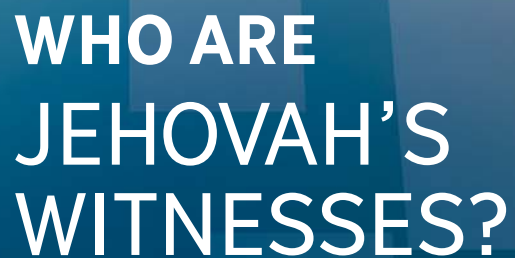




THE WATCHTOWER
ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM



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.

Would you welcome more information or a free home Bible study?

Visit www.jw.org or send your request to one of the addresses below.

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Brooklyn, NY 11201-2483

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Jehovah's Witnesses
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For a complete list of worldwide addresses, see www.jw.org/en/contact.

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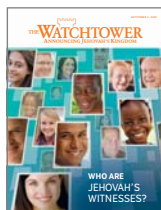
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Who are Jehovah's Witnesses?

"I had known Mike for years. He is one of Jehovah's Witnesses. But his religion always baffled me. Who is Jehovah? Why don't Witnesses celebrate the holidays? Was Mike mixed up in a cult?"—Becky, California, U.S.A.

"When my neighbors started to study the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses, I wondered: 'What does that name, Jehovah's Witnesses, mean? What a strange name for a religion!'"—Zenon, Ontario, Canada.

"My wife and I thought that Jehovah's Witnesses called to prey on our guilt feelings because we weren't at church. And we figured that if the mainline churches didn't have what we were looking for, a weird sect like Jehovah's Witnesses couldn't have it either."—Kent, Washington, U.S.A.

"I honestly didn't know who they were and what they stood for."—Cecilie, Esbjerg, Denmark.



You have likely seen them preaching from door to door or in a public place, distributing Bible-based literature and offering free Bible studies. You may have received this magazine from one of them. Still, you may wonder who Jehovah's Witnesses really are. Perhaps your thoughts are similar to one of those quoted above.

If you have such questions and concerns, where might you go for answers? How can you learn what Jehovah's Witnesses really believe, how their ministry and places of worship are financed, and why they call at your home and approach you in public places?

"I read a lot about Jehovah's Witnesses on the

Internet," says Cecilie, quoted earlier. "I heard some rumors, and I listened to a great deal of prejudiced talk. As a result, I formed a very negative view of Jehovah's Witnesses." Later, however, she spoke to Jehovah's Witnesses directly and found satisfying answers to her questions.

Would you like to receive truthful answers to your questions about Jehovah's Witnesses? We encourage you to turn to the most knowledgeable source—Jehovah's Witnesses themselves, who publish this magazine. (Proverbs 14:15) We hope that the following articles will help you to see who we are and what we believe as well as to understand the work we do.

What sort of people are Jehovah's Witnesses?



“[Jehovah’s Witnesses] have tremendous moral strength. We could use such unselfish people even in the highest political functions—but we are never going to get them there. . . . They recognize governmental authorities but believe that only God’s Kingdom is capable of solving all human problems.”
—*Nová Svoboda* newspaper, Czech Republic.

We are an international organization unaffiliated with other religious groups. Although our world headquarters is in the United States, the vast majority of Jehovah’s Witnesses live in other countries. In fact, some eight million of us teach people the Bible in over 230 lands. We do so in response to Jesus’ words: “This good news of the Kingdom will be preached in all the inhabited earth for a witness to all the nations.”—Matthew 24:14.

LANDS WITH THE MOST WITNESSES

United States	1,190,000
Mexico	800,000
Brazil	770,000
Nigeria	330,000
Italy	250,000
Japan	220,000

Regardless of where we live, we conscientiously obey the law. Yet we endeavor to remain politically neutral. This is because we observe Jesus’ direction for Christians to be “no part of the world.” Thus we do not take part in political issues and activities or support warfare. (John 15:19; 17:16) In fact, during World War II, Jehovah’s Witnesses were imprisoned, tortured, and even worse because they would not compromise their neutrality. A former German bishop wrote: “They can rightfully claim to be the only major conscientious objectors in the Third Reich.”

Still, we do not isolate ourselves. Jesus prayed to God regarding his followers: “I do not request that you take them out of the world.” (John 17:15) Therefore, you may see us as we work, shop, and go to school in the local community.



Watch the video *Special Convention in Israel* at www.jw.org, and see how Israeli and Palestinian Witnesses have overcome national and ethnic differences. (Look under ABOUT US > CONVENTIONS)

What do Jehovah's Witnesses believe?

Jehovah's Witnesses believe that "all Scripture is inspired of God and beneficial." (2 Timothy 3:16) We use the Bible as a practical guide to learn about the Creator and to live meaningful lives.

The Bible says: "May people know that you, whose name is Jehovah, you alone are the Most High over all the earth." (Psalm 83:18) Therefore, we worship only Jehovah God, and as his Witnesses, we endeavor to make known his personal name.—Isaiah 43:10-12.

As Christians, we believe that Jesus, "the Son of God,"* came to earth and became the Messiah. (John 1:34, 41; 4:25, 26) After he died, Jesus was raised to heaven. (1 Corinthians 15:3, 4) Later he became King of God's Kingdom. (Revelation 11:15) That Kingdom is a real government that will restore Paradise to the earth. (Daniel 2:44) "The meek will possess the earth, and they will find exquisite delight in the abundance of peace," says the Bible.—Psalm 37:11, 29.

Jehovah's Witnesses believe that Bible principles can benefit people even today. (Isaiah 48:17, 18) Therefore, we adhere closely to those principles. For example, because the Bible warns us to avoid practices that pollute our minds and bodies, we do not smoke or misuse drugs. (2 Corinthians 7:1) We also avoid practices specifically condemned in the Bible, such as drunkenness, sexual immorality, and stealing. —1 Corinthians 6:9-11.

* The Bible also refers to Jesus as "the only-begotten Son of God" because he was the first and only direct creation of Jehovah.—John 3:18; Colossians 1:13-15.



"When they read in the Bible, they believe God is talking to them. Whenever problems appear in their lives, they take God's Word and search in it for a solution. . . . For them, God's Word is still alive."

—Catholic clergyman Benjamin Cherayath, *Münsterländische Volkszeitung* newspaper, Germany



To learn about our beliefs, including why we do not celebrate the holidays or accept blood transfusions, go to www.jw.org, and look under ABOUT US > FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS.

How is our ministry financed?



“As is the case with all the activities of Jehovah’s Witnesses, religious funding is handled on a voluntary basis, each one personally determining the amount and frequency of his religious ‘donations.’”

—European Court of Human Rights, 2011

Each year, we print and distribute hundreds of millions of Bibles and pieces of Bible literature. We build and operate branch offices and printeries around the world. Tens of thousands of congregations meet in modest yet attractive places of worship called Kingdom Halls. Who pays for all of this?

Our work is supported entirely by voluntary donations. (2 Corinthians 9:7) In 1879, the second issue of this magazine stated: “‘Zion’s Watch Tower’ [as this magazine was then called] has, we believe JEHOVAH for its backer, and while this is the case it will never *beg* nor *petition* men for support.” We have not wavered from that policy.

Donations are sent directly to one of our branch offices or placed in a contribution box that is located in each Kingdom Hall. But we never tithe, take up collections, or charge a fee for our services or publications. We are not paid to preach, to teach in the congregation, or to help build places of worship. After all, Jesus said: “You received free, give free.” (Matthew 10:8) All ministers at our branch offices and at our world headquarters, including those making up the Governing Body of Jehovah’s Witnesses, are unsalaried members of a religious order.

Donated funds are also used for disaster relief. The early Christians were pleased to share in relief measures for victims of adversity. (Romans 15:26) We likewise assist the afflicted by rebuilding their homes and places of worship and by providing food, clothing, and medical treatment.



Watch the video *Philippines Typhoon—Faith Conquers Adversity* at www.jw.org. (Look under ABOUT US > ACTIVITIES)

Why do we preach?

Perhaps nothing distinguishes us as much as our extensive preaching work—from house to house, in public places, and wherever people are found. Why do we do it?

Jehovah's Witnesses preach to glorify God and to make known his name. (Hebrews 13:15) We also want to obey Christ Jesus, who commanded: "Go, therefore, and make disciples of people of all the nations, . . . teaching them to observe all the things I have commanded you."—Matthew 28:19, 20.

Moreover, we love our neighbor. (Matthew 22:39) Of course, we realize that most people have their own religious beliefs and that not everyone is interested in our message. Still, we feel that Bible teachings are lifesaving. That is why we continue "without letup teaching and declaring the good news about the Christ," as did the first-century Christians.—Acts 5:41, 42.

Most readers of our literature are not Jehovah's Witnesses. And millions who study the Bible with us belong to other religions. Yet they are grateful that Jehovah's Witnesses call on them.

Of course, you may have other questions about Jehovah's Witnesses. We invite you to learn the answers by

- Asking one of Jehovah's Witnesses.
- Visiting our website, www.jw.org.
- Attending our meetings, which are free and open to all. ■



For additional information about Jehovah's Witnesses, watch the feature-length video *Jehovah's Witnesses—Organized to Share the Good News*, at www.jw.org. (Look under PUBLICATIONS > VIDEOS)



Sociologist Antonio Cova Maduro wrote of "the effort and trouble to which Jehovah's Witnesses go, to the point of exhausting themselves . . . , so that the sacred text reaches the farthest corner of the earth."—*El Universal* newspaper, Venezuela

Finding Something Better Than Glamour

AS TOLD BY MINA HUNG GODENZI

One night in 1984, I changed from being just an ordinary teenager to being a celebrity. I was crowned Miss Hong Kong. My picture was on the front page of magazines and newspapers. I sang, danced, gave speeches, hosted TV shows, wore beautiful clothes, and appeared with important people, such as the governor of Hong Kong.

The next year, I started acting in movies, several times starring in the leading role. Reporters wanted my story, photographers wanted my picture, and people wanted my presence for premieres, ribbon cuttings, lunches, and dinners. I was always the center of attention.

Gradually, though, I discovered that all of this was not as attractive as I had imagined. I worked mainly on action movies, and that was dangerous. Actors in Hong Kong did not use doubles as often as actors in Hollywood did, so I performed my own stunts, such as riding a motorcycle over a car. Many films I starred in were immoral and violent. Some featured demonism.

In an
action film



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In 1995, I married a movie producer. Although I seemed to have everything to make me happy—glamour, wealth, and a loving husband—I was depressed and sad. I decided to stop acting.

REMEMBERING MY CHILDHOOD FAITH

I began to remember with fondness the faith that I had when I was a little girl. Back then, each Saturday my sister and I went to visit a family of Jehovah's Witnesses. The father, Joe McGrath, studied the Bible with us together with his three daughters. Theirs was a warm and loving family, and "Uncle Joe" treated his wife and children with respect. I also enjoyed going with them to their Christian meetings. Sometimes we went to big assemblies. Those were happy times. I felt safe with the Witnesses.

In contrast, terrible things happened to me in my own home. My father's way of life caused my mother a lot of grief, and she became deeply depressed. When I was about ten, Mother stopped associating with Jehovah's Witnesses. I continued halfheartedly and was baptized at age 17. But soon afterward, I became involved in unchristian

conduct and was no longer a part of the congregation.

I DECIDED TO RETURN

Shortly after my wedding, two overseers from the local congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses came to visit me. They explained how I could return to Jehovah God, and they arranged for a missionary named Cindy to help me. By this time, I had lost much of my faith, so I asked her to prove to me that the Bible really is God's Word. She showed me examples of Bible prophecies that have been fulfilled. Gradually, we became close friends, and she invited me to study the basic teachings of the Bible with her. I accepted. For the first time, I came to appreciate that Jehovah is a God of love, who wants me to be happy.

When I started going to Christian meetings again, I found that I enjoyed the company of the Witnesses much more than the company of people in the movie business. But my childhood experiences left me feeling that I could not trust anyone, and I did not like myself. A member of the congregation helped me when she showed me from the Bible how to deal with those emotional problems, and I also learned to make genuine friends.

SOMETHING BETTER THAN GLAMOUR

In 1997, my husband and I moved to Hollywood, California, U.S.A. There I became more involved in helping people to benefit from the wisdom of God's Word. Teaching the Bible has given me more satisfaction than all the glamour of acting and starring in movies. For example, in 2002, I met up with Cheri, an old acquaintance from Hong Kong. In many ways our experiences in life had been similar. She had been Miss Hong Kong the year before I was. In fact, when I won the title, she was the one who crowned me. She also became a movie actor and later a producer, working with famous directors. She too had moved to Hollywood.

My heart went out to Cheri when I learned that she had lost her fiancé to a sudden heart attack.

She could find no consolation from her Buddhist religion. Like me, she had achieved the glamorous life that others envy, yet she was sad and unable to trust anyone. I began sharing with her what I had learned from the Bible, but her Buddhist background made it difficult for her to appreciate it.

One day in 2003, Cheri called me from Vancouver, Canada, where she was making a film. Excitedly, she told me that she had been driving and admiring the countryside when suddenly she started to pray out loud: "Tell me, Who is the true God? What is your name?" At that moment, she drove by a Kingdom Hall and saw the name Jehovah. That, she felt, was a reply from God, and she wanted to meet with Jehovah's Witnesses as soon as possible. I made arrangements, and within a few days, she was at the meeting of a Chinese-language congregation in Vancouver.

My friend Cheri
on a movie set



"These people are genuinely interested in me," Cheri told me later. "I can tell them how I feel." I was very pleased to hear

Cheri today



that, because when Cheri was in the movie business, she never made friends. Cheri continued attending the meetings. But in 2005, she signed a contract to produce two epic films in China, making it necessary for her to return to Hong Kong. Happily, in 2006, Cheri dedicated her life to Jehovah and was baptized at a Witness assembly in Hong Kong. Although she wanted to serve Jehovah more fully, her work in the movie business made things very difficult for her, and she was very unhappy.

THE JOY OF HELPING OTHERS

In 2009, Cheri's whole situation in life changed. She decided to withdraw from the movie industry

I have found that helping people to understand God's Word makes me genuinely happy



in order to serve Jehovah fully. She made many new friends in the Christian congregation. She became a full-time preacher of the good news of the Kingdom and really enjoyed helping people find a better way of life.—Matthew 24:14.

Then Cheri decided to learn Nepalese to support the growing group of Nepalese-speaking Witnesses in Hong Kong. I should explain that most Nepalese people in Hong Kong tend to be ignored or even despised because they speak little English or Chinese and because their customs are different. Cheri told me how much she enjoyed helping these people to understand the Bible. For example, when calling from house to house one day, she met a Nepalese woman who knew a little about Jesus but nothing about the true God, Jehovah. Cheri used the Bible to show her that Jesus prayed to his Father in heaven. When the woman realized that she could pray to the true God, whose name is Jehovah, she opened her heart to accept the good news. Soon her husband and daughter were also studying the Bible.—Psalm 83:18; Luke 22:41, 42.

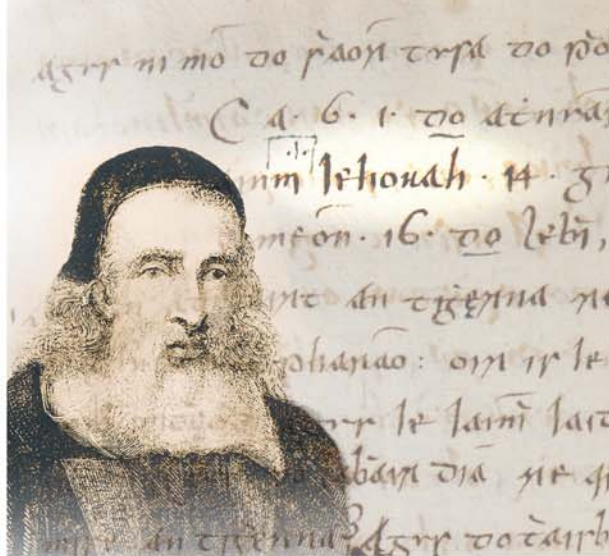
When I saw how much Cheri enjoyed preaching full-time, I asked myself, 'What prevents me from doing what she is doing?' By this time, I too was living in Hong Kong again. I decided to reorganize my life to share more fully in teaching Bible truth. I have found that listening to people and helping them to understand God's Word makes me genuinely happy.

For instance, I have been able to study the Bible with a Vietnamese woman who was always sad and often had tears in her eyes. Now she has a joyful outlook on life and really enjoys associating with the congregation.

Both Cheri and I found something far better than glamour. Although being in the movie industry was exciting and brought us fame, teaching people about Jehovah God is more satisfying because it brings glory to him. We have certainly experienced the truth of Jesus' words: "There is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving."—Acts 20:35. ■

Bedell's Bible

One Small Step to Better Bible Understanding



Portrait: Reproduced by kind permission of Emmanuel College, Cambridge; text: With the permission of the governor and guardians of Marsh's Library, Dublin

WHEN English cleric William Bedell went to Ireland in 1627, he found a very puzzling situation. Ireland, a predominantly Catholic country, was ruled by Protestant Britain. Protestant Reformers had already translated the Bible into local languages all over Europe. Yet no one seemed interested in translating it into Irish.

Bedell felt strongly that the Irish people “ought not to be neglected till they can learn English.” He set out to produce a Bible in the Irish language. But he met with bitter opposition, particularly from Protestant sources. Why was that?

OPPOSITION TO THE USE OF IRISH

Bedell made it his business to learn Irish himself. He encouraged students to use Irish when he became provost, or head, of Trinity College in Dublin and when he later became the bishop of Kilmore. As a matter of fact, when Queen Elizabeth I of England founded Trinity College, she did so to produce ministers who could teach her subjects the Bible’s message in their mother tongue. Bedell tried to make that happen.

In the Kilmore diocese, by far the majority of people spoke Irish. So Bedell insisted on having ministers who could speak Irish. He made his appeal in the spirit of the apostle Paul’s words at 1 Corinthians 14:19, which says: “In a congrega-

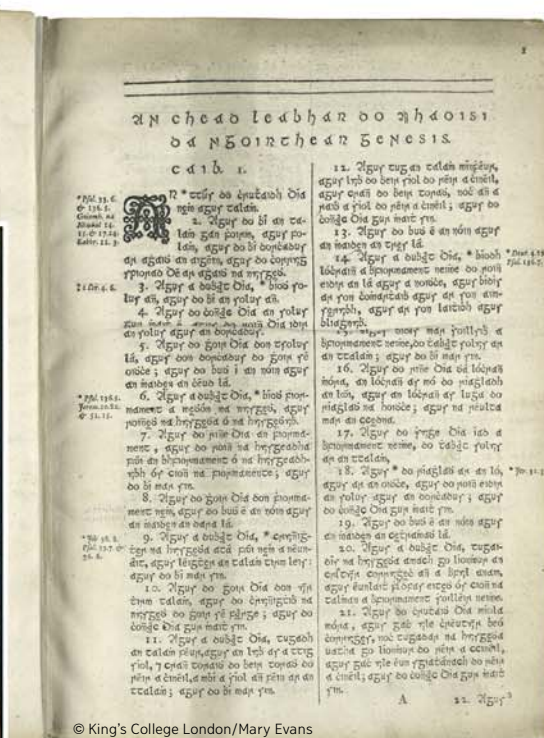
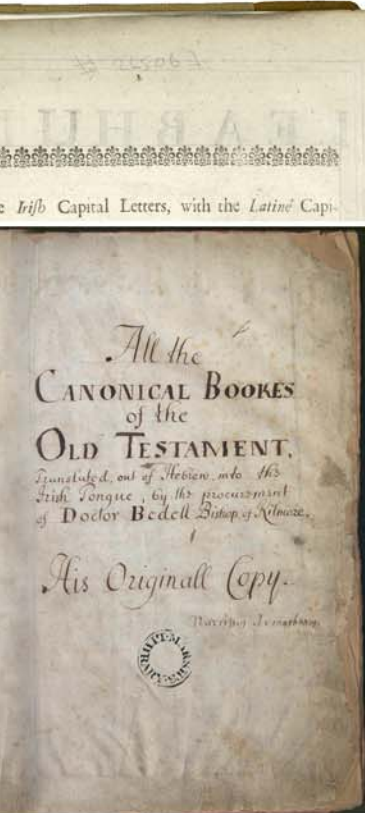
tion I would rather speak five words with my mind, that I might also instruct others, than ten thousand words in a tongue,” that is, in a language little understood.

But influential authority figures made every effort to stop him. According to historians, some asserted that the use of Irish was “dangerous to the State” and others suggested that it was “against the interests of the Government.” Some felt that it was in the interests of England to keep the Irish in ignorance. In fact, laws were enacted that required the Irish to abandon their own language and customs and to learn English and follow English ways and manners.

BEDELL’S BIBLE PROJECT

Bedell was not deterred by such dictatorial views. Early in the 1630’s, he started translating the recently published English-language Bible (the *King James Version* of 1611) into Irish. He wanted to produce a Bible that was understandable to as many people as possible. He felt strongly that the poor people could not search the Scriptures to find the way to everlasting life as long as the Bible remained a sealed book to them.—John 17:3.

Bedell was not the first to see this. Some 30 years earlier, another bishop, William Daniel, had



The title page of Bedell's original manuscript, circa 1640, and the published Bible, 1685

With the permission of the governor and guardians of Marsh's Library, Dublin

seen how difficult it was for anyone to learn what the Bible taught when it came, as he put it, “in the cloud of an unknown tongue.” Daniel had translated the Christian Greek Scriptures into Irish. Bedell now took on the task of translating the Hebrew Scriptures. What is known as Bedell’s Bible includes both his work and William Daniel’s earlier work. As things turned out, Bedell’s Bible—the first complete Bible in Irish—was the *only* translation of the Bible into Irish for the next 300 years.

Bedell, a qualified Hebrew scholar, enlisted two native speakers of Irish to help with the translation from English into Irish. As they progressed with their work, Bedell, along with one or two trusted helpers, painstakingly checked and revised each verse. For reference, they consulted an Italian translation made by Swiss theologian

Giovanni Diodati, as well as the Greek *Septuagint* and a precious old Hebrew Bible manuscript.

The team followed the lead of the translators of the *King James Version* (many of whom Bedell would have known personally) and included God’s personal name in a number of places in their Bible. For example, at Exodus 6:3, they rendered God’s name “*Iehovah*.” Bedell’s original manuscript is preserved in Marsh’s Library, Dublin, Ireland.—See the box “Bedell Remembered and Recognized.”

FINALLY PUBLISHED

Bedell completed his project about 1640. But he could not immediately publish it. Why? For one thing, he still faced unrelenting opposition. Detractors vilified Bedell’s chief translator, hoping thus to discredit his work. They even maliciously

“When we read Bedell’s Bible, we heard the words of the Bible in our mother tongue. This was a crucial key that opened the way for me and my family to learn the wonderful truths found in the Scriptures”

had him arrested and imprisoned. As if that were not enough, Bedell found himself in the middle of a bloody and bitter anti-English rebellion, which broke out in 1641. Local Irish people protected Bedell for a time despite his English origins because they recognized his genuine concern for them. Eventually, however, rebel soldiers imprisoned him in very poor conditions. No doubt this hastened his death in 1642. He never saw his work published.

Bedell's work almost perished completely when his home was ransacked and destroyed. Thankfully a close friend managed to rescue all his translated documents. In time, Narcissus Marsh, who later became the archbishop of Armagh and the primate of the Church of Ireland, got hold of them. He received financial support from scientist Robert Boyle and courageously published Bedell's Bible in 1685.

A SMALL YET SIGNIFICANT FORWARD STEP

Bedell's Bible did not receive worldwide acclaim. Still, it was one small yet significant step toward better Bible understanding, especially for people who spoke Irish—not only in Ireland but also in Scotland and many other places. They could now satisfy their spiritual need as they read God's Word in their mother tongue.—Matthew 5: 3, 6.

Bedell's Bible has continued to help lovers of truth to do that right up to modern times. One speaker of Irish, who in relatively recent times learned what the Bible really teaches, says: "When we read Bedell's Bible, we heard the words of the Bible in our mother tongue. This was a crucial key that opened the way for me and my family to learn the wonderful truths found in the Scriptures." ■

Bedell Remembered and Recognized

For nearly 300 years after the publication of Bedell's Bible in 1685, no other complete Bible in Irish was published. Then, in 1981, Catholic scholars produced the *Maynooth Bible*, a translation in modern Irish. In its foreword, the *Maynooth Bible* recognizes the "great achievement on the part of The Church of Ireland when they published their version of the Bible in the 17th century." That, of course, was Bedell's translation, although, in fact, until very recently the Catholic Church prohibited Catholics from reading the Bedell Bible.

The scholars who produced the *Maynooth Bible* published some of their preparatory work in 1971. One part of this was the *Pentatúc* (Pentateuch), the first five books of the Bible. In recognition of the pioneering work that Bedell had done, those Catholic scholars included the note "In memory of William Bedell" inside its cover page.

The translators of the *Pentatúc* used the Irish term "lávé" for God's name in many of the places where it appears in the Hebrew Scriptures, represented by the Tetragrammaton or YHWH. Examples can be found at Exodus 6:2-13. Sadly, when the complete *Maynooth Bible* was eventually published, the editors—unlike Bedell—decided to remove the divine name completely from their translation and substitute "*an Tiarna*" (the Lord) in its place.

EXODUS 6:3
BEDELL'S BIBLE

3 Agus do éabhréim mé
 oh, Abrahám, do Isaac, 7 do
 ed náimh. Be úile éabhráir
 mé 7 do éabhráir mé.

EXODUS 6:3
MAYNOOTH BIBLE

"Mise an Tiarna. 3Tha
 d'Iósac, agus do Iacób fao
 1'; ach níor chuireas mé fé
 éin 'an Tiarna'. Dhaingnig
 bhariaim dóibh tír Chaná
 eoraithe. 3D'eist mé chom

Are You Disappointed in God?

“WHY ME? Why did God permit this to happen to me?” Those are questions that disturbed 24-year-old Sidnei from Brazil. After an accident on a waterslide, he became permanently confined to a wheelchair.

Suffering that results from accident, illness, death of a loved one, natural disaster, or war can easily make people feel disappointed in God. This is nothing new. The patriarch Job of ancient times was struck with one calamity after another. Mistakenly he blamed God, saying: “I cry to you for help, but you do not answer me; I stand up, but you just look at me. You have cruelly turned against me; with the full might of your hand, you assault me.”—Job 30:20, 21.

Job did not know the source of his troubles nor why they came upon him or were permitted. Happily, the Bible enlightens us on the reason why such events occur as well as how we should react to them.

DID GOD INTEND FOR PEOPLE TO SUFFER?

Regarding God, the Bible tells us: “Perfect is his activity, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness who is never unjust; righteous and upright is he.” (Deuteronomy 32:4) That being the case, is it consistent or even comprehensible that a God who is “righteous and upright” would intend for humans to suffer or that he would use calamities to punish or purify them?

On the contrary, the Bible tells us: “When under trial, let no one say: ‘I am being tried by God.’ For with evil things God cannot be tried, nor does he himself try anyone.” (James 1:13) In fact, we learn from the Bible that God gave mankind a perfect start. He gave the first humans, Adam and Eve, a beautiful home, all of life’s necessities, and meaningful work to do. God told them: “Be fruitful and become many, fill the earth and subdue it.” Adam and Eve certainly had no reason to be disappointed in God.—Genesis 1:28.

But today, living conditions are far from perfect. In fact, throughout history, mankind’s plight has been severe. True is the description: “All creation keeps on groaning together and being in pain together until now.” (Romans 8:22) What happened?

WHY IS THERE SUFFERING?

To understand why there is suffering, we should go back to the time when it started. Induced by a rebellious angel, later called Satan the Devil, Adam and Eve rejected God’s standards of right and wrong as represented by the command for them to refrain from eating of “the tree of the knowledge of good and bad.” The Devil told Eve that they would not die if they disobeyed God, thus accusing God of being a liar. Satan also accused God of withholding from his subjects the right to determine good and bad. (Genesis 2:17; 3:1-6) Satan implied that mankind would be better off without God’s rulership. All of this raised an issue of vital importance—Was God fit to rule?

The Devil raised yet another issue. He accused humans of serving God with selfish motives. About faithful Job, the Devil said to God: “Have you not put up a protective hedge around him and his house and everything he has? . . . But, for a change, stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your very face.” (Job 1:10, 11) Though Satan’s words were about Job, the implication was that all humans have selfish motives for serving God.

HOW GOD RESOLVES THE ISSUES

What would be the best way to resolve those fundamental issues once and for all? God, who is all-wise, had the best solution—one that does not leave us feeling disappointed. (Romans 11:33) He decided to allow humans to rule themselves for a time and let the results prove whose rulership is superior.

The miserable conditions on earth today are clear evidence that human rulership has utterly failed. Not only have worldly governments failed to bring peace, security, and happiness but they have also brought the earth to the brink of ruin. This reinforces the fundamental truth stated in the Bible: “It does not belong to man who is walking even to direct his step.” (Jeremiah 10:23) Only God’s way of ruling can guarantee lasting peace, happiness, and prosperity to mankind, because that is God’s purpose.—Isaiah 45:18.

How, then, will God bring the human condition in line with his purpose? Recall that Jesus taught his followers to pray: “Let your Kingdom come. Let your will take place, as in heaven, also on earth.” (Matthew 6:10) Yes, in due time God, through his Kingdom, will remove all causes of suffering. (Daniel 2:44) Poverty, disease, and death will be things of the past. Regarding the poor, the Bible indicates that God “will rescue the poor who cry for help.” (Psalm 72:12-14) As for the sick, the Bible promises: “No resident will say: ‘I am sick.’” (Isaiah 33:24) Even concerning the dead ones who are in God’s memory, Jesus said: “The hour is coming in which all those in the me-

morial tombs will hear his voice and come out.” (John 5:28, 29) What heartwarming promises!

OVERCOMING DISAPPOINTMENT

Some 17 years after his accident, Sidnei, mentioned at the outset of this article, said: “I never blamed Jehovah God for the accident, but I have to admit that at first I was disappointed in him. There are days when I feel really down, and I cry when I think about my physical disability. However, from the Bible I have come to understand that the accident was not punishment from God. As the Bible says, ‘time and unexpected events overtake us all.’ Praying to Jehovah as well as reading specific scriptures has made me stronger spiritually and kept my spirits up.”—Ecclesiastes 9:11; Psalm 145:18; 2 Corinthians 4:8, 9, 16.

Keeping in mind the reasons why God has permitted suffering and how its effects will soon be undone helps us to overcome any feeling of disappointment in God that we may have. We are assured that God is “the rewarder of those earnestly seeking him.” No one who rests his faith on him and his Son will be disappointed.—Hebrews 11:6; Romans 10:11. ■



Building faith in God’s promises helps us to overcome any feeling of disappointment in him



WHY DOES THE BIBLE DESCRIBE EVENTS OF OUR TIME?—LUKE 21:10, 11.

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Why are there prophecies in the Bible?

Many detailed prophecies are found throughout the Bible. No man can foretell the future in detail. Thus, the fulfillment of Bible prophecies provides convincing evidence that the Bible is God's Word.—Read **Joshua 23:14**; **2 Peter 1:20, 21**.

Bible prophecies already fulfilled give us a sound basis for faith in God. (Hebrews 11:1) They also give us confidence that God's promises of a better future will come true. Thus, Bible prophecy gives us sure hope.—Read **Psalms 37:29**; **Romans 15:4**.

How do Bible prophecies help us?

Some prophecies warn God's servants to take action. For example, when first-century Christians saw certain prophecies fulfilled, they left Jerusalem. Later, when the city was destroyed because most of its people had rejected Jesus, the Christians were far away in a safe place.—Read **Luke 21:20-22**.

Today, fulfilled prophecies show that God's Kingdom will soon bring an end to human kingdoms and governments. (Daniel 2:44; Luke 21:31) So it is urgent that each person act now to gain the approval of the King, Jesus Christ, whom God has appointed.—Read **Luke 21:34-36**.

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