liar!

Sophia: I never heard that part of the story before.

Michelle: And when Satan called God a liar, he raised an issue that would require time to settle. Can you see why?

Sophia: Hmm. I'm not sure.

Michelle: Well, maybe I could illustrate the point this way. Let's say that one day I approach you and claim that I'm physically stronger than you are. How could you prove me wrong?

Sophia: I suppose with some sort of a test.

Michelle: Yes, exactly. Maybe we would choose a heavy object and then see which one of us was able to lift it. Actually, proving who is stronger is pretty straightforward.

Sophia: I see your point.

Michelle: But what if instead of saying that I'm stronger, I claimed to be more *honest* than you? That's a different matter, isn't it?

Sophia: Yes, I suppose so.

Michelle: After all, honesty is not something like strength, which can be proved with a simple test.

Sophia: No.

Michelle: Really, the only way to settle the challenge would be to let enough time pass for others to observe the two of us and see who really is more honest.

Sophia: That makes sense.

Michelle: Now, look again at this account in Genesis. Did Satan claim to be stronger than God?

Sophia: No.

Michelle: God could have quickly proved him wrong. Instead, Satan claimed to be more *honest* than God. In effect, he said to Eve, 'God is lying to you, but *I'm* telling you the truth.'

Sophia: Interesting.

Michelle: In his wisdom, then, God knew that the best way to settle the challenge would be to allow time to pass. Eventually, it would become clear who was telling the truth and who was lying.

AN IMPORTANT ISSUE

Sophia: But as soon as Eve died, didn't that prove that God was telling the truth?

* See Revelation 12:9.

Michelle: In a sense, it did. But there was more to Satan’s challenge. Look again at verse 5. Do you notice what else Satan told Eve?

Sophia: He said that if she ate of the fruit, her eyes would be opened.

Michelle: Yes, and that she would become “like God, knowing good and bad.” So Satan claimed that God was withholding something good from humans.

Sophia: I see.

Michelle: And that too was a major challenge.

Sophia: What do you mean?

Michelle: By his words, Satan implied that Eve—and by extension, all humans—would be better off without God’s rulership. In this case too, Jehovah knew that the best way to address the challenge would be to let Satan try to prove his point. So God has allowed Satan to rule this world for a time. That explains why we see so much suffering around us—it’s because Satan, not God, is the real ruler of the world.* But there is good news.

* See John 12:31; 1 John 5:19.

Sophia: What’s that?

Michelle: The Bible teaches these two beautiful truths about God. First, Jehovah is there for us when we suffer. For example, consider the words of King David, as recorded at Psalm 31:7. David experienced a lot of suffering during his lifetime, but notice what he was able to say in prayer to God. Would you please read that verse?

Sophia: OK. It says: “I will rejoice greatly in your loyal love, for you have seen my affliction; you are aware of my deep distress.”

Michelle: So even though David experienced suffering, he found comfort in knowing that Jehovah saw everything he went through. Do you find that comforting—the thought that Jehovah is aware of everything, even our painful emotions that other humans may not fully understand?

Sophia: Yes, I do.

Michelle: The second beautiful truth is that God will not allow our suffering to go on indefinitely. The Bible teaches that he will soon bring an end to Satan’s wicked rulership. And he will completely undo all the bad things that have happened, including the things that you and your mother have suffered. May I come back next week and show you why we can be sure that God *will* soon end all suffering?*

Sophia: That sounds good. ■

* For more information, see chapter 9 of the book *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* published by Jehovah’s Witnesses. Also available at www.jw.org.



Is there a particular Bible subject that you have wondered about? Are you curious about any of the beliefs or religious practices of Jehovah’s Witnesses? If so, do not hesitate to ask one of Jehovah’s Witnesses. He or she will be pleased to discuss such matters with you.



In Jesus' day, how were temple contributions made?

The treasury of the temple was located in the Court of Women. The book *The Temple—Its Ministry and Services* says: "All around ran a simple colonnade, and within it, against the wall, the thirteen chests, or 'trumpets,' [where] contributions were placed."

The chests were called trumpets because they were narrow at the top and wide at the bottom. Each chest was labeled for a different type of offering, and the funds collected in them were earmarked for specific uses. Jesus was in the Court of Women when he observed many people, including a needy widow, offering contributions.—Luke 21:1, 2.

Two chests were reserved for the temple tax—one for the current year and one for the past year. Chests 3 to 7 were for collecting funds for the appointed value of turtledoves, pigeons, wood, incense, and golden vessels respectively. If the offerer had set aside more than the stipulated price for an offering, then he deposited the leftover amount in one of the remaining chests. Chest 8 was for money left over from sin offerings. Chests 9 through 12 held funds left over from guilt offerings, from the sacrificing of birds, from the offerings of Nazirites, and from the offerings of lepers. Chest 13 was for voluntary contributions. ■

Was the Bible writer Luke an accurate historian?



Luke wrote the Gospel that bears his name as well as the Acts of Apostles. Luke says that he "traced all things from the start with accuracy," but some scholars have questioned his account of events. (Luke 1:3) So how accurate was he?

Luke touches on historical facts that can be verified. For example, he uses a number of obscure titles of Roman civic officials, such as praetors, or civil magistrates, in Philippi; politarchs, or local rulers, of Thessalonica; and Asiarchs, or leading men, in Ephesus. (Acts 16:20, *Kingdom Interlinear*; 17:6; 19:31) Luke calls Herod Antipas a tetrarch, or district ruler, and Sergio Paulus he calls the proconsul of Cyprus.—Acts 13:1, 7.

Luke's correct use of titles is noteworthy because when the status of a Roman territory changed, so did the title of its administrator. Yet, "time after time such references in Acts prove to be just right for the place and time in question," says Bible scholar Bruce Metzger. Scholar William Ramsay calls Luke "a historian of the highest order." ■



AS TOLD BY
SUSANA PLASÍN UDÍAS

YEAR BORN

1922

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

SPAIN

HISTORY

CATECHIST



Jehovah had not forgotten me

MY PAST: I was born into a middle-class neighborhood of Bilbao, in northern Spain. I was the second of four children. Our family were devout Catholics, and I attended Mass daily. At the age of 23, I became a teacher—a vocation that I loved and pursued for 40 years. Among other subjects, I was proud to teach the Catholic religion, and in the evenings I served as a catechist—instructing girls for their first communion.

After 12 years of happy marriage, I was widowed and left with four daughters to care for. I was only 33 years old! I tried to find consolation in my Catholic faith, but I had recurring questions. I wondered: ‘Why do humans continue to die if Christ redeemed us? Why do we pray for God’s Kingdom to come if good people go to heaven?’ And above all, I thought: ‘If God judges us when we die, why would we later need to leave heaven, purgatory, or hell for the final judgment?’

I put those questions to some priests I met. One of them answered: “I don’t know. Ask the bishop. Why does it matter? You believe in God, don’t you? Just let it be!” But I kept on searching for answers. Later, I attended lectures by Jesuits, Pentecostals, and Gnostics. Yet no one had satisfying answers to my questions.

HOW THE BIBLE CHANGED MY LIFE: When I was in my 60’s, a seven-year-old pupil invited me to attend a meeting of Jehovah’s Witnesses. I liked what I saw and heard, but because of my busy life, I had no further contact with the Witnesses at that time. Two years later, a Witness couple named Juan and Maite knocked at my door. For three months, we had intensive question-and-answer sessions, which finally led to a Bible study.

How I longed for each study session! I investigated everything thoroughly, using three Bible translations to ensure that Jehovah’s Witnesses were teaching the truth. Soon I realized how religiously confused I had been for



decades. I felt perturbed by the vast differences between my former beliefs and what I was learning from the Bible. I felt overwhelmed, as if my beliefs were a deeply entrenched tree being uprooted.

Then, my second husband became seriously ill and died. About the same time, I retired from my job and left Bilbao for a while. Juan and Maite also moved away. Regrettably, I discontinued my Bible study. Deep down, however, I knew that I had found a treasure. I never forgot it.

I knew that I had found a treasure

Some 20 years later, when I was 82, Juan and Maite returned to Bilbao and paid me a visit. How happy I was to see them again! I realized that Jehovah had not forgotten me, and I resumed my study. Juan and Maite were very patient with me, as I would often ask the same questions repeatedly. I needed to hear the Biblical arguments over and over again to break the emotional bonds I had with my previous beliefs. I also wanted to be well-equipped to explain Bible truth to my friends and family.

The day I finally got baptized—at the age of 87—was the happiest of my life. The baptism was held in conjunction with an assembly of Jehovah's Witnesses. A Christian elder delivered a Bible-based talk that was directed especially to those of us who were about to get baptized. The talk moved me to tears. I listened to it as though

Jehovah were speaking directly to me. After I was baptized, dozens of Witnesses came up and congratulated me—even though most of them had never met me before!

HOW I HAVE BENEFITED: I always knew that Jesus Christ is “the way.” (John 14:6) But my Bible study enabled me to get to know Jehovah, the one to whom Jesus leads us. Now I can pray to God as my dear Father and Friend. Reading the book *Draw Close to Jehovah** was a turning point in my life. I first read it through in just one night! I was touched to learn how merciful Jehovah truly is.

Looking back on my long search for religious truth, I think of Jesus' words: “Keep on asking, and it will be given you; keep on seeking, and you will find; keep on knocking, and it will be opened to you.” (Matthew 7:7) Now that I have found the answers I so longed for, it brings me great joy to share them with others.

At 90 years of age, I feel young spiritually. Every meeting I attend at the Kingdom Hall is a special occasion—both for the precious knowledge I receive and for the company of my dear brothers and sisters. I yearn to be a teacher again in the promised Paradise earth. (Revelation 21:3, 4) I especially look forward to seeing my dead loved ones return to life and then to having the opportunity to teach them Bible truth. (Acts 24:15) How I long to explain to them what a precious gift Jehovah gave me in my old age! ■

* Published by Jehovah's Witnesses.

HOPE FOR THE DEAD

THE RESURRECTION

Do you believe in the Bible's promise of a resurrection?* The prospect of being reunited with our loved ones who have died is appealing, to say the least. But is it realistic to nourish such a hope? To help answer that, we do well to consider the example of the apostles of Jesus Christ.

The apostles firmly believed in the resurrection of the dead. Why? For at least two reasons. First, their hope was primarily based on this fact: Jesus himself had been raised from the dead. The apostles—and “more than 500 brothers at one time”—saw the resurrected Jesus. (1 Corinthians 15:6) Additionally, Jesus' resurrection was widely attested to and accepted, as the four Gospels show.—Matthew 27:62–28:20; Mark 16:1-8; Luke 24:1-53; John 20:1–21:25.

Second, the apostles had witnessed Jesus carry out at least three resurrections—first at Nain, then at Capernaum, and finally at Bethany. (Luke 7:11-17; 8:49-56; John 11:1-44) The last of those resurrections, described earlier in this issue, involved a family especially close to Jesus. Let us look further at what happened.

* See the article “Death Does Not End It All!” on page 6 of this issue.

“I AM THE RESURRECTION”

“Your brother will rise.” Jesus spoke those words to Martha, whose brother, Lazarus, had been dead for four days. Martha did not at first understand the meaning of Jesus' words. “I know he will rise,” she responded, but she thought that it would be at some time in the future. Imagine her surprise when after hearing Jesus say, “I am the resurrection and the life,” she saw Jesus raise her brother from the dead!—John 11:23-25.

Where was Lazarus during the four days after his death? Lazarus said nothing to suggest that he had been alive somewhere else during those four days. No, Lazarus did not have an immortal soul that had gone to heaven. By resurrecting Lazarus, Jesus did not bring him back down to earth, dragging him away from enjoying heavenly bliss in a place near to God. So where was Lazarus during those four days? He was, in fact, asleep in the grave.—Ecclesiastes 9:5, 10.

Remember, Jesus compared death to a sleep from which one is awakened by resurrection. The account reads: “‘Lazarus our friend has fallen asleep, but I am traveling there to awaken



“The one who exercises faith in me, even though he dies, will come to life.”—John 11:25

him.’ The disciples then said to him: ‘Lord, if he is sleeping, he will get well.’ Jesus, however, had spoken about his death. But they imagined he was speaking about taking rest in sleep. Then Jesus said to them plainly: ‘Lazarus has died.’” (John 11:11-14) By resurrecting Lazarus, Jesus gave him back his life and reunited him with his family. What a marvelous gift Jesus gave to that family!

The resurrections Jesus performed when on earth were a foregleam of what he will do in the future as King of God’s Kingdom.* During his rule over the earth, the heavenly Jesus will bring back to life those humans who are asleep in mankind’s common grave. That is why he said: “I am the resurrection.” Think of the happiness you will feel when you see your loved ones again! Think, too, of the joy that resurrected ones will experience!—Luke 8:56.

* For more information about the Bible’s promise of a future resurrection, see chapter 7 of the book *What Does the Bible Really Teach?* published by Jehovah’s Witnesses. Also available at www.jw.org.

FAITH FOR EVERLASTING LIFE

Jesus said to Martha: “The one who exercises faith in me, even though he dies, will come to life; and everyone who is living and exercises faith in me will never die at all.” (John 11:25, 26) Those whom Jesus resurrects during his thousand-year reign will have the prospect of living forever—as long as they truly put faith in him.

After making those remarkable statements about the resurrection, Jesus asked Martha a soul-searching question: “‘Do you believe this?’ She said to him: ‘Yes, Lord, I have believed that you are the Christ, the Son of God.’” (John 11:26, 27) What about you—would you like to develop the kind of faith in the resurrection hope that Martha had? A first step is to take in knowledge of God’s purpose for humankind. (John 17:3; 1 Timothy 2:4) Such knowledge can lead to faith. Why not ask Jehovah’s Witnesses to show you what the Bible teaches about this subject? They will be happy to discuss with you the marvelous hope of the resurrection. ■

Think of the happiness you will feel when you see your loved ones again!



What sort of person is God?

God is an invisible spirit person. He created the heavens, the earth, and all living things. No one created God—he had no beginning. (Psalm 90:2) God wants people to seek him and to know the truth about him.—**Read Acts 17:24-27.**

God is a person whom we can know by name. We can discern some of his qualities by contemplating the things he has made. (Romans 1:20) But to know God well, we need to study his Word, the Bible. It acquaints us with God's loving personality.—**Read Psalm 103:7-10.**

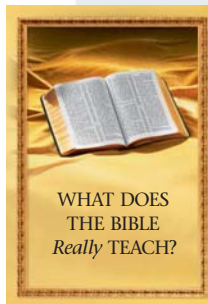
How does God feel about injustice?

Our Creator, Jehovah, hates injustice. And he created humans in his image. (Deuteronomy 25:16) That is why most of us hate injustice. The injustice around us is not God's doing. God granted man free will. Sadly, many people misuse their free will and practice injustice. Jehovah's heart is saddened.—**Read Genesis 6:5, 6; Deuteronomy 32:4, 5.**

Jehovah loves justice, and he will not forever tolerate injustice. (Psalm 37:28, 29) The Bible promises that soon God will bring all injustice to an end.—**Read 2 Peter 3:7-9, 13.**



The Bible promises that God will soon provide justice for all



For more information, see chapter 1 of this book, published by Jehovah's Witnesses. Also available at www.jw.org

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