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THE WATCHTOWER

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



HOW TO ENJOY
YOUR WORK

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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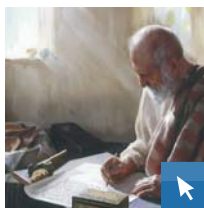
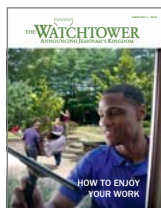
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HARD WORK — Is It Outdated?

Alex sighs as he lifts another box onto the truck of the moving company he works for. ‘Why am I stuck in this dead-end job?’ he asks himself. ‘When am I going to hit it big? My life would be so much better if I didn’t have to *work!*’

Like Alex in this scenario, many today do not enjoy working hard. “A lot of people think that it’s beneath them to do ‘menial’ work,” says an auto mechanic named Aaron. “Their attitude is: ‘I’m only doing this until a better opportunity comes along.’”

Why do many feel that hard work is not for them? Perhaps they have been influenced by the media, which often portrays an “ideal” life as one of luxury and ease. “People think that the harder you have to work to make a living, the less successful you are,” says Matthew, a maintenance worker. A janitor named Shane has noticed the same trend. He says: “A full day’s work for a full day’s wage is something that people simply do not do anymore.”

On the other hand, many successful people actually enjoy hard work. “I think that hard work

is extremely rewarding, especially when it’s directed toward worthwhile goals,” says a 25-year-old construction worker named Daniel. Andre, 23, would agree. “I believe that happiness and enjoyment are linked to work,” he says. “Less work and activity is not a venture that will lead to long-term happiness—only long-term boredom!”

How have people like Daniel and Andre developed a positive view of hard work? Simply put, they have applied Bible principles in their life. Far from discouraging hard work, the Bible promotes diligence and perseverance. But the Bible does more than just tell us to work. It also shows us how to *enjoy* our work.

Which Bible principles can help you to find satisfaction in your work? We invite you to consider a few of them, as discussed in the following article.



How to Enjoy Hard Work

“Everyone should eat and drink and find enjoyment for all his hard work. It is the gift of God.” (Ecclesiastes 3:13) If God wanted us to enjoy our work, is it not logical that he would show us *how* to find such joy? (Isaiah 48:17) Thankfully, he does—through the pages of his Word, the Bible. Consider the following Bible-based advice for finding satisfaction in your work.

CULTIVATE A POSITIVE VIEW OF WORK

Whether your work is mostly mental, mostly physical, or somewhere in between, recognize that “there is benefit in every kind of hard work.” (Proverbs 14:23) What sort of benefit? For one thing, hard work helps us to care for our material needs. True, God promises to provide for the needs of those who sincerely worship him. (Matthew 6:31, 32) But he also expects us to do our part by diligently trying to earn an honest living.—2 Thessalonians 3:10.

Thus, we can view our work as a means to an end. Work is an honorable way to care for our responsibilities. “Providing for yourself is an accomplishment,” says 25-year-old Joshua. “If you

are able to pay for what you need, then your work is doing what it is supposed to do.”

Moreover, hard work contributes to our self-respect. After all, hard work is just that—hard. When we discipline ourselves to stick with our work—even if it seems boring or difficult—we can have the satisfaction of knowing that we held ourselves to a high standard. We have won a victory over the inclination to take the easy way out. (Proverbs 26:14) In that sense, work brings an intense feeling of satisfaction. “I love the feeling I have after a long day of work,” says Aaron, quoted in the preceding article. “I may be exhausted—and my work might have even gone unnoticed by others—but I know that I’ve accomplished something.”



APPLY YOURSELF TO YOUR WORK

The Bible speaks highly of the man who is “skillful at his work” and the woman who “delights to work with her hands.” (Proverbs 22: 29; 31:13) Of course, a person does not become skillful automatically. And few of us enjoy doing things that we are not good at. Perhaps that is why many do not enjoy their work; they simply have not put forth enough effort to become good at it.

In reality, a person can learn to enjoy almost any kind of work if he approaches it with the right mind-set—that is, if he focuses on learning how to do the job well. “When you put your best into a task and see the results, it’s very satisfying,” says 24-year-old William. “You never get that feeling from cutting corners or doing only the minimum.”

FOCUS ON HOW YOUR WORK BENEFITS OTHERS

Avoid the trap of thinking only about how much money you are earning. Rather, ask yourself such questions as these: ‘Why is this job necessary? What would happen if it wasn’t done—or it wasn’t done right? How does my work benefit others?’

That last question is especially good to think about, for work is most satisfying when we see how it benefits other people. Jesus himself said: “There is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving.” (Acts 20:35) In addition to those who benefit directly from our services—such as customers and employers—there are others who benefit from our hard work. These include members of our household and those in need.

How They View Hard Work

“When I’m tired at the end of the day, I feel a real sense of accomplishment and joy. I know I really *worked* that day.”
—**Nick.**

“Working hard is the best way to work. If you’re going to do something worthwhile, do it right.”—**Christian.**

“The human body can do extraordinary things. I like to show my appreciation for the gift of life by using it to work hard and help other people.”—**David.**

Members of our household. When a family head works hard to provide for members of his household, he benefits them in at least two ways. First, he makes sure that they have the physical necessities of life—food, clothing, and shelter. He thus fulfills his God-given responsibility to “provide for those who are his own.” (1 Timothy 5:8) Second, a diligent breadwinner teaches by example the importance of hard work. “My father is a great example of someone who has a good work ethic,” says Shane, quoted in the preceding article. “He is an honest man who has worked hard his whole life, the majority of it as a carpenter. From his example, I’ve learned the value of working with your hands, building things that will have practical use for other people.”

Those in need. The apostle Paul advised Christians to “do hard work . . . so that [they] may have something to share with someone in need.” (Ephesians 4:28) Indeed, when we work hard to provide for ourselves and our family, we may also be in a position to help those who are less fortunate. (Proverbs 3:27) So hard work can enable us to experience the greater happiness of giving.



GO THE EXTRA MILE

In his famous Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said: “If someone in authority compels you into service for a mile, go with him two miles.” (Matthew 5:41) How might you apply the principle behind those words to your own work? Rather than simply doing the minimum, look for ways to do *more* than is required. Set personal goals; challenge yourself to do your work better or faster than expected. Take pride in even the small details of your work.

When you go the extra mile, you are more likely to enjoy your work. Why? Because *you* are in control of your actions. You are giving more because you want to, not because someone forced you to. (Philemon 14) In this regard, we might recall the principle recorded at Proverbs 12:24: “The hand of the diligent ones will rule, but idle hands will be put to forced labor.” True, few of us will be put under literal slavery or forced labor. However, a person who does only the bare minimum may feel that he is enslaved, always under the yoke of the demands of others. But the person who goes the extra mile—doing more because he *chooses* to—feels in control of his life. He remains master over his actions.

KEEP WORK IN ITS PROPER PLACE

Hard work is admirable, yet we do well to remember that there is more to life than work. True, the Bible encourages diligence. (Proverbs 13:4) But it does not encourage becoming a workaholic. “Better is a handful of rest than two handfuls of hard work and chasing after the wind,” says Ecclesiastes 4:6. The point? A workaholic may never enjoy the fruitage of his labor if his work consumes all his time and energy. In effect, his work becomes as pointless as “chasing after the wind.”

The Bible can help us to cultivate a balanced view of work. Although it says we should apply ourselves to our work, it also advises us to “make sure of the more important things.” (Philippians 1:10) What are the more important things? These include spending time with family and friends. Even more important are spiritual activities, such as reading God’s Word and meditating on it.

Those who keep their life balanced are likely to enjoy their work even more. “One of my former employers is a great example of someone with a balanced work ethic,” says William, quoted earlier. “He works hard, and he has a good rapport with his clients because of the quality of his work. But at the end of the day, when the job is done, he knows how to leave his work behind and focus on his family and his worship. And you know what? He’s one of the happiest people I know!” ■

Why Examine the Bible?

The following is a typical conversation that one of Jehovah's Witnesses might have with a neighbor. Let us imagine that a Witness named Brian has contacted a man named Eric.



THE BIBLE—ACCURATE HISTORY

Eric: I should tell you that I'm not very religious. So I don't think we have much to talk about.

Brian: I appreciate your telling me that. By the way, my name is Brian. And your name?

Eric: Eric.

Brian: It's nice to meet you, Eric.

Eric: You too.

Brian: If I may ask, did you grow up in a religious household?

Eric: Yes. But when I left home for college, I kind of lost touch with religion.

Brian: I see. What did you study in college?

Eric: Social studies and history. I've always liked history—you know, man's journey on earth.

Brian: History can be fascinating. The Bible, as you may know, is a book of history. Did you ever include the Bible in your research?

Eric: Not really. I know it's a good book, but I never really thought of the Bible as a historical book.

Brian: You seem to be an open-minded person. If you have a few minutes, I would like to show you just a few examples of accurate history found in the Bible.

Eric: Sure. But I don't have a Bible.

Brian: That's OK. I can show you from my copy. The first example is here at 1 Chronicles chapter 29, verses 26 and 27. Those verses say:

"Thus David the son of Jesse reigned over all Israel, and the length of his reign over Israel was 40 years. In Hebron he reigned for 7 years, and in Jerusalem he reigned for 33 years."

Eric: How is that an example of accurate history?

Brian: Well, critics at one time claimed that King David never existed.

Eric: Really? Why would they question his existence?

Brian: There was little evidence outside the Bible that he was a real person. However, in 1993, a team of archaeologists uncovered a very ancient stone with a word on it that is translated "House of David."

Eric: Interesting.

Brian: Another person from the Bible whose existence was questioned was Pontius Pilate, a governor who ruled in Jesus' day. He is mentioned here at Luke chapter 3, verse 1—among many other government officials of the time.

Eric: Yes, I see. It says that "when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod was district ruler of Galilee."

Brian: Right. For years, some scholars doubted



HUC, Tel Dan Excavations



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

whether Pontius Pilate was a real person. Then, about 50 years ago, a stone was found in the Middle East with his name clearly etched on it.

Eric: Hmm. I've never heard those details before.

Brian: I'm glad to share them with you.

Eric: To be honest, I have always respected the Bible as a work of literature, but I've never really felt that it had any relevance to our time. It may contain accurate history, but I don't think it has any practical value.

THE BIBLE—AN OLD BUT MODERN BOOK

Brian: A lot of people would agree with that statement. But I believe differently. Here's why: Our basic human needs have not changed from the beginning of time. For example, we have always needed food, clothing, and shelter. We've always felt the need to communicate with one another and to have a happy family. Isn't it true that we all value those things?

Eric: Sure.

Brian: The Bible can help us in all those areas. It is what we might call an old but modern book.

Eric: What do you mean?

Brian: Let me put it another way: The Bible contains fundamental principles that are as relevant today as they were when they were written centuries ago.

Eric: OK. In what areas?

Brian: When it comes to things such as having a balanced view of money or a happy family life or being a good friend, Bible principles can guide us. This book is like a road map to success. Wouldn't you agree, for instance, that being a successful husband and family head these days can be a challenge?

Eric: Well, yes, I have to agree with you there. My wife and I have been married for about a year, and it's not always easy to see eye to eye.

Brian: Exactly. But the Bible contains simple principles that work. Take Ephesians chapter 5 as a case in point. Let's read verses 22, 23, and 28. If you like, you can read those verses.

Eric: Sure. It says: "Let wives be in subjection to their husbands as to the Lord, because a husband is head of his wife just as the Christ is head of the congregation, he being a savior of this body." Then, verse 28 says: "In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. A man who loves his wife loves himself."

Brian: Good. Thank you. Isn't it true that if both mates tried to apply that simple advice, family life would improve?

Eric: Yes, I guess so. But that's easier said than done.

Brian: True; no one is perfect. In fact, in that same chapter of the Bible there is a verse that encourages us to be reasonable.* With any relationship, there needs to be balance and compromise. My wife and I have found that the Bible can help us find that balance.

Eric: That makes sense.

Brian: Jehovah's Witnesses have a Web site that has some good information on marriage and family life. If you have a couple of minutes, I could show you a sample of what it offers.

Eric: Sure. I can spare a couple of minutes.

Brian: Good. The address for the Web site is www.jw.org. Here is the home page.

Eric: I like the photos.

Brian: Those are scenes of the ministry work that we do all over the world. Ah, here we are. This section is entitled "Help for Couples and Parents." Under that heading, there are several

* See Ephesians 5:17.

The Bible contains fundamental principles that are as relevant today as they were when they were written centuries ago

brief articles dealing with different situations. Is there one that interests you?

Eric: Yes. "Solving Problems in Your Marriage." I think I could use that!

Brian: This article outlines four steps to solving problems. Notice this paragraph. Would you like to read it, Eric?

Eric: Sure. It says: "If communication is the lifeblood of a marriage, then love and respect are the heart and lungs of the relationship." Hmm, I like the way they explain that.

Brian: Thank you for reading. There's a Bible verse cited here. You can open it by tapping on it.

Eric: Yes, I see it. Ephesians 5:33. It says: "Each one of you must love his wife as he does himself; on the other hand, the wife should have deep respect for her husband."

Brian: Did you notice that the emphasis is on *giving* what each one expects to *receive*?

Eric: I'm not sure what you mean.

Brian: Well, isn't it true that the man wants to feel he is respected by his wife and that in turn, the wife wants to be assured that her husband really loves her?

Eric: Yes. I'll agree with that.

Brian: If the husband often looks for ways to show his love for his wife, wouldn't it be easier for the wife to manifest respect for him?

Eric: That sounds as if it would work.

Brian: So this one verse in the Bible, though written almost 2,000 years ago, addresses the needs of both parties in a marriage and provides helpful advice that, if applied, really works. And to repeat the illustration we read earlier, the "heart and lungs" of the marriage will remain healthy.

Eric: I must admit, there is more to the Bible than I thought.

Brian: I am happy to hear that, Eric. I would like to meet you here again and get your opinion on the subheading "Four Steps to Solving Problems" that appears in this same article on our Web site.*

Eric: Sure. My wife and I will take a look at it together. ■

* For more information, see chapter 14 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.





AS TOLD BY ERNEST LOEDI

YEAR BORN

1948

COUNTRY OF ORIGIN

HUNGARY

HISTORY

YEARNED FOR ANSWERS
TO LIFE'S BIG QUESTIONS



I was impressed by the Bible's clear, logical answers

MY PAST: I was born in Székesfehérvár, Hungary, a city with a rich history stretching back over 1,000 years. Sadly, I can still remember the ugly marks that were left there by the ravages of the second world war.

In my early childhood, I was raised by my grandparents. I remember them fondly—especially my grandmother Elisabeth. She instilled in me a strong faith in God. From the age of three, I repeated with her every evening what is sometimes called the Lord's Prayer. Even so, it would not be until my late 20's that I would come to understand the meaning of that prayer.

My grandparents took care of me in my early years because my parents were working day and night, hoping to save enough money to buy a decent home. Every second Saturday, though, the entire family gathered for a meal. I cherished those times we had together.

In 1958, my parents' dream came true; they were able to purchase a house for the three of us to live in. Finally, I was to live with my parents—I was elated! Six months later, however, that happiness came to a sudden end. My father died of cancer.

I was devastated. I remember praying: "God, I begged you to save my dad. I need him. Why didn't you answer my prayers?" I desperately wanted to know where my father was. I wondered: 'Has he gone to heaven? Or has he ceased to exist forever?' I envied other children who still had a father.

For many years, I went to the cemetery nearly every day. I would kneel at my father's grave and pray: "Please, God, I want to know where my dad is." I also prayed for help to understand the meaning of life.

At the age of 13, I decided to learn German. I thought that among the vast and rich German literature, perhaps

I could find answers to my questions. In 1967, I began studying in the city of Jena, then part of East Germany. I eagerly read books by German philosophers, especially those dealing with the meaning of human existence. Although I found some interesting ideas, none of them fully satisfied me. I continued praying for answers.

HOW THE BIBLE CHANGED MY LIFE: In 1970, I returned to Hungary, where I met my future wife, Rose. At the time, Hungary was under Communist rule. Shortly after we were married, Rose and I escaped to Austria. Our goal was to emigrate eventually to Sydney, Australia, where my uncle lived.

I soon found work in Austria. One day, a workmate told me that I could find answers to all my questions in the Bible. He gave me a couple of books that discussed the Bible. I devoured those books and wanted to learn more. So I wrote to Jehovah's Witnesses, the publishers of the books, and requested more literature.

On the day of our first wedding anniversary, Rose and I were visited by a young Austrian Witness. He brought the literature that I had requested and offered me a Bible study, which I accepted. Since I was eager to learn, we studied twice a week—each study session lasting for about four hours!

I was thrilled by what the Witnesses taught me from the Bible. When they showed me God's name, Jehovah, in my Hungarian Bible, I could hardly believe it. In my 27 years of attending church, I had never heard God's name mentioned even once. I was impressed by the Bible's clear, logical answers to my questions. For example, I learned that the dead are unconscious, as if in a deep sleep. (Ecclesiastes 9:5, 10; John 11:11-15) I also learned about the Bible's promise of a new world where "death will be no more." (Revelation 21:3, 4) I hope to see my father again, for



in that new world, "there is going to be a resurrection."—Acts 24:15.

Rose joined me wholeheartedly in studying the Bible. We made rapid progress, finishing the study publication in just two months! We attended every meeting that the Witnesses held at the Kingdom Hall. We were deeply impressed by the love, helpfulness, and unity among Jehovah's Witnesses.—John 13:34, 35.

In 1976, Rose and I were granted entry into Australia. We immediately located Jehovah's Witnesses there. The local Witnesses made us feel at home right away. In 1978, we became Witnesses ourselves.

HOW I HAVE BENEFITED: I have finally found answers to the questions that troubled me for so long. By drawing close to Jehovah God, I've also found the best Father imaginable. (James 4:8) And my hope of seeing my biological father again in the coming new world means a great deal to me.—John 5:28, 29.

In 1989, Rose and I decided to return to Hungary so that we could share our beliefs with our friends and family, as well as with others whom we might meet. We have been privileged to teach the Bible to hundreds of people. More than 70 of them have joined us in serving Jehovah, including my dear mother.

I prayed for 17 years to find answers to my questions. Another 39 years have passed, and I am still praying—only now I can say, "Thank you, my dear heavenly Father, for answering the prayers of my childhood." ■

“Do Not Interpretations Belong to God?”

JOSEPH walked along the dark corridor, dripping with sweat from his toil in the stifling heat. Outside, the Egyptian sun was baking the prison like a kiln. It seemed at times as if he knew every brick in the place, every crack in every wall. This was his whole world now. True, he was highly regarded here. Nonetheless, he was a prisoner.

How often he must have cast his thoughts back to his life in the high rocky hills in Hebron, where he had tended his father’s flocks! He was about 17 years old when his father, Jacob, sent him on an errand that took him dozens of miles (km) from home. Such freedom seemed almost unimaginable now. Joseph’s jealous brothers had turned on him with murderous hatred and then sold him as a slave. He was taken down to Egypt, where he first served in the household of the Egyptian official Potiphar. Joseph held his master’s trust until a false accusation of rape from Potiphar’s wife landed him here in this prison.* —Genesis, chapters 37, 39.

Joseph was 28 years old now, with about a decade of slavery and imprisonment behind him. To put it mildly, his life was not turning out as he had hoped. Would he ever be set free? Would he see his dear elderly father again or his beloved younger brother, Benjamin? How long would he be stuck in this pit?

* See the “Imitate Their Faith” articles in the August 1 and November 1, 2014, issues of *The Watchtower*.



Have you ever felt as Joseph did? Sometimes life turns out to be a far cry from our youthful hopes. Indeed, painful situations can seem to drag on endlessly, and it can be hard to see a way out or a way to endure. Let us see what we can learn from the faith of Joseph.

“JEHOVAH CONTINUED WITH JOSEPH”

Joseph knew that his God, Jehovah, never lost sight of him, and this knowledge surely helped him to endure. Even here in a foreign prison, Jehovah found ways to bless Joseph. Thus, we read: “Jehovah continued with Joseph and kept showing loyal love to him and granting him favor in the eyes of the chief officer of the prison.” (Genesis 39:21-23) As Joseph continued to work hard, he kept giving his God a basis for blessing him. How comforting it must have been for him to know that Jehovah was always with him!

Did Jehovah intend to let Joseph remain in that prison indefinitely? Joseph could only guess at the answer, and he surely kept the matter before his God in prayer. As it so often happens, the answer came in a most unexpected way. One day, there was some commotion in the prison as two new inmates arrived—officers from Pharaoh’s personal staff. One was the king’s chief baker; the other was the chief cupbearer.—Genesis 40:1-3.

The chief of the guard entrusted Joseph with the care of those two formerly prominent

men.* One night they each had a vivid and puzzling dream. When Joseph saw them in the morning, he could tell that something was wrong. So he asked: "Why are your faces gloomy today?" (Genesis 40:3-7) Perhaps his kindly manner assured the men that it was safe for them to reveal their troubles. Joseph did not know it, but that conversation would lead to a turning point in his life. Would there have been any conversation, though, had Joseph not chosen to show a little kind concern for others? His choice may move us to ask ourselves, 'Do I express my faith in God by showing an interest in fellow humans?'

The two men explained that they were agitated by their vivid and puzzling dreams—and by the fact that they had no interpreter with them. The Egyptians placed a lot of weight on dreams and depended heavily on the men who claimed to be able to interpret them. The two men did not know that their dreams had come from Joseph's God, Jehovah. But Joseph knew. He assured them: "Do not interpretations belong to God? Relate it [the dream] to me, please." (Genesis 40:8) Joseph's

* The ancient Egyptians enjoyed over 90 varieties of breads and cakes. So the chief of Pharaoh's baking staff was a prominent man. And the chief cupbearer led a staff of servants who made sure that Pharaoh's wine and perhaps beer were of high quality and were kept safe from any attempt to poison the monarch—a real risk, for court intrigue and assassinations were common. It was not unusual for the cupbearer to become a trusted adviser to the king.

words resound today for all sincere students of the Bible. If only every religious person showed the same humility! We need to be willing to set aside prideful human thinking and to rely on God as we seek correct interpretations of his word.—1 Thessalonians 2:13; James 4:6.

The cupbearer went first. He told Joseph of a dream about a vine with three twigs that bore clusters of grapes. The grapes ripened, and the cupbearer squeezed the juice into Pharaoh's cup. Thanks to Jehovah, Joseph instantly knew the meaning behind the dream. He told the cupbearer that the three twigs meant three days; within that time, Pharaoh would restore the cupbearer to his former position. As relief swept over the cupbearer's features, Joseph added this request: "Please show me loyal love and mention me to Pharaoh." Joseph explained that he had been kidnapped from his home and imprisoned without just cause.—Genesis 40:9-15.

Encouraged by the good news the cupbearer had received, the baker asked Joseph the meaning of his own dream in which he had seen three baskets of bread as well as birds eating from one of the baskets on his head. The answer to this riddle was also given to Joseph. But it did not mean good news for the baker. Joseph said: "This is its interpretation: The three baskets are three days. Three days from now, Pharaoh will behead you

Joseph treated
his fellow prisoners
with kindness
and dignity



and will hang you on a stake, and the birds will eat your flesh from you.” (Genesis 40:16-19) Like all of God’s faithful servants, Joseph boldly revealed God’s messages, both the good news and the news of impending judgment.—Isaiah 61:2.

Three days later, Joseph’s words came true. Pharaoh held a birthday party—a practice not found among God’s people in Bible times—and pronounced judgment on his two servants. The baker was executed, just as Joseph had foretold, whereas the cupbearer was restored to his former position. Sadly, though, that neglectful man forgot all about Joseph.—Genesis 40:20-23.

“I NEED NOT BE CONSIDERED!”

Two full years passed. (Genesis 41:1) Imagine how frustrating that must have been for Joseph! Perhaps his hopes were high after Jehovah gave him the understanding of the puzzling dreams of the cupbearer and the baker. Thereafter, as each day dawned, Joseph may have awakened with renewed hope that this would be the day of his release—only to find once again that the dull routine of prison life dragged on, unchanged. Those two years might well have been the most challenging of all for Joseph to endure. Yet, he never gave up his trust in his God, Jehovah. Rather than giving in to despair, he was determined to endure, and he emerged from that trying time all the stronger.—James 1:4.

In these difficult times, who of us does not need to work on our endurance? In order to face life’s ongoing trials, we need the kind of determination, patience, and inner peace that only God can give us. As he did with Joseph, he can help us to fight despair and hold on to hope.—Romans 12:12; 15:13.

The cupbearer may have forgotten Joseph, but Jehovah never did. One night, he sent Pharaoh a pair of unforgettable dreams. In the first, the king saw seven fine-looking, fat cows emerge from the Nile River, followed by seven ugly, thin cows. The thin ones devoured the fat ones. Later, Pharaoh dreamed that he saw a stalk of grain sprouting

seven choice ears. But then another seven ears, wind-parched and sickly, sprouted up and devoured the choice ones. In the morning, Pharaoh awoke deeply agitated over the dreams, so he called on all his wise men and magic-practicing priests to interpret them. They all failed. (Genesis 41:1-8) Whether that means that they were dumbfounded or that they came up with a variety of conflicting ideas, we do not know. At any rate, Pharaoh was let down—yet he was more desperate than ever to find an answer to this puzzle.

Finally, the cupbearer remembered Joseph! His conscience stung him, and he told Pharaoh about the remarkable young man in prison who two years earlier had correctly interpreted his dream and that of the baker. Immediately, Pharaoh had Joseph summoned from prison.—Genesis 41:9-13.

Imagine Joseph’s feelings as Pharaoh’s messengers came with the royal summons. He quickly changed his clothes and shaved—likely removing all the hair from his head, for such was the Egyptian custom. No doubt he prayed fervently that Jehovah would bless him in this interview! Soon he found himself in the opulent court of the royal palace, standing before the monarch. We read: “Then Pharaoh said to Joseph: ‘I had a dream, but there is no one to interpret it. Now I have heard it said about you that you can hear a dream and interpret it.’” Joseph’s response showed, once again, both his humility and his faith in his God: “I need not be considered! God will speak concerning Pharaoh’s welfare.”—Genesis 41:14-16.

Jehovah loves humble, faithful people, so it is no wonder that he gave Joseph the answer that had eluded the wise men and priests. Joseph explained that Pharaoh’s two dreams had the same meaning. By repeating the message, Jehovah was signifying that the matter was “firmly established”—absolutely sure of fulfillment. The fat cows and the healthy ears of grain represented seven years of plenty in Egypt, while the lean cows and the sickly ears of grain pictured seven years of famine that would follow the years



Joseph humbly said to Pharaoh: "I need not be considered!"

of plenty. That famine would devour the land's abundance.—Genesis 41:25-32.

Pharaoh knew that Joseph had the answer. But what could be done? Joseph recommended a plan of action. Pharaoh needed to find a man both "discreet and wise" to oversee the gathering of the land's surplus grain into storehouses during the seven years of plenty and then to distribute that surplus to the needy during the ensuing famine. (Genesis 41:33-36) Joseph's experience and abilities more than qualified him for that job, but he did not promote himself. His humility made such a presumptuous course unthinkable; his faith made it unnecessary. If we have real faith in Jehovah, we have no need for ambition or self-promotion. We can be at peace, leaving matters in his capable hands!

"CAN ANOTHER MAN BE FOUND LIKE THIS ONE?"

Pharaoh and all his servants saw the wisdom in Joseph's plan. The king also acknowledged that Joseph's God was the real force behind Joseph's wise words. He said to his servants there in the royal court: "Can another man be found like this one in whom there is the spirit of God?" To Joseph, he said: "Since God has caused you to know

all of this, there is no one as discreet and wise as you. You will personally be over my house, and all my people will obey you implicitly. Only in my role as king will I be greater than you."—Genesis 41:38-41.

Pharaoh was as good as his word. Joseph was soon clothed in fine linen. Pharaoh gave him a gold necklace, a signet ring, a royal chariot, and full authority to travel through the land and put his plan into effect. (Genesis 41:42-44) Within the space of a day, then, Joseph went from prison to palace. He awoke a lowly convict, and he fell asleep as the ruler second to Pharaoh. How clear that Joseph's faith in Jehovah God was justified! Jehovah saw all the injustices that his servant had suffered through the years. He addressed those issues at just the right time and in just the right way. Jehovah had in mind not only correcting the wrongs done to Joseph but also preserving the future nation of Israel. We will see how that was so in a future article in this series.

If you face a trialsome situation, perhaps an injustice that seems to drag on for years on end, do not despair. Remember Joseph. Because he never lost his kindness, his humility, his endurance, and his faith, he gave Jehovah every reason to reward him in the end. ■

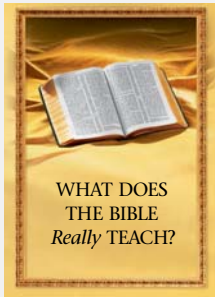


HOW COULD A WORLD GOVERNMENT
UNITE PEOPLE OF ALL NATIONS?
ISAIAH 32:1, 17; 54:13

Will we ever have one government for the whole world?

Imagine how a world government could benefit mankind. Today many people suffer because they are so poor, while others are very rich. But a compassionate world government could make sure that all have what they need. Do you think humans will ever create such a government?—**Read Jeremiah 10:23.**

Throughout history, governments have failed in many ways to care for their subjects, especially the poor. Some governments are cruel. (Ecclesiastes 4:1; 8:9) But Almighty God has promised to provide a government that will replace all others. Its Ruler will really take care of people.—**Read Isaiah 11:4; Daniel 2:44.**



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What will God's Kingdom achieve?

Jehovah God has chosen an ideal world Ruler—his Son, Jesus. (Luke 1:31-33) As a man on earth, Jesus was interested in helping people. As King, he will unite people of all nations and relieve people of all suffering.—**Read Psalm 72:8, 12-14.**

Will everyone accept Jesus as Ruler? No. But Jehovah is patient. (2 Peter 3:9) He is giving people the opportunity to accept Jesus as Ruler. Soon, Jesus will rid the earth of bad people and will establish peace and security worldwide.—**Read Micah 4:3, 4.**

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