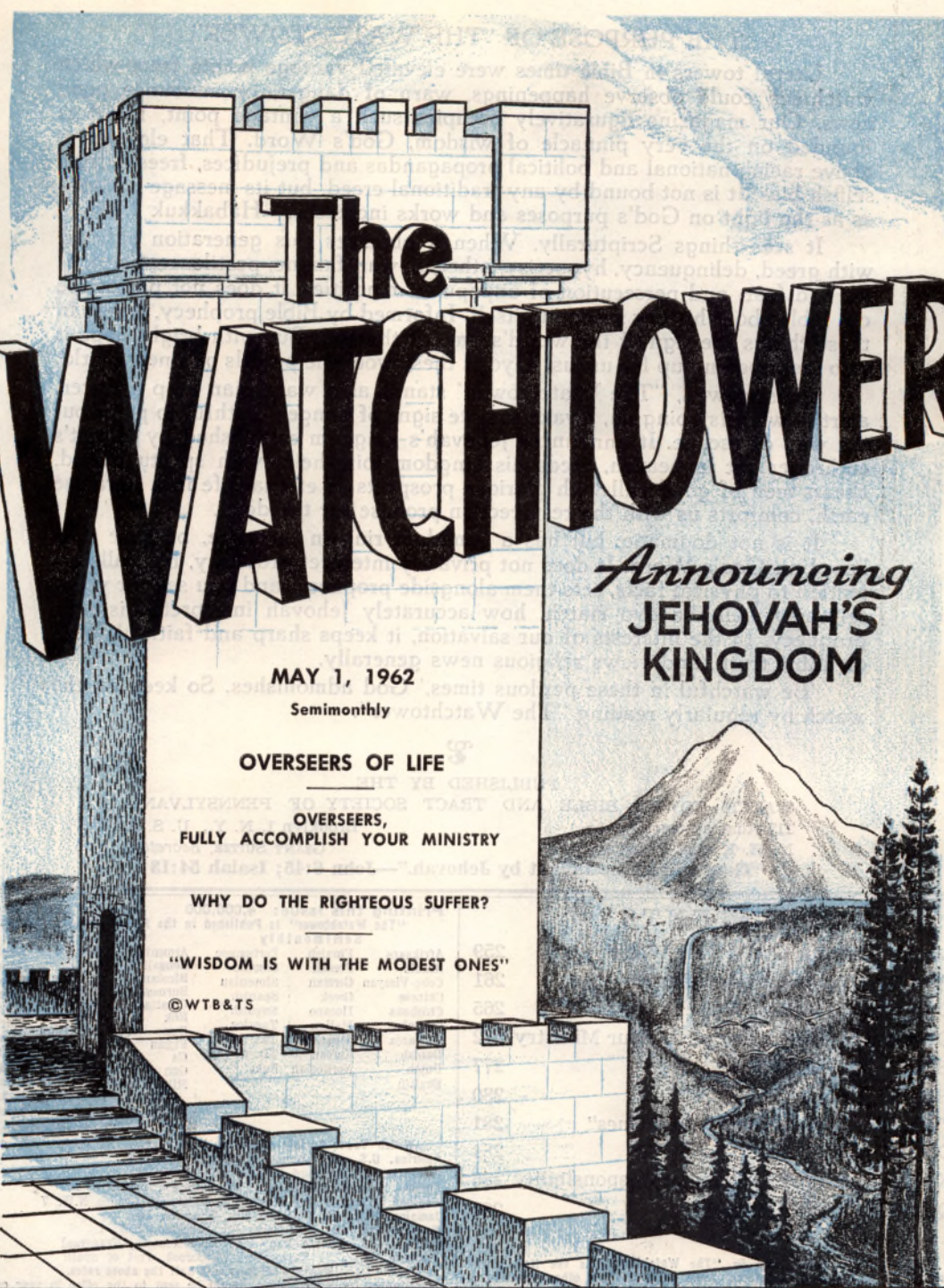




The WATCHTOWER

Announcing
**JEHOVAH'S
KINGDOM**

MAY 1, 1962

Semimonthly

OVERSEERS OF LIFE

OVERSEERS,
FULLY ACCOMPLISH YOUR MINISTRY

WHY DO THE RIGHTEOUS SUFFER?

"WISDOM IS WITH THE MODEST ONES"

© WTB&TS

"YOU ARE MY WITNESSES," SAYS JEHOVAH.—Isa. 43:12

THE PURPOSE OF "THE WATCHTOWER"

Literal towers in Bible times were elevated vantage points from which watchmen could observe happenings, warn of danger, or announce good news. Our magazine figuratively occupies such a vantage point, for it is founded on the very pinnacle of wisdom, God's Word. That elevates it above racial, national and political propagandas and prejudices, frees it from selfish bias. It is not bound by any traditional creed, but its message advances as the light on God's purposes and works increases.—Habakkuk 2:1-3.

It sees things Scripturally. When it observes this generation afflicted with greed, delinquency, hypocrisy, atheism, war, famine, pestilence, perplexity and fear, and persecution of unpopular minorities, it does not parrot the old fable about history repeating itself. Informed by Bible prophecy, it sees in these things the sign of the world's time of the end. But with bright hope it also sees opening up for us just beyond these woes the portals of a new world.

Thus viewed, "The Watchtower" stands as a watchman atop a tower, alert to what is going on, awake to note signs of danger, faithful to point out the way of escape. It announces Jehovah's kingdom established by Christ's enthronement in heaven, feeds his kingdom joint-heirs with spiritual food, cheers men of good will with glorious prospects of eternal life in a paradise earth, comforts us with the resurrection promise for the dead.

It is not dogmatic, but has a confident ring in its voice, because it is based on God's Word. It does not privately interpret prophecy, but calls attention to physical facts, sets them alongside prophecy, and you see for yourself how well the two match, how accurately Jehovah interprets his own prophecy. In the interests of our salvation, it keeps sharp and faithful focus on Bible truth, and views religious news generally.

'Be watchful in these perilous times,' God admonishes. So keep on the watch by regularly reading "The Watchtower".



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"They will all be taught by Jehovah."—John 6:45; Isaiah 54:13

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Announcing
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ONLY the Almighty God could set before righteous men and women the certain hope of everlasting life in the new world. God's promised new world will not be like this world that is filled with uncertain-

ty, wickedness, disappointment, pain and suffering. Since the new world is at hand, this world is limited, its days are numbered. But the days of the new world, which Jehovah God is creating, will be numberless. To enjoy it one will need to live forever; but to live everlastingly in God's new world, one must begin living for the new world now.

How is this done? Begin by finding out what God wants you to do. Many persons shy away from informing themselves as to exactly what God wants them to do. That is no way to live for God's new world. Those who would live now for the new world must begin to inform themselves of God's requirements for life and then take action to live in harmony with those requirements.

One who lives now for the new world will make a clean break from this world by not using it as a model for his conduct: "Quit being fashioned after this system of things, but be transformed by making your

Living now
**FOR
GOD'S
NEW WORLD**

mind over, that you may prove to yourselves the good and acceptable and perfect will of God."

(Rom. 12:2) To live for the new world, one cannot be like this world. But since this world opposes one's changing and

going in the opposite direction, a vigorous personal effort is needed.

To live for the new world we have to prove for ourselves "the good and acceptable and perfect will of God." So we need to know what kind of person God wants us to be. True Christians should be images of Jehovah God and copies of Jesus Christ. This requires one to make his mind over, for he cannot be running in the way of the world that is doomed and at the same time according to God's will and New World standards. We cannot live for the desires of men, but rather we must live for the will of God. We must do as Peter says in the fourth chapter of his first letter: "Arm yourselves with the same mental disposition [of Christ]; because the person that has suffered in the flesh has desisted from sins, to the end that he may live the remainder of his time in the flesh, no more for the desires of men, but for God's will." —1 Pet. 4:1, 2.

Here Peter shows that man's real purpose in living is for the doing of God's will,

in contrast to the will of men and of nations. Peter shows, too, that if we are living according to the will of God, we will suffer. Today there is a lot of suffering in the world, but most of it is on account of unrighteousness. Because of wicked lives many persons are suffering. But Peter says that those who make their minds over and who live for the new world have desisted from sins and now they must arm themselves with the mind of Christ. That means taking in knowledge of what Jesus Christ taught and then living by those principles, which are actually New World standards.

It is bad enough that one has indulged himself and served sin in the past, not to speak of continuing to do so in the future until stopped at Armageddon. So Peter continues in the next two verses: "For the time that has passed by is sufficient for you to have worked out the will of the nations when you proceeded in deeds of loose conduct, lusts, excesses with wine, revelries, drinking matches, and illegal idolatries. Because you do not continue running with them in this course to the same low sink of debauchery, they are puzzled and go on speaking abusively of you."—1 Pet. 4:3, 4.

Those who want to live for God's new world cannot afford to fear what men of this world will think about them and do to them. Popularity with the world has never yet brought life and never can bring it; rather it brings enmity with God. (Jas. 4:4) When you abandon the course of this world and walk in New World pathways, the old world will range up against you in ridicule and hostility. Because you do not run with the world, worldlings may speak abusively of you. Yet this course of New World living is the right one and wins the friendship of God.

Live for the new world now by redeeming the time, buying it out at the cost of nonessential things. Those who do not buy

out the time to live by the divine will but who continue to 'live the remainder of their time for the desires of men' are not living for the new world and will not have divine protection to survive the war of Armageddon into the righteous new world.

Make time, then, to study God's Word. Do this in association with those who believe the New World promises and who live for the new world now; namely, the New World society of Jehovah's witnesses. Take advantage of the opportunity to have a home Bible study, at no cost to yourself. Jehovah's witnesses in your community are willing to help you make progress in New World living.

Now is the time of all times to keep steady, clearheaded, walking in the advancing light of the new world. Keep on the watch lest the complete end, at Armageddon, overtake you unawares. It comes as a snare upon this world, as Jesus Christ warned: "But pay attention to yourselves that your hearts never become weighed down with overeating and heavy drinking and anxieties of life, and suddenly that day be instantly upon you as a snare. For it will come in upon all those dwelling upon the face of all the earth. Keep awake, then."—Luke 21:34-36.

Members of this generation who long to gain the prize of life in the new world must awake to the will of God, breaking off with this old world before its disastrous end. All professing Christians and persons of goodwill must now prove whether they are living for this doomed world or are living for the righteous new world of endless success. The time past in the lives of Christians is enough for them to have done the will of the nations, going in the way of the worldly majority. The new world is at hand. Turn the attention and hopes of as many as you can to the new world. Live for it now and make sure of everlasting life in it after this world's end.

Why
DO
THE

Righteous

How do you react
to suffering? Do
you blame God?

SUFFER?

WHEN earthquakes and hurricanes kill and maim without respect for whether their victims are righteous or wicked, do you blame God? When you read that an innocent man spent years in prison for the offense of another, do you wonder why such injustices occur? What do you think when an upright, God-fearing Christian writhes with the pain of incurable cancer, while his loose-living, unprincipled neighbor prospers and enjoys excellent health? Does it cause you to wonder why the righteous suffer?

Some feel that a righteous person should be rewarded with freedom from suffering, that suffering is an evidence of one's having committed unrighteous acts. That was the argument used by the three supposed friends of Job when they came to comfort him. Job was suffering indescribably from disease and pain. He had lost all his material possessions, including his ten lovely children. His brothers and intimate acquaintances, who had held him in high esteem, detested his very presence. Even his wife turned away from him and recommended that he curse God and die.—Job, chaps. 1, 2; 19:13-19.

After Job's three visitors had silently observed his excruciating pain and extreme humiliation for seven days and nights, finally one of them spoke, not comfortingly or sympathetically, but with stinging, cutting words that accused Job of unrighteous acts for which he was now suffering punishment. "Remember, please," said Eli-

phaz: "Who that is innocent has ever perished? And where have the upright ever been effaced? According to what I have seen, those devising what is hurtful and those sowing trouble will themselves reap it. Through the breath of God they perish, and through the spirit of his anger they come to an end." Yes, contended Eliphaz, God is punishing you for your sins, Job. That is why you are suffering.—Job 4:7-9.

Have you not heard people, even clergymen, use the same argument: that calamities are acts of God to punish people for their sins? However, the charge against Job was false. God was not punishing him because of some unrighteous acts he had committed. Job was righteous. That is why Jehovah said to Eliphaz the Temanite: "My anger has grown hot against you and your two companions, for you men have not spoken concerning me what is truthful as has my servant Job."—Job 42:7.

GOD NOT TO BLAME

Today human suffering is observed on every hand. Millions of people starve and



live in extreme poverty. Unlike Job, who "did not sin or ascribe unseemliness to God," many become embittered and blame God. This was especially true during World War II when bombs rained from the sky, spreading death and suffering to both good people and bad. Yet when men break God's laws by hating and warring against one another, can they properly blame Him when suffering results? If a parent warns his children that they should not fight among themselves and they disregard the good counsel and assault one another with sticks and stones, is the parent responsible if bruises and injuries are suffered? He is no more responsible than God is for human suffering when people disregard his laws.

Even when righteous servants of God suffer as a result of wars and other disasters such as hurricanes, floods and earthquakes, still God is not to blame. It is true that in specific instances in times past God caused disasters to execute the wicked, but on those occasions, as in the case of the cataclysmic flood in Noah's day, a warning was given so that there was no question in anyone's mind that God brought the destruction as he forewarned. But there is no Scriptural authority for believing that disasters in general are calamities God brings upon people to punish them for their sins. To the contrary, earthquakes, for instance, are found to be caused primarily by the settling of the earth, and not by a direct intervention of God. Instead of such calamities being acts of God, chance and unforeseen occurrence are involved.

When the first human pair willfully disobeyed God they were expelled from the garden of Eden. They thus lost for themselves and their descendants the special protection and blessing of their Creator. Therefore, except for special instances involving the accomplishment of God's own purpose, what happened to mankind from day to day was governed by chance and

not by God's direction. So it is "because time and unforeseen occurrence befall them all" that good people and bad suffer similarly from natural disasters, accidents, fires, and so forth.—Eccl. 9:11.

BOTH RIGHTEOUS AND WICKED SUFFER

Sickness and disease are a chief cause of suffering. Even the young suffer painful diseases, and this is true whether one is righteous or wicked. Faithful young Timothy had trouble with his stomach and suffered "frequent cases of sickness." (1 Tim. 5:23) Since Paul makes particular mention of this in his letter, it appears that Timothy's sickness resulted in his experiencing a great deal of suffering. It seems that Paul likewise suffered some physical affliction, which he referred to as a "thorn in the flesh."—2 Cor. 12:7-9.

Why did these righteous men suffer, as did other faithful Bible characters? For the same reason that righteous servants of God today do—because of inherited imperfections due to sin. Humans have received imperfect bodies from their parents, and their right conduct before God does not now change or cure such inherited weaknesses or susceptibilities to disease. Because of this a righteous person may suffer, and even perish, but a wicked one may continue a long time in his badness. On the other hand, the wicked too are born with inherited physical weaknesses that may lead to their experiencing suffering. The matter of chance and unforeseen occurrence is involved.—Job 14:4; Rom. 5:12.

Those who have walked in the ways of righteousness may also suffer because of exercising poor judgment or failure to apply Scriptural counsel at all times. This is true of a Christian, who, contrary to Scriptural advice, marries an unbeliever and suffers marital troubles as a result. Or perhaps he uses poor judgment, not eating properly, and getting insufficient rest, so

that he runs himself down and suffers because of it. David failed on one occasion to apply Scriptural counsel and committed adultery with Bath-sheba. This foolish act brought him much suffering, even though he repented and did not repeat his sin. Peter, too, in a spiritually weakened condition, denied Christ three times. The Scriptures say he wept bitterly.—2 Sam. 11:2-4; Matt. 26:75.

Peter learned a good lesson and later gave this appropriate warning to Christians: "Let none of you suffer as a murderer or a thief or an evildoer or as a busybody in other people's matters." Even though one has formerly pursued a righteous course, such misconduct warrants correction that can be grievous. One who suffers for such things does not suffer as a righteous man. So take care that you do not suffer for your lack of good judgment or failure to heed Scriptural counsel.—1 Pet. 4:15.

The wicked often suffer because of ignoring God's counsel by pursuing a life of overindulgence and licentious living. It is said that Herod the Great suffered loathsome diseases acquired because of his evil living habits, and that his palace resounded with his agonizing cries. Today thousands of persons live a life of misery as a result of venereal diseases contracted because of their loose living. But even though God's law is a protection to the righteous, still it appears that they have more than their share of suffering. Are there reasons for this?

SUFFERING BECAUSE OF BEING RIGHTEOUS

It is observed that persons who have experienced much suffering are often amenable to righteousness. Their experience has softened them so that they readily conform to God's law and follow a right course. However, a primary reason why the righteous suffer is that they are righteous. The

case of Joseph's unjust imprisonment serves as an example.

When Joseph was sold into slavery in Egypt he was purchased by the Egyptian court official Potiphar. Soon he came to be in charge of Potiphar's entire household. Joseph was a very handsome man and Potiphar's wife yearned to have relations with him; she continually urged him to lie with her. Finally Joseph, a righteous man, answered: "How could I commit this great badness and actually sin against God?" This so angered Potiphar's wife that she falsely accused Joseph and had him thrown in prison, where he suffered unjust confinement for more than two years.—Gen. 39:9.

Do you not admire a man like this, one that will stand up for what is right? Would you not be proud of a son that would so appreciate your counsel that he would suffer ridicule and persecution in order to live by it? Imagine, then, how happy God is when his children maintain a course of right conduct in this wicked world with all its temptations. But you may ask, Why does God allow his servants to suffer? The answer lies in an issue that was raised by the rebel angel Satan the Devil. The issue involves man's integrity, and this is shown in the case of righteous Job.

At a meeting of the angelic sons of God in heaven Jehovah asked Satan: "Have you set your heart upon my servant Job, that there is no one like him in the earth, a man blameless and upright, fearing God and turning aside from bad?" The fact that God called Job's faithfulness to Satan's attention indicates there was a contention as to whether human creatures would keep integrity to God. Satan's reply proves that there was such an issue, for right away he makes excuses for Job's faithfulness. He asserts that Job serves God because of the material blessings received and not because he loves him. He suggests: "For a change,

thrust out your hand, please, and touch everything he has and see whether he will not curse you to your very face.' Accordingly Jehovah said to Satan: 'Look! Everything that he has is in your hand. Only against him himself do not thrust out your hand!' "—Job 1:7-12.

Job maintained a righteous course despite everything the Devil could do; he proved that he served God because he loved him and wanted to be pleasing in his sight. Job believed in the integrity of his course, and so proclaimed to his accusers: "Until I expire I shall not take away my integrity from myself!"—Job 27:5.

Men of integrity have always been willing to suffer for what they believed in. Some have even sacrificed their lives because of love for a person or a country. The Bible records example after example of other persons that have had strong love for Almighty God. Above everything else, they wanted to live a righteous life in order to be an honor to God and thus prove the Devil's claim that he could turn all human creatures away from God to be a lie. Although pursuing a course of righteousness has resulted in their suffering a great deal, they have maintained a proper attitude.

PROPER ATTITUDE TOWARD SUFFERING

It is true that in itself suffering does not bring happiness; but if one knows that a loved one is benefited or made happy, then he can rejoice even in the suffering. That is why the apostles, after receiving a flogging for preaching the good news of the Kingdom, "went their way from before the Sanhedrin, rejoicing because they had been counted worthy to be dishonored in behalf of his name." They were obeying God's

command to preach and they knew that this was pleasing to him. Therefore they were happy, for, as the scripture says, "if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are happy."—Acts 5:40, 41; 1 Pet. 3:14.

This helps one to appreciate what Jesus meant when he said in the sermon on the mount: "Happy are you when people reproach you and persecute you and lyingly say every sort of wicked thing against you for my sake. Rejoice and leap for joy, since your reward is great in the heavens."

(Matt. 5:10-12) When a Christian keeps integrity to God and suffers because of it he rejoices in the knowledge that he is proving the Devil a liar and is thus making Jehovah's heart rejoice. Although the suffering does not make him happy, the fact that it contributes to the vindication of God's name does. Then, too, one can rejoice because of the reward that is promised to the faithful.—Prov. 27:11.

Everyone today is bound to experience suffering because of living amid this wicked system of things and being subject to inherited imperfections due to sin. The righteous can also expect to suffer because of keeping integrity to God. But they can take heart and rejoice, for there is a new world of God's making that is now so very close at hand. There suffering *will be no more*, for God promises that "he will wipe out every tear from their eyes, and death will be no more, neither will mourning nor outcry nor pain be any more." So never let present suffering embitter you. Look to the future. Yes, place your hope and confidence in God's promised new world, where there will be no suffering.—Rev. 21:4; 2 Pet. 3:13.

COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE

- The Faithful Creator.
- The Name of Jehovah—a Strong Tower.
- Who Can Be Trusted?
- The Wisdom of God.
- The Book of Mormon Compared with the Bible.

JEHOVAH is the great Overseer. All his creation he faithfully oversees to ensure that his will is accomplished and that those having the right to life walk in the proper way to retain it. He is a God of purpose and a

God of order. To maintain good organization, the spirit creatures and the animate and inanimate bodies were all set in their respective positions, and moral as well as physical laws were established to keep every creation in harmony with him. Although uncountable miles from some of his creation, he is still able to give close oversight. Commenting upon the far-reaching purview of Jehovah, the psalmist David exclaimed: "Jehovah—in the heavens is his throne. His own eyes behold, his own beaming eyes examine the sons of men." (Ps. 11:4) As the great Overseer, he inspects, directs and corrects as needed. For one to be found in harmony with his arrangements means life, whether this was in the distant past or is in this modern generation. The day for his inspection is upon us.—1 Pet. 2:12.

² The words for "overseer" in Hebrew (*pagid*) and Greek (*episkopos*) are both taken from root meanings suggesting one who visits for the purpose of inspecting. The visit or inspection might be a friendly one or a hostile one, depending upon the condition found and what was needed to correct it. To fulfill his responsibilities properly, an overseer would have to know

1. To insure all creation's being in harmony with him, what has Jehovah arranged for, and what is necessary to have life?

2. What is the meaning of the word "overseer" as taken from the Hebrew and Greek?

OVERSEERS of LIFE

what to look for, where to look and how to administer the principles of the Supreme One when faced with a given situation. Within his hand there would be as a trust the power to bestow blessing and commendation as

well as punishment and correction; but he, too, would be responsible to Jehovah as to how he fulfilled this trust.

³ The first creation of Jehovah, an only-begotten Son, proved himself a faithful overseer. Working along with his Father as a master Workman, he made "all other things . . . in the heavens and upon the earth, the things visible and the things invisible, no matter whether they are thrones or lordships or governments or authorities." (Col. 1:16) Because of his trustworthiness in taking care of his overseership while on earth, greater glory and power have been given to him as the King of Jehovah's kingdom, "so that in the name of Jesus every knee should bend of those in heaven and those on earth."—Phil. 2:10.

⁴ The life course of the only-begotten Son is very much in contrast to another one of Jehovah's spirit sons, a cherub, who was placed in charge of certain operations on the planet earth. This was no insignificant assignment, even though our planet earth is, in comparison to the vast creation of the universe, a mere speck of dust. The time had come for God to create intelligent fleshly creatures who could think and act as He did, in a miniature way. "In God's image he created him." (Gen. 1:27)

3. How did the only-begotten Son prove to be a good overseer?

4. Contrast the course of the only-begotten Son with that of the covering cherub.

There is no indication that these creatures were to be anywhere else in the universe. They were to multiply, fill the earth and subdue it all to a paradise. The spiritual overseer should have been keenly interested in the fulfillment of God's will on earth and in directing all praise and worship to the Creator of both him and the human creatures. This would be no time to lean to one's own understanding.

⁵ This perfect and obedient son of God turned against the Chief Overseer, Jehovah, and became a slanderer, an opposer, one corrupt in heart. He and the first man and woman were sentenced to death with no further privileges of oversight available to them for extending Paradise throughout the earth. The woman Eve ignored the organization arrangement of seeking direction from her head, Adam. Adam, in turn, permitted himself to be blinded by selfishness so as to be directed from a human creature lower than him organizationally rather than from Jehovah, who had given him specific instructions. They failed inspection when the great Overseer, "walking in the garden about the breezy part of the day," came to take an accounting. (Gen. 3:8) Years later the apostle Paul made reference to the downfall of the spirit overseer of the earth, when Paul was giving instructions to the young overseer Timothy and setting forth requirements for overseers in the Christian congregation. An overseer was not to be "a newly converted man, for fear that he might get puffed up with pride and fall into the judgment passed upon the Devil. Moreover, he should also have a fine testimony from people on the outside, in order that he might not fall into reproach and a snare of the Devil." (1 Tim. 3:6, 7) The power given to an overseer is no cause to puff

him up with pride, and a newly converted man would need to show that he could safely be entrusted with this authority. Life is involved.

⁶ The first human creatures chose not to be shepherded by Jehovah and as a result they as well as their offspring came under the condemnation of sin and death. Only a very few human creatures down through the course of human history have chosen to seek Jehovah's favor and become reconciled with him, but these few have been glad to have Jehovah's eyes looking upon them. They have been glad for what he has done in their behalf. When their numbers increased, so as to require organization, laws and statutes, they were glad to submit to his directions. They are glad, too, that the history of the earth, the activities of man upon it, good and bad, and God's purposes for the future have all been recorded in a Book, under divine inspiration. Considering this, we see how God has dealt with those who have chosen to serve him and how he has rewarded those who submit to his direction.

⁷ Before the global flood, which occurred about sixteen hundred years after Adam's downfall, only a very few men are mentioned favorably in the Bible. Abel, who died a faithful servant of Jehovah, and Enoch, a faithful prophet of Jehovah, were prominent among these. Noah, the great-grandson of Enoch, after he was five hundred years of age, became father to Shem, Ham and Japheth. Jehovah made a searching examination of the corrupt way in which mankind had developed upon the earth by this time, just before the great deluge, and found only eight exceptions to a condition where "every inclination of the thoughts of [man's] heart was only bad all the time."—Gen. 6:5.

5. (a) How did the covering cherub as well as Adam and Eve show disregard for Jehovah's overseership? (b) What is the danger of appointing a "newly converted man" to be an overseer?

6. How have the few faithful servants of Jehovah, in contrast to many unfaithful in the past, shown appreciation for his oversight?

7. Who are mentioned favorably before the flood, and what condition brought on the flood of Noah's day?

⁸ Noah submitted himself to the oversight of Jehovah, and Jehovah organized him and his family to complete the ark for the preserving of themselves alive, along with a token number of animals, to provide a fresh new start upon the face of the earth. Good oversight would be absolutely necessary on the part of Noah in order to complete the boat before the floodwaters broke and to round up the animals and see that there was sufficient food aboard for them as well as for himself and his family. Nothing could be left to chance. Life was involved. Everything had to be checked, and it was only when everything was in order that "Jehovah shut the door behind him." "And Noah proceeded to do according to all that God had commanded him. He did just so." (Gen. 7:16; 6:22) This is what made Noah a successful overseer.

⁹ This great deluge proved to be a picture of the way Jehovah will destroy wickedness in the last days and preserve alive those who wish to serve him correctly into a new world of righteousness. We are living in that day now, and we do well to remember the good example of Noah and his family in responding to the oversight of Jehovah, the Great Shepherd, and his organization.—Isa. 26:20, 21; Matt. 24:36-42.

¹⁰ About 426 years after the Flood we are told of the great faith of Abraham, which led to the covenant for producing the seed of blessing for all mankind. The twelve sons of his grandson Jacob were the family heads of the nation of Israel. The great Overseer, Jehovah, proved loyal to his promise to Abraham; and even though events had taken place to maneuver these Israelites into slavery in

Egypt, Jehovah organized them lovingly and oversaw their return to the land of promise. "And Jehovah was going ahead of them in the daytime in a pillar of cloud to lead them by the way, and in the nighttime in a pillar of fire."—Ex. 13:21.

¹¹ Think of moving a caravan of two or three million people, with their possessions and all the parts of the tabernacle, without the modern facilities of transport that we have today. No small task of organizing; but the seventy organizational heads under Moses, the priests, the chiefs of thousands, of hundreds, of fifties and of tens, all knew their jobs well and cooperated as a closely knit organization. Each tribe was assigned to its place around the tabernacle and its place in the order of march. Then there was the administration of laws and principles in settling questions and disputes. The job proved too great for Moses alone, and he followed the advice of his father-in-law Jethro, which proved to be practical wisdom from God, to appoint others to help him with this work: "Select out of all the people capable men, fearing God, trustworthy men, hating unjust profit; and you must set these over them as chiefs over thousands, chiefs over hundreds, chiefs over fifties and chiefs over tens. And they must judge the people on every proper occasion; and it must occur that every big case they will bring to you, but every small case they themselves will handle as judges."—Ex. 18:21, 22.

¹² The nation was to be "a kingdom of priests and a holy nation" preparatory to the coming of the Messiah. After receiving the laws and commandments from Jehovah, "Moses came and called the older men of the people and set before them all these words that Jehovah had commanded him. After that all the people answered unani-

8. How did Noah prove to be a good organizer under Jehovah's direction, and with what result to him and his family?

9. How can we take a warning from what occurred in Noah's day?

10. How did Jehovah organize the nation of Israel in fulfillment of his promise to Abraham?

11. How did Moses organize the nation of Israel in line with divine wisdom?

12. Submitting to Jehovah's oversight would result in what benefits to the Jews?

mously and said: 'All that Jehovah has spoken we are willing to do.'" (Ex. 19: 6-8) Faithfulness to this covenant would always bring them prosperity from Jehovah, but disobedience would bring their rejection. "For Jehovah your God is walking about within your camp to deliver you and to abandon your enemies to you; and your camp must prove to be holy, that he may see nothing indecent in you and certainly turn away from accompanying you."—Deut. 23:14.

¹³ For the majority their response, "All that Jehovah has spoken we are willing to do," proved to be empty words. The history of the Jewish nation is one turbulent period after another, marked with disobedience, rebellion, complaint, apostasy and corruptness. On arriving in the Promised Land, they were not content with Jehovah as King and with the judges and priests who were administering the affairs of the nation. They asked for a king, only to be enslaved by him. Among other detestable things, Saul, the first king, presumptuously began to offer sacrifice to Jehovah without waiting for the prophet Samuel to arrive before the troops moved into battle. The kingship was wrested from him and given to David, a man after Jehovah's own heart. Jehovah used David and his reign to picture the rulership of his heavenly King, Christ Jesus. David did not launch a coup d'état to unseat Saul prematurely, but waited until Jehovah saw fit to remove this unfaithful one—a good example for us today.

¹⁴ Continual unfaithfulness led to the complete downfall of the nation and its being

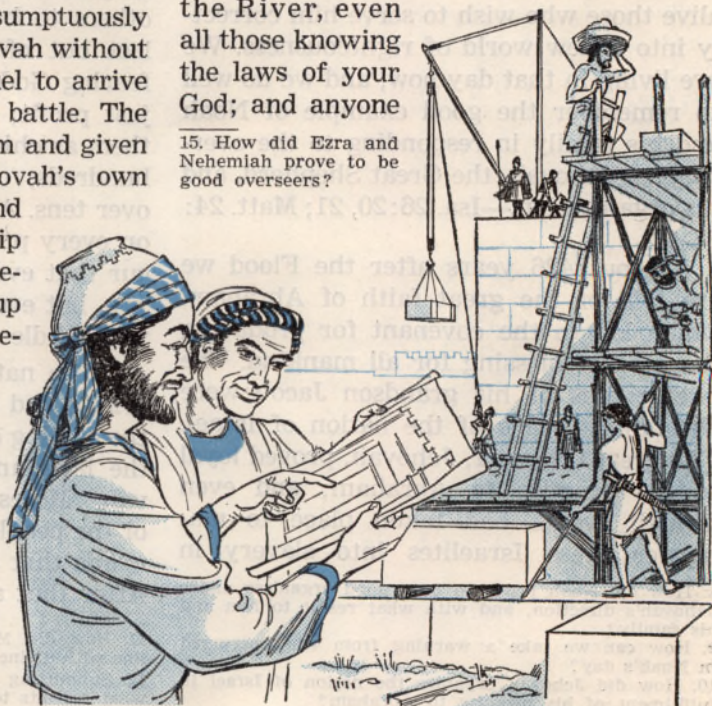
brought into seventy years of captivity by Babylon, the seat of false worship. True to his promise, Jehovah caused a deliverance, and instructions went forth to rebuild the house of Jehovah at Jerusalem. Temple work was organized under Governor Zerubbabel and High Priest Joshua. Jehovah blessed the efforts of these faithful overseers who inspected, directed and corrected matters in connection with this vast project. On their completing the temple work an inauguration of it was held. "And they appointed the priests in their classes and the Levites in their divisions, for the service of God which is in Jerusalem, according to the prescription of the book of Moses."—Ezra 6:18.

¹⁵ Jehovah put it into the heart of King Artaxerxes I to direct Ezra regarding organization. "And you, Ezra, according to the wisdom of your God that is in your hand appoint magistrates and judges that they may continually judge all the people that are beyond the River, even all those knowing the laws of your God; and anyone

15. How did Ezra and Nehemiah prove to be good overseers?

13. In contrast to their promise, what does Bible history show as to their living up to it?

14. How did Jehovah organize his people for reestablishment of true worship at Jerusalem?



that has not known them you men will instruct." (Ezra 7:25) The walls and remaining city work were completed under Nehemiah. Contrary to some other overseers in the past, he did not oppress the people or demand special favors. "As for me, I did not do that way on account of the fear of God. And, what is more, in the work of this wall I took a hand, and not a field did we acquire; and all my attendants were collected together there for the work." With a clear conscience he could pray: "Do remember for me, O my God, for good, all that I have done in behalf of this people."—Neh. 5:15, 16, 19.

¹⁶ It was some 450 years to the coming of Christ, and during this time two more world powers, Greece and Rome, were to rule over Jerusalem and to impose foreign rule of oppression. There was a subtle depreciation of true worship from the top down and from the bottom up. Subsequent rebellions of the Jews did not bring relief but brought more oppression by the nations. In the first century the Jewish system of things revolved around the Sanhedrin and around the imposing of handed-down tradition rather than the pure Word of God. There were still a high priest and auxiliary priests to offer sacrifice and administer at the temple, but practices and sectarian doctrines violated completely the spirit of the Mosaic law. How greatly the people needed a leader, a faithful overseer, to lead them back to true worship! Their very lives depended upon this, for the time had come now to take an accounting.

¹⁷ Roman rule was represented by Governor Pilate at Jerusalem when Christ Jesus began his ministry. Jesus did not seek to set himself up as king over Israel

or try to displace imperial power of Rome. He came only to "seek and to save what was lost" and to prepare the way for the new system of things that would bring fulfillment of all God's promises to eliminate disobedience, sin, death and all the awful consequences. Jesus was to be the true overseer, and he described himself as being the Fine Shepherd. "The sheep listen to his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out." "I have come that they might have life and might have it in abundance. I am the fine shepherd; the fine shepherd surrenders his soul in behalf of the sheep."—Luke 19:10; John 10:3, 10, 11.

¹⁸ For three and one-half years his message went to the Jews. Besides his own vigorous preaching campaign, he trained his apostles and disciples to carry on the work after he had returned to heaven. Love was demonstrated in all his activities. Correction and chastisement were needed from time to time, but he administered these with discernment, knowing what was needed and how it should be given. He was a leader and called for his followers to come after him. As a nation the Jews rejected him as their overseer and life-giver. So he said: "How often I wanted to gather your children together in the manner that a hen gathers her brood of chicks under her wings, but you people did not want it! Look! Your house is abandoned to you." How horrible it was in the year 70 when the Romans sacked the city, all "because you did not discern the time of your being inspected."—Luke 13:34, 35; 19:44.

¹⁹ Jesus' death and the persecution that came upon his followers after Pentecost did not stop the work but caused the spreading of the good news. At Pentecost the promised holy spirit was received as

16. To what extent had true worship deteriorated with the coming of Christ, and why was this a crucial time?

17. As overseer of the new system of things, what did Jesus do while on earth?

18. In what way did Jesus train those who responded to his message, and what resulted to those who rejected his message?

19. How did the Christian congregation develop after the death of Christ, and with what results?

helper. A body of older men, including the apostles, took charge of the work and sent representatives from Jerusalem to various parts of the land. "When he [Jesus] ascended on high . . . he gave gifts in men . . . some as apostles, some as prophets, some as evangelizers, some as shepherds and teachers, with a view to the training of the holy ones, for ministerial work." (Eph. 4:8, 11, 12) Congregations of holy ones were organized. Overseers were appointed over them. Instructions were sent from the governing body at Jerusalem to strengthen and confirm their faith. A notable edict from the governing body was the one described in Acts, chapter 15. Adhering closely to God's Word and responding to the holy spirit's direction, their decision was according to principle but not unduly restrictive. Faithful adherence to this direction from Jehovah's earthly organization at that time resulted in the congregations' continuing "to be made firm in the faith and to increase in number from day to day."—Acts 16:5.

²⁰ As Paul, Barnabas and other faithful representatives of the governing body visited the congregations, they read this decision and served well as overseers. On one missionary journey the apostle Paul left Titus behind in Crete. He was authorized to "correct the things that were defective" and to "make appointments of older men in city after city, as I gave you orders." (Titus 1:5-9) Similar instructions were given to the young overseer Timothy. (1 Tim. 3:1-7) The overseer must be irreprehensible in every respect. His household must be in order, and he must be bringing forth the fruitage of the spirit and "holding firmly to the faithful word as respects his art of teaching, that he may be able both to exhort by the teach-

ing that is healthful and to reprove those who contradict."

²¹ An overseer in the Christian congregation must truly be an irreprehensible man, but he must be more than a morally clean man and one who has a good report from within and without the congregation. He must be a man full of good works and must have loving concern for all who come under his oversight. He must protect the flock as a shepherd protects the sheep under his care. The apostle Paul, on a journey by boat to Jerusalem, put into port at Miletus, and the account in Acts, chapter 20, informs us that he sent to Ephesus and called for the older men of the congregation. He put them on notice that he was clean from the blood of all men, for he had not held back from telling them all the counsel of God, and then he added: "Pay attention to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the holy spirit has appointed you overseers, to shepherd the congregation of God, which he purchased with the blood of his own Son. . . . I have exhibited to you in all things that by thus laboring you must assist those who are weak, and must bear in mind the words of the Lord Jesus, when he himself said, 'There is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving.'"—Acts 20:27-35.

²² The apostles, right up to the last one, the apostle John, were all keenly interested in the congregations. Besides traveling to these and giving personal encouragement, instruction and correction, letters were written to the congregations, which were put into general circulation then and which we are happy to have today as part of the Holy Bible. Nevertheless, according to prophecy, the "man of lawlessness," the apostate leaders of professed Christians,

21. Besides being a morally respectable man, what else is required of an overseer?

22. (a) How was the apostle John a good overseer to the congregations in the latter part of his ministry? (b) Revelation chapter 1 portrays Christ as doing what, indicating that he is a thorough overseer?

20. Paul left Titus behind in Crete for what purpose, and what did he look for in considering prospective overseers?

was to exercise a stronger and stronger influence upon the Christian congregation. The aged apostle John was soon to pass away, around A.D. 100, and thus the last one of those who acted as a restraint against this encroachment would be out of the way. (2 Thess. 2:1-12) There was a need for strong yet encouraging counsel to be given by Jehovah God through his Son, Christ, and in turn to John, for him to distribute it to the overseers of the congregations. The seven congregations in Asia Minor were representative of all the congregations then, but primarily of all the congregations of the spirit-begotten ones on the earth today, since John by inspiration came to be in "the Lord's day" when receiving the vision. He saw seven lampstands, picturing all the congregations of spirit-begotten ones. Walking in among the lampstands was Christ Jesus, the faithful overseer, checking, instructing and correcting things that were standing in the way of true worship and theocratic progress. There was an overseer for each congregation, represented by a star. The seven (a complete number) were in the right hand of Christ for him to control. They must follow his direction and remember always that they are in office by holy spirit operating through Christ and that they are accountable to him. As starlight is stronger than lamplight, they must shine brightly by good works, good conduct and example.

²³ Conditions in the seven congregations back there picture what may exist in the congregations today, and, by following the advice given, the overseers will know how to deal with the conditions. Some of the congregations were commended for their hard work and endurance, but they had become careless in service and meeting attendance. Some were spiritually dead be-

cause of failure to perform all features of God's service, and there was a need to become awake, to be diligent in private study, in meeting attendance and in ministerial activity. The overseer must take the lead in directing the congregation back to its former love. Some were commended for not giving in to materialistic influences, but there was the danger of falling victim to the spirit of nationalism and religious sects. The overseer must be careful not to commercialize his position or to fall victim to sexual immorality or allow the congregation to become corrupt with it. Sisters must keep their place within the congregation and cooperate, with a quiet and mild spirit, which befits Christian women. There is no room for lukewarmness. One must be fully on Jehovah's side and appreciate spiritual riches, which come in rendering exclusive devotion to Jehovah. —Rev., chapters 1 to 3.

²⁴ The counsel given to the overseers in the seven congregations in Asia was to be fully applied, so that the congregations might prosper and not have any condition remaining therein that would impede the full flow of Jehovah's holy spirit. It is noteworthy here that the instructions were first given to John on earth and then they were to be transmitted to the overseers of the congregations for action on the directions. Jehovah has always worked through his organizational means in accomplishing his will. He is the God of order, the God of purpose and the God of principle. To be in harmony with his organization and to be working in harmony with his overseers, no matter what time a servant of his might have lived, has meant blessing and prosperity. Everlasting life is the reward of those who respond to the loving oversight of Jehovah.

23. In what way were some of the congregations commended, and how were some falling short?

24. What must be protected in the congregation, and how were the instructions dispatched to the congregations?

OVERSEERS, Fully Accomplish Your Ministry

DOES it happen to be your privilege to be an overseer in Jehovah's organization today? Thank Jehovah for that privilege! Did you get that position because of your popularity in the congregation? Was it because of a choice salary that you were guaranteed each month, or was it because of your special education or eloquent speaking? You know it was none of these things that put you in this position. No, for unless you met the qualifications set forth in God's Word for the position of overseer, you would not be there. Popularity does not qualify anyone. Money can be no attraction to anyone unselfish. The best of theological seminary education would be useless, and how empty your words would be, however eloquent, if you were only interested in tickling the ears of the congregation!

² You, therefore, are in your position of service because God's visible organization, under the direction of his holy spirit, has seen fit to "lay hands upon you," yes, appoint you to serve. Your striving for greater maturity and applying yourself in the ministry have resulted in this greater responsibility. It is a serious one, in that you answer to the holy spirit at every turn, and yet it is a happy one. Why? Because, in Jesus' words, which the apostle Paul quoted to the overseers at Ephesus, "there is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving." (Acts 20:35) Good oversight, careful attention to those who are

less mature, seeing that the congregation is kept clean for true worship and that appreciation for the ministry remains strong, are all factors that are essential for a healthy, happy flock on the increase. Jehovah's organization today, like his organized people in the past, is prospering because those in it wish with all their hearts to work together in unity for the accomplishment of his will. They are increasing, not only in numbers, but in quality. Better field ministry, with brief, pointed sermons at the doors, has resulted in a more efficient preaching of the good news. The training program for assisting less experienced publishers has improved the quality of the work. The overseers are giving good attention to organization and are visiting those who need help to encourage them spiritually.

³ Most overseers are doing a very good job, and their good works are not going unnoticed by Jehovah or by their fellow witnesses. "For God is not unrighteous so as to forget your work and the love you showed for his name, in that you have ministered to the holy ones and continue ministering. But we desire each one of you to show the same industriousness so as to have the full assurance of the hope down to the end, in order that you might not become sluggish, but be imitators of those who through faith and patience inherit the promises." (Heb. 6:10-12) It is because the overseer and his assistants must "show the same industriousness" down to the end that so much counsel is given in *The*

1. What would not qualify one for the position of overseer in the congregation?

2. What really does qualify one for a position of oversight in the congregation, and what has been the result of good leadership in past years?

3. Why is much admonition given to overseers by Jehovah and his organization?

Watchtower, in *Kingdom Ministry*, at assemblies and at other times in regard to faithfulness in positions of oversight.

⁴ How fitting the counsel to the overseer Timothy: "You, though, keep your senses in all things, suffer evil, do the work of an evangelizer, *fully* accomplish your ministry"! There were strong reasons for overseers in Timothy's day to accomplish their ministry fully, and the same reasons hold true today. The apostle tells us in the same fourth chapter: "For there will be a period of time when they will not put up with the healthful teaching, but, in accord with their own desires, they will accumulate teachers for themselves to have their ears tickled; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, whereas they will be turned aside to false stories."—2 Tim. 4: 3-5.

⁵ How is the overseer to accomplish his ministry fully? "Fully" means "in a full manner, to a full degree, completely, entirely, thoroughly." If an overseer fully performs his ministry he leaves nothing unattended or only half done. He gives proper attention to all the responsibilities that are part of his ministry. When the overseer is enthusiastic, progressive and anxious to fulfill his responsibilities and is quick to respond to directions, the congregation will usually reflect the same spirit. The converse is also true. If the overseer is lacking in initiative, slow to follow through on instructions, the same spirit usually will be reflected in the congregation. First of all, the overseer must be a good minister in the field. He must know how to preach the good news efficiently, if he is to be a good teacher of others. More is required of the overseer, and thus there must be good field ministry plus good shepherding work on his part. "In-

deed, everyone to whom much was given, much will be demanded of him; and the one whom people put in charge of much, they will demand more than usual of him." —Luke 12:48.

⁶ Is yours a small congregation? Is there a shortage of mature brothers to take the lead, and as a consequence does much responsibility rest upon you? Is progress somewhat slow or do the brothers respond somewhat slowly? Do not be discouraged. Jesus was not discouraged when there were only a few associated with him. With good oversight by him the numbers grew and so did maturity and their response to instruction in the truth. There is no reason for the overseer to feel that he is merely serving until someone else more qualified comes on the scene. Remember, holy spirit appointed you through Jehovah's organization. Follow through faithfully on the requirements of the office.

⁷ Fully accomplishing the ministry on the part of the overseer does not always require more time but requires time well spent. An overseer has a heavy responsibility and many duties to perform; but a steady, regular pace will get all accomplished within his weekly schedule. Foresight is required in order to see what is needed and to plan accordingly. The overseer should learn to delegate responsibility properly as he also does his own share, like faithful Nehemiah, who not only directed how the work should be done, but also shared in the work with his attendants. Take full advantage of all opportunities for accomplishing the things assigned.

⁸ It is the responsibility of the overseer to visit those who need help and strengthen them spiritually. How refreshing to them is a discussion centering on God's

4. Why is it necessary for overseers to accomplish their ministry fully?

5. What is the meaning of "fully," and what results when the overseer fully cares for his duties?

6. Why should the overseer not become discouraged if certain conditions of immaturity are manifest at times?

7. How can the overseer work all his assigned duties into his schedule?

8. What is a primary responsibility of the overseer toward those who are weak spiritually?

Word, or a recent article in *The Watchtower* or the blessings of a recent assembly! When can he do this visiting? Besides setting aside time to visit with these in their homes at appropriate times, he can use time for visiting at the service centers, before and after meetings, and while training publishers in the field service. By his knowing what is needed and the general circumstances of each one, he can make opportunities to fulfill this Christian responsibility resting upon the overseer.

⁹ The weaker ones have problems. While it is not the responsibility of the overseer to pry into the private affairs of others, yet encouragement and kind counsel by him will often help one who is becoming discouraged to cope better with his situation. Bring to bear God's Word. It is powerful and has the answer to all our problems. The overseer is busy, and if he is in a fairly large-sized congregation, quite a few will wish to speak with him at meetings, especially if he is approachable and wants to help the brothers. This will require that he give priority to those who need to be seen; otherwise, some will take much of his time, and others, seeing that he is very busy, will hesitate to approach him. The overseer should never be too busy or too involved in other matters to speak with those who may be timid or hesitant about discussing their spiritual welfare or asking for help.

¹⁰ The overseer must be adaptable to situations that arise. He must be kind and considerate, but yet at times it is necessary for him to admonish the disorderly. "Now we request you, brothers, to have regard for those who are working hard among you and presiding over you in the Lord and admonishing you; and to give

them more than extraordinary consideration in love because of their work. Be peaceable with one another. On the other hand, we exhort you, brothers, admonish the disorderly, speak consolingly to the depressed souls, support the weak, be long-suffering toward all. See that no one renders injury for injury to anyone else, but always pursue what is good toward one another and to all others."—1 Thess. 5: 12-15.

¹¹ A good overseer must keep strong in the faith himself and keep up-to-date on his responsibilities. He should set aside time regularly for private study and for preparing meetings, realizing that a good spiritual diet is very necessary for himself and a healthy flock. He cannot wait till the last minute to do things. This is procrastination and indicates that a good schedule is lacking. Not waiting till the last minute allows time to think things out and to look ahead and thus avoid any unwise moves. The overseer must be dependable and on time, which means too that the meetings should be on time. It should be the exception when meetings go over the allotted time. All in the congregation should know what to expect, so that they can cooperate. Good habits are contagious. If the overseer has a good routine and a good schedule, others will be inclined to follow.

¹² Thoroughness is required on the part of the overseer in arranging activities of the congregation. Ministerial servants are appointed to assist him. There must be close cooperation between all in positions of assigned duties. The overseer is to take the lead, and yet he is not a boss. On the other hand, he should be respected as the one chiefly responsible to direct the affairs of the congregation. He will need to work closely with his assistants and train them

9. How can the overseer go about assisting those who need encouragement and advice on problems with which they are faced?

10. How can all in the congregation cooperate with those taking the lead in the congregation, and, besides encouragement, what is needed at times to insure unity?

11. How should the overseer give attention to his spiritual welfare and his schedule for doing things?

12. To insure good organization, what is constantly required on the part of the overseer?

where necessary, so that their work is fully accomplished also. All parts of the congregation require inspection, checking, adjusting, exhorting, setting things straight, improving cooperation, smoothing out rough places, and so forth. All activities must move along smoothly, but not so fast or so coldly efficiently that the needs of the sheep are not taken into consideration.—1 Pet. 5:1-4.

¹³ Not dissimilar to the organizing of the Israelites under Moses, the congregation is broken down into groups of ten or more, with assistants to the overseer appointed to look after the spiritual needs of each group. Here individualized attention can be given. At these service centers a book study is held weekly and field activities are arranged from these key locations. A schedule has been suggested by the Society for the overseer to visit these service centers to check on their progress. As overseer, he will be looking to see how the group is progressing, both in spiritual knowledge and in preaching the good news of the Kingdom. The book study conductor is responsible to take the lead, and the overseer inspects how the study is conducted and how the group is being led in the field ministry. Are there any problems with respect to coverage of the territory with the message and following up the interest with back-calls and Bible studies, so that the "other sheep" are properly gathered? Is the group working together in unity? Is the training program operating efficiently? Perhaps the group is getting somewhat large and a new group needs to be formed. Then there may be a particular weakness in field activity or in the support of the study. The overseer can kindly speak with the group and to individuals as is needed to encourage greater activity and faithfulness.

13. How is individualized attention given to each one in the organization, and what can the overseer do to improve this arrangement?

¹⁴ Fully accomplishing the ministry on the part of the overseer also requires diligence in keeping the organization clean. While the overseer and the two other brothers on the congregation service committee have the primary responsibility to look after the cleanliness of the organization, a responsibility rests upon all in the congregation to keep any leaven from permeating the congregation and corrupting it. The committee should be "carefully watching that no one may be deprived of the undeserved kindness of God; that no poisonous root may spring up and cause trouble and that many may not be defiled by it; that there may be no fornicator nor anyone not appreciating sacred things, like Esau, who in exchange for one meal gave away his rights as first-born."—Heb. 12:15, 16.

¹⁵ The overseer and his assistants will be careful not to pry into the personal affairs of others. Personal differences often can and should be settled by following the Scriptural procedure outlined at Matthew 18:15, 16. If necessary, a matter may need the attention of the congregation by means of its representative members, the committee, and this can be handled in harmony with Matthew 18:17. A strong and active congregation is fortified against the encroachments of wickedness.

¹⁶ The Fine Shepherd, Christ Jesus, pointed up the importance of overseers' diligently accomplishing the work assigned, by means of an illustration. Three slaves were given minas with which to trade. The first slave by hard work was able to turn one mina into ten minas. He received words of commendation from the master: "Well done, good slave! Because in a very small matter you have proved

14, 15. What additional responsibility is placed upon the overseer, as well as upon all associated, with respect to cleanness in the organization?

16. How did Jesus illustrate the importance of taking care of Kingdom interests committed into one's care, whether this be a large or small assignment?

yourself faithful, hold authority over ten cities." The second slave received one mina and turned this into five minas. He too received a "Well done" and was given authority over five cities. A third received one mina but he was afraid to risk it or lose it; so he hid it. The master on return took it from him with a reprimand and gave it to the one having ten. This illustrates well the importance of improving, advancing and increasing Kingdom interests committed into our care.—Luke 19: 15-27.

¹⁷ Overseers particularly are responsible to look faithfully after the interests of the King here on earth as a trust, looking to the time when the Master will require an accounting of the results of their work. Your assignment may be heavy and at times you may become weary as you work diligently to accomplish what is required. On the other hand, your assignment may seem to you as being small and, as a consequence, it may receive little attention from you. Remember, the one who is faithful in little will be faithful in much. Care well for any and all responsibilities given to you by Jehovah, always looking to him for the strength and wisdom to do your job well. Jesus was a good example as an overseer in this regard. "My food is for me to do the will of him that sent me and to finish his work." (John 4:34) Later in prayer to Jehovah he said, "I have glorified you on the earth, having finished the work you have given me to do."—John 17:4.

¹⁸ The apostle Paul encouraged others to follow him even as he followed Christ. Discussing his stewardship, he said: "If, now, I am declaring the good news, it is no reason for me to boast, for necessity is laid upon me. Really, woe is me if I did not

declare the good news! If I perform this willingly, I have a reward; but if I do it against my will, all the same I have a stewardship entrusted to me." (1 Cor. 9: 16, 17) Later, to Timothy in his last canonical letter he stated: "For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the due time for my releasing is imminent. I have fought the fine fight, I have run the course to the finish, I have observed the faith. From this time on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me as a reward in that day, yet not only to me, but also to all those who have loved his manifestation."—2 Tim. 4:6-8.

¹⁹ Overseers, prove faithful and fully accomplish your ministry as these who are good examples did. Assistant servants and conductors, without ambition and covetousness, reach out for greater privileges, standing always ready to assume more and more responsibility in the New World society. And, whether an overseer or a humble preacher of the good news, remember the admonition to the Hebrews by the apostle Paul: "Be obedient to those who are taking the lead among you and be submissive, for they are keeping watch over your souls as those who will render an account; that they may do this with joy and not with sighing, for this would be damaging to you." (Heb. 13:17) The day of inspection is here. Jehovah is taking out of all nations those deserving of everlasting life, to live under the kingdom of his Son. This was pictured to John like a gleaming city, its gates remaining open to receive all who thirst after righteousness. "But anything not sacred and anyone that carries on a disgusting thing and a lie will in no way enter into it; only those written in the Lamb's scroll of life will."—Rev. 21:27.

17. Why should overseers be diligent to care well for the trust committed into their care, and how did Jesus set a good example as an overseer?

18. How did the apostle Paul set a good example as an overseer or steward in God's organization?

19. What should be the attitude of all with respect to greater privileges in Jehovah's organization, and what will be the reward to each one, depending upon how he submits to Jehovah's direction as the great Overseer?

How may I CONTRIBUTE?

MONEY means almost everything to some people, but to the servant of God it is mainly a means to an end. Perhaps it is for that reason that many who love money and some who are not that concerned about it are amazed to see what the Christian society of Jehovah's witnesses has been able to do and is doing without any loud ado about finances. Their huge national and international conventions are always a wonderment to many. Their large printing plants, where an enormous amount of Bibles and Bible literature is printed yearly, have captured the admiration of printers and other people alike. They have also constructed thousands of Kingdom Halls and have sent out missionaries to many lands. The fact that Jehovah's witnesses have been able to do all this and more, without the customary passing of the collection plate, fund-raising drives, bingo games, bazaars, raffles, carnivals, renting of pews, tithing and other methods commonly used today to appropriate money for organizational support, is truly a marvel indeed! How, then, is their work carried on?

Recently, a young man, with whom one of Jehovah's witnesses was conducting a home Bible study, raised this very question. He said: "This week I read some of the 1962 *Yearbook of Jehovah's Witnesses* and was impressed with the great amount of work you people are doing. But what

I don't understand is how all of this is financed. Surely it costs money to operate a world organization; still you never ask for donations. You have never asked me for any, I know. Who pays the bills? How do you keep going? What's your secret?"

The answers to these intriguing questions proved revealing to the householder and they may to you too. The discussion went something like this:

HOW MONEY IS RAISED

WITNESS: It is no secret how the Watch Tower Society, the legal agent for Jehovah's witnesses, gets its money. If the Watch Tower Society were a commercial organization, the question of how money is obtained, of course, would not arise. But because the Watch Tower Society is a charitable organization and because it does not follow the methods of Christendom's religions, taking up money collections or tithes, there is a good deal of wonderment as to how the Society gets its money and supports itself.

HOUSEHOLDER: Well, how does it raise the needed money?

WITNESS: The money comes from willing, unforced, unsolicited givers. They contribute according to their prosperity and ability to do so.

HOUSEHOLDER: Who are these contributors?

WITNESS: Principally they are Jehovah's witnesses who have been moved by the love of God and his Word and by his spirit to contribute, not only money, but time, effort and ability, to the spreading of the message of man's salvation by means of God's kingdom.

HOUSEHOLDER: That's amazing to hear, because I recall reading in *Time* magazine the statement of a clergyman who said that there were so many special financial drives in the churches today that, as he put it: "I find there are only three Sundays in the year that I can preach the Gospel of Christ." It's wonderful to hear that you do not go in for these drives.

WITNESS: Jehovah's witnesses understand and appreciate the purpose for which the Watch Tower Society has been formed, namely, to spread Bible truths in as many languages as possible by every proper means. The desire to see this done moves or motivates them to support it.

HOUSEHOLDER: Are there enough who willingly support the work this way?

WITNESS: Jehovah's witnesses have never gone begging for finances. For this we are very grateful to God, because we realize that this is his work and that he is seeing to it by means of his spirit that it gets done. The many privileges of supporting the worldwide witness to God's kingdom have been grasped voluntarily and cheerfully. At Zechariah 4:6 we learn that it is God's spirit that is leading the people to respond that way.

HOUSEHOLDER: It's gratifying and yet humbling to hear you say that. It makes one feel that God does care for us.

WITNESS: Yes, it's good to know what the apostle Paul says at Acts 17:27, that God "is not far off from each one of us," that he does care for us.

HOUSEHOLDER: That's a comforting thought.

ANCIENT EXAMPLES

WITNESS: Have you ever wondered if Jehovah's people of ancient times contributed as we do today?

HOUSEHOLDER: I have given it some thought and often wondered if they were called upon to contribute, yes.

WITNESS: From times of old Jehovah has permitted men and women to contribute of their own free will money, or material wealth, to the support of his work on earth. If this were not so, the widow mentioned at Luke 21:1-4 would not have dropped her two coins, her last mite, into the treasury chest or contribution box at the temple, causing Jesus to say she gave more than all the other contributors.

HOUSEHOLDER: So they had contribution boxes where people could drop their coins. Well, isn't that interesting?

WITNESS: There were times when the Israelites contributed quite openly too. For example, at Exodus 35:5-9; 36:5-7 we read of a contribution taken up and of the people's willing response. It is known that King David openly and willingly contributed \$140,980,800 in gold and silver toward temple construction. His contribution was an evidence of his faith in the project. Our contributions are a demonstration of our faith in Jehovah's work. At Psalm 110:3 we read that Jehovah's people "will offer themselves willingly." And so it has been from Abel's day down to our time.

WHERE AND HOW TO CONTRIBUTE

HOUSEHOLDER: This idea of giving willingly appeals to me. Suppose I desired to contribute to the local congregation of Jehovah's witnesses, how would I go about doing it?

WITNESS: That's simple enough. In each Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's witnesses there is a contribution box, usually in the rear of the hall. You may place your contribution there if you like. There are no records kept of the contribution. In fact, no one but yourself will know the amount you contribute or even if you contribute.

HOUSEHOLDER: That's a nice arrangement. It saves people from embarrassment. But what if it is inconvenient for me to go

to the Kingdom Hall? Is it proper for me to give my contribution to one of Jehovah's witnesses and have him place it in the box for me?

WITNESS: Of course this is proper and is quite frequently done. However, we would enjoy and prefer having you come to the Kingdom Hall and take in the spiritual program.

HOUSEHOLDER: I appreciate that. But do you mind if I ask, How will the money that I contribute be used?

WITNESS: The money will be used to further the preaching of the good news of the Kingdom, to further Bible education in this community. None of it goes for a minister's salary, because all of us contribute our time. But it costs money to provide a meeting place where people can gather together as a congregation to hear the Word of God and to build up the faith of one another. And some of the funds may be sent to the headquarters of the Society to be used for furthering the preaching work in other ways.

HOUSEHOLDER: How is that done?

WITNESS: Many congregations pass a resolution to send a certain amount to the Society regularly. This is also often done at our circuit and district assemblies.

HOUSEHOLDER: Don't individuals contribute directly to the Society too? Could I, for example, contribute directly to the Watch Tower Society?

WITNESS: Yes, you can by sending your contribution to the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania, Treasurer's Office, 124 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn 1, N. Y. In lands outside the United States persons can direct their donations to the local branch office, obtaining the address from the list that appears in the back of most of the Society's books and booklets. To help the organization plan its work, what many do is to write a note to the Society stating how much they hope to

contribute during the year, and then they send the contributions as they are able. This in no sense puts them under obligation, but it does help the Society to plan its activity.

HOUSEHOLDER: I can appreciate how that would help. How much money would be right to send?

WITNESS: Any amount is appreciated. It is not how big the contribution, but the motive behind it that counts. If you send fifty cents or fifty dollars, it all can be used. The spirit in which you give and the thought behind the gift are the important factors. At 2 Corinthians 9:7 the apostle Paul tells us that "God loves a cheerful giver."

HOUSEHOLDER: And don't we all? No doubt, when you give with a right motive there is happiness in giving.

WITNESS: Yes, Jesus said there would be. At Acts 20:35 we read that he said: "There is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving."

HOW CONTRIBUTIONS ARE USED

HOUSEHOLDER: Tell me, do the contributions in one land go to support the preaching work in other lands?

WITNESS: To some extent, yes, but the Witnesses in each land try to contribute for the support of the work in their own land. It is only when the congregations are too poor to support themselves or the branch office that financial help is given. But there is a warm, family spirit about us, because we are all working together to accomplish the same work. So when earthquakes, hurricanes and other disasters have caused hardship to our brothers, we are more than glad to come to their aid with material goods, our personal assistance and other things that are needed.

HOUSEHOLDER: That's wonderful. But another question: What all is *financed with* the money that is sent to the Society?

WITNESS: At some of the Watch Tower Society's 85 branch offices it operates printing plants. It also provides accommodations for those who work in these printing plants, since they all contribute their time and effort. By these workers' giving of their time freely, it is possible for the Society to distribute to the public Bibles and Bible-study aids at a very small cost. For example, the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures*, that is, a complete Bible, is available for only \$1.

HOUSEHOLDER: That is amazing!

WITNESS: In addition to this, the Society has 6,377 special pioneers, including the missionaries, ministers who are sent into isolated territory to start new congregations, working in 153 different lands of the earth. Last year it was able to help these workers to the extent of \$2,328,819.69, which averages a little over \$30 each per month. The Society also has 1,870 circuit and district servants, traveling representatives of the Watch Tower Society who serve some 21,557 congregations. These, too, are helped in a modest way. Also, recently 104 ministers were brought in from all parts of the earth for intensive training at the Watchtower Bible School of Gilead, expenses paid. And yearly millions of pieces of literature, such as handbills and tracts, are distributed absolutely free of cost to those accepting.

HOUSEHOLDER: However, for the larger books and magazines, some money is contributed.

WITNESS: That's true, and the money donations received at the time that the Society's printed publications are placed with the people are applied toward printing and distributing more Bible-study helps; but such money donations fall far, far short of sufficiency to carry on the Kingdom preaching work on a worldwide scale. Money gifts, in addition to the gifts for the literature, are financing the preaching work in many lands. Do you have any idea as to the amount of activity carried on by Jehovah's witnesses?

HOUSEHOLDER: No, I don't. But I can imagine it's enormous.

WITNESS: Last year 965,169 Witnesses contributed 132,695,540 hours of their time freely in preaching the good news of God's kingdom. They made 45,004,266 return visits on interested persons and each week conducted 622,665 home Bible studies—this, too, is represented in that time.

HOUSEHOLDER: That's indeed a fine record.

WITNESS: It truly is. The Witnesses, by using their resources to further such work, are, as Jesus showed in his illustration recorded at Luke 16:1-9, making friends with Jehovah God and Christ Jesus. By their diligently applying themselves in every way they hope to be pleasing to God and gain his favor and life everlasting in the new world. Those who appreciate these facts are more than happy to contribute toward the advancement of this most urgent and helpful work in the earth.

HIS TRUTH

● The famous Italian scientist and inventor, Alessandro Volta, once said to Silvio Pellico: "I have been very much disturbed on hearing the leading men of science declare that the Gospel and God were good only for the common people. . . . I have deeply considered the Gospel as well as nature. . . . I feel that the Creator is still the friend of miserable man despite his sins. I must live inspired by an intense love for him." He said: "I have found his truth omnipotent."—*La Bibbia nel giudizio di illustri Italiani*, by Augusto Jahier.

WISDOM

is with the

Modest Ones"

WOULD you like to escape many of life's pitfalls and embarrassments? Would you like to avoid needlessly offending others, but rather be liked by those about you? And above all, would you like to lessen the likelihood of giving offense to your Creator? Then cultivate the virtue of modesty, for it will greatly help you in all these respects.

Much has been written in praise of modesty. The best of all on the subject, however, is found in God's Word, the Bible. By means of precept and examples—which show both the good results from being modest and the bad that results from one's lacking it—the Bible teaches us the virtue of being modest.

"Modesty" and "modest" have several meanings, three of which are more generally used. One meaning of modest relates to size. We speak of a modest income, a modest home or a modest Kingdom Hall. In this sense modest means that which is moderate and unpretentious. Beginnings usually are modest, and so God asked the Jews that returned from Babylonian captivity: "Who has despised the day of small things?" The rebuilding of Jehovah's temple at Jerusalem had a modest beginning, but it was not to be despised. After all, it involved the pure worship of Jehovah God. —Zech. 4:10.

"Modest" and "modesty" are also used in the sense of chasteness, decency and propriety. Generally men need to guard against immodest speech, women against immodest attire. When the apostle Paul counseled women to dress with becoming

modesty, he used the term in this sense: "I desire the women to adorn themselves in well-arranged dress, with modesty and soundness of mind." The Greek word here rendered "modesty" is *aidós* and comes from a root having the thought of down-cast eyes or bashfulness. The current dance craze "the twist" represents the very opposite of this kind of modesty.—1 Tim. 2:9.

The third common meaning given to modesty and the one with which we are especially concerned in this discussion is "awareness of one's limitations; absence of any undue self-confidence; lacking in vanity or conceit." To be modest in this sense is to have "a limited and not an exaggerated estimate of one's abilities or worth." (*Webster*) It means exercising a reserve and is the very opposite of presuming too much: "Has presumptuousness come? Then dishonor will come; but wisdom with the modest ones."—Prov. 11:2.

The Hebrew word here rendered "modest" is also found at Micah 6:8, where it usually is translated "humbly." But says the Soncino Bible of the expression "walk humbly": "One is reluctant to question a phrase which has sunk so deeply into the religious consciousness of mankind; yet it is doubtful whether *humbly* is an adequate translation of the Hebrew. In the Bible the root *tsana* is found only here and in Prov. xi. 2 (elsewhere *anaw* is used to express humility). The lexicon turns to Rabbinic Hebrew for elucidation of its meaning, and there the word signifies 'modesty,' . . ." But is it "modesty" in the sense of decency or chastity, as the Rabbinic Hebrew

goes on to say? No, for the context of Micah 6:8 makes it very evident that here, as at Proverbs 11:2, what is stressed is not modesty in the sense of chasteness and propriety, but modesty in the sense of an awareness of one's limitations, of one's relationship with his Maker. And so correctly, and perhaps uniquely, the *New World Translation* reads: "He has told you, O earthling man, what is good. And what is Jehovah asking back from you but to exercise justice and to love kindness and to be modest in walking with your God?"

MODESTY AND HUMILITY

Modesty and humility are closely related, but they are not the same. The opposite of humility is pride; the opposite of modesty is presuming too much, vanity and conceit. "Humility" comes from the root *humus*, meaning earth, and has the thought of lowliness. "Modesty" comes from the root *modestus*, meaning moderate.

Modesty may be said to be an aspect of humility, which is the more basic quality. A humble person who has good sense, who is wise, who uses a sound mind, will also be modest. A humble person will not resent suggestions or criticism, but a modest person is more likely to ask, "Wherein can I improve? Have you anything to offer?"

Since modesty means being aware of one's limitations, it is a quality of persons who are finite. All creatures have their limitations, and therefore modesty is becoming to them. But the Creator, being infinite, has no limitations, and so nowhere do we read in his Word of his being modest, but we do read of his humility: "Your own humility will make me great." "Who is like Jehovah our God, him who is making his dwelling on high? He is condescending to look on heaven and earth."—Ps. 18:35; 113:5, 6.

Does this mean that God is immodest? Not at all. It merely means that modesty

is a virtue that has no application to him.

Modesty being an aspect of humility that involves sound thinking, we find it implicit in Paul's counsel to the Romans: "I tell everyone there among you not to think more of himself than it is necessary to think; but to think so as to have a sound mind." Yes, just as it is necessary to love ourselves and yet not to love ourselves too much, it is necessary for us to think something of ourselves but not too much.—Rom. 12:3.

Helping us to appreciate the distinction between modesty and humility is the Scriptural record which shows that, while God's faithful servants were ever humble, at times they erred as to being modest. For one thing, they may have erred because of not being aware of their weaknesses. The apostle Peter was certainly a humble man, yet he repeatedly thought to improve on what his perfect Master said and did. His lack of modesty he especially betrayed when he said: "Even if all the others are stumbled, yet I will not be." He was humble, but erred as to modesty, because he was not aware of his own limitations.—Mark 14:29.

At times great pressure may cause a humble servant of God to err in this respect. Moses, though the meekest man in all the earth, on one occasion, when sorely tried, presumed too much: "Hear, now, you rebels! Is it from this crag that we shall bring out water for you?" God took this error on Moses' part seriously: "Because you did not . . . sanctify me before the eyes of the sons of Israel," but immodestly took the credit to yourself, "you will not bring this congregation into" the Promised Land.—Num. 20:10, 12.

GOD FAVORS MODEST ONES

Why is it said that "wisdom is with the modest ones"? First of all, because Jehovah God can best use those who are mod-

est, who are not self-confident, who are aware of their own limitations. Such ones will not draw attention away from Jehovah God to themselves and such are also more likely to look to Jehovah God for guidance and strength.

As is to be expected, Jesus Christ is the most striking example of modesty found in the Scriptures. Because of this his Father was able to commit so much into his hands. Even though no one could convict him of sin and even though God made him the sole way of approach to his Father, Jesus remained modest, always directing all glory to his Father: "Why do you call me good? Nobody is good, except one, God." "The Son cannot do a single thing of his own initiative." "I seek, not my own will, but the will of him that sent me."—Luke 18:18, 19; John 5:19, 30; 8:46; 14:6.

Moses, who foreshadowed Jesus Christ, likewise was generally modest. In fact, he was painfully aware of his limitations. (Ex. 3:11, 12; 4:10-13) Gideon had the same mental disposition: "Excuse me, Jehovah. With what shall I save Israel? Look! My thousand is the least in Manasseh, and I am the smallest in my father's house." King Saul's presumptuousness caused him to end up badly, but at first he was modest: "Was it not when you were little in your own eyes that you were head of the tribes of Israel, and Jehovah proceeded to anoint you as king over Israel?"—Judg. 6:15; 1 Sam. 15:17.

King Solomon also started out modestly: "God, you yourself have made your servant king in the place of David my father, and I am but a little boy. I do not know how to go out and how to come in." Jeremiah, when commissioned as prophet to the nations, expressed himself similarly: "Alas, O Lord Jehovah! Here I actually do not know how to speak, for I am but a boy." And let it be noted that in all these

instances Jehovah God supplied their lack as well as giving them encouragement.—1 Ki. 3:7; Jer. 1:6.

No question about it, modesty is an asset in our relations with our Creator. He that would be more fully used by him must be modest in walking with his God. True, it is commendable to be reaching out for the office of overseer, but this should be done, not ambitiously, but with due awareness of one's limitations.—1 Tim. 3:1.

MODESTY MAKES FRIENDS

Wisdom is also with the modest ones in that modesty aids in avoiding giving offense and in making friends. Few things so grate on others as a lack of modesty, and few things so make for goodwill as modesty. One who presumes too much is prone to encroach on the rights of others and so arouses fear and antagonism. One who is not aware of his own limitations is bound to annoy others. If we are modest we will not be talking too much, will not be monopolizing conversations, will not run overtime when giving a scheduled talk. Also, we will not sound harsh, gruff or needlessly loud, but the very tone of our voice will be modest, unassuming.

Then, too, we will not estrange our acquaintances, arousing envy, rivalry or the spirit of trying to keep up with the Joneses by word or action. Rather, we will be modest in the clothes we wear, in the auto we drive and in the home we occupy. We will not call attention to our accomplishments, be they in business, sports, in the arts or in the Christian ministry. As the proverbs remind us: "For people to search out their own glory, is it glory?" "May a stranger, and not your own mouth, praise you; may a foreigner, and not your own lips, do so." The modest person does not blow a trumpet to call attention to his good works but will keep his right hand from knowing

what his left hand is doing.—Prov. 25:27; 27:2; Matt. 6:1-6.

We may even pacify ambitious rivals by going out of our way to manifest modesty. That is what Gideon did, when the Ephraimites “vehemently tried to pick a quarrel with him.” He smoothed down their ruffled feathers by saying: ‘Why, what I did was as nothing in comparison with you. Did not God give into your hands the princes of Midian?’ Gideon’s modesty paid off, for “their spirit calmed down toward him when he spoke this word.”—Judg. 8:1-3.

MODESTY A SAFEGUARD

Modesty is also the course of wisdom in that it acts as a safeguard. For one thing, it helps protect from the snares of the Devil. Had Jesus not been modest he might well have yielded to one of Satan’s temptations. Satan did ensnare many in the post-apostolic Christian congregation because of their lack of modesty.

Modesty also protects from the temptations brought by the world. Neither Gideon nor Jesus allowed the people to make him king. A less modest person would have yielded. Modesty protects one against the world’s “desire of the eyes and the showy display of one’s means of life.”—1 John 2:16.

Modesty also protects us from our own weaknesses. It will keep us from being frustrated or disappointed because of aiming too high in our ambitions or goals. The two disciples that asked to be seated at the right and left of Jesus in his kingdom were disappointed and had to be told by Jesus: “You do not know what you are asking for.”—Mark 10:38.

Modesty will keep us from being unduly affected by either public praise or public censure. It will make it easier for children to be submissive to their parents; wives, to their husbands; and members of a congregation to their overseers. Modesty will keep us from boasting about tomorrow. And it will keep us from needless embarrassment, as when we presume to take the most prominent seat at a feast and then have to yield it to one more distinguished than ourselves.—Luke 14:8-10.

Truly “wisdom is with the modest ones” and God’s Word gives us much counsel on modesty. Modesty puts us in line to be used more by our Creator, it makes for better relations with our fellowman, it safeguards us from the temptations by Satan, the world and the flesh and helps us to avoid needless disappointments, frustrations and embarrassments. So make friends with modesty. Clothe yourself with modesty.

Do You Remember?

Have you read the recent issues of *The Watchtower* carefully? If so, you should recognize these important points. Check yourself.

● Why was Jesus courageous in the face of those who sought his life?

His confidence was in Jehovah God, the Source of life.—P. 6.*

● Is it right to keep on preaching the Bible in a land where the rulers forbid it, perhaps because they have a state church?

Yes. The apostles, faced with such a proscription on the part of Jewish rulers in the first century, said: “We must obey God as ruler rather than men.”—Pp. 13, 14.

● Who benefit from Christ’s ransom now?

All who exercise faith in it. Those of his anointed followers are declared righteous by God, which means that he grants them the right to human life. The “other sheep” too enjoy a righteous standing before God; he forgives their sins, though not granting them the right to life at this time.—Pp. 38, 40.

* All page references are to *The Watchtower* for 1962.

● How has Jesus come out of Bethlehem, as foretold at Micah 5:2?

Over nineteen centuries ago he was born there. Additionally, it is of interest to note that Bethlehem means "House of Bread," or "Bread Supply." Jesus likened his own flesh to bread, and on his ascension to heaven he presented the value of his human sacrifice on behalf of mankind. So now, having been installed as King in 1914, he comes forth from what might be called a heavenly House of Bread (Bread Supply) in that what sustains men for everlasting life is administered by him from heaven.—Pp. 42, 45.

● How are Christ's anointed followers "like dew from Jehovah" and "like a lion"?

Like dew, they are a blessing from Jehovah to men of goodwill. And like a lion, since 1919 they have fearlessly carried on their work among the nations, undaunted by opposition.—Pp. 53-55.

● What are the senses of the four main Hebrew words for "man"?

Ish means simply man; *adám* means human or earthly; *enósh* means weak or mortal; and *geber* means a physically strong or able-bodied man.—P. 56.

● How can reasonableness be shown in the giving of instructions or counsel?

Rather than commanding, we can entreat. Rather than being arbitrary and inflexible, we can explain and consider problems raised.—P. 80.

● How does a reasonable person react when corrected in an error?

He is ready to listen, willing to change his way if error is proved, thankful to be corrected before the error grows to bigger proportions.—P. 82.

● Why are certain words and expressions found in the King James Version Bible missing from the *New World Translation*?

Because they appeared in the Greek-language text used in preparation of the *King James Version*, but they do not appear in the Westcott and Hort Greek text, which is based on an exhaustive comparison of ancient manuscripts and which text is the basis for the Christian Greek Scriptures in the *New World Translation*.—Pp. 88, 91.

● How can one use riches to make friends with God?

God's favor cannot be bought. But if we are moved by love to use our resources to

glorify him, expending both ourselves and our possessions to advance his worship, this is well pleasing to him.—P. 109.

● What was foreshadowed by the deliverance of the Israelite firstborn in Egypt? by the deliverance of Israel and of the "mixed company" through the Red Sea?

The firstborn pictured the members of Christ's spirit-begotten congregation, who, while still in the world, have been delivered out of its spiritual darkness, through faith in Christ, the antitypical passover lamb. At the Red Sea was pictured the deliverance through Armageddon of those on earth who worship Jehovah.—Pp. 139, 140.

● What is pictured by the group of horsemen of Revelation 6:1-8?

That Christ's presence, as represented by the first horseman, is associated with war, famine and pestilence, filling the common grave of mankind; and these are the things pictured by the other horsemen.—P. 152.

● What lesson did God teach when he asked Job what he knew about the founding of the earth, control of the sea, the dawn, hail, rain and ice?

It was a lesson in man's littleness contrasted with Jehovah's greatness.—P. 168.

● Why is it important to keep proving what we are?

Because all of us were born in sin, we live in an immoral world, and, even if we know God's requirements, overconfidence or indifference on our part can cause us to stray from the pathway of life.—P. 170.

● Is Christianity a "personal thing"?

Yes, indeed. It calls for personal decisions and personal conviction. But it must not be hid from others, because there is the personal obligation to speak about one's faith to fellow believers and to those of different beliefs.—Pp. 197-199.

● In what way can a believing wife often do the most good toward winning her unbelieving husband to the truth?

By her godly subjection to her husband, by her conduct characterized by a quiet and mild spirit, coupled with faithfulness to God, she may do more than by what she says to help him to see the truth.—P. 211.

● What comes after Christendom's end?

God's righteous new world in which true Christians will forever carry on pure worship.—P. 240.

Keeping Awake to Christian Responsibility

THE time for this old world is rapidly running out. How do we know? Because of the fulfillment of Jesus' great prophecy, concerning which he said: "When you see these things happening, know that he is near, at the doors. Truly I say to you that this generation will by no means pass away until all these things happen."—Mark 13:29, 30.*

Of what concern is that to Christians? Of very great concern because Jesus went on to say: "Keep looking, keep awake, for you do not know when the appointed time is. It is like a man traveling abroad that left his house and gave the authority to his slaves, to each one his work, and commanded the doorkeeper to keep on the watch. Therefore keep on the watch, for you do not know when the master of the house is coming, . . . in order that when he arrives suddenly, he does not find you sleeping. But what I say to you I say to all, Keep on the watch."—Mark 13:33-37.

What coming is here referred to? Not Christ's presence or *parousia*, which began in 1914, nor the manifestation of his presence, the *epiphaneia*, which began in 1918 with Jehovah coming to the temple with the messenger of the covenant, but to his coming at Armageddon, his *apokalypsis*, his revealing, to which Jesus also referred when he said: "Look! I am coming as a thief."—Rev. 16:15.

To what must Christians keep awake? To their God-given responsibilities. Everyone who has dedicated himself to do God's will and to follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ must love and serve God, even as was required of God's people in times past: "What is Jehovah your God asking of you but to fear Jehovah your God, so as to walk in all his ways and to love him and to serve Jehovah your God with all your heart and all your soul."—Deut. 10:12.

What various responsibilities does this include? Among the first is to speak the word of Jehovah faithfully: "The Lord Jehovah himself has spoken! Who will not prophesy?" The early Christians appreciated their responsibility to do this, for we read that "those who had been scattered went through the land declaring the good news of the word." The apostle Paul had an especially keen appreciation of his commission to preach, for he exclaimed: "Really, woe is me if I did not

declare the good news!" This responsibility no dedicated Christian can sidestep or avoid, but he must keep awake to it, alert to all opportunities to discharge it. During the month of May Christian ministers will be doing so by featuring the Bible-study aid *From Paradise Lost to Paradise Regained* in their ministry.—Amos 3:8; Acts 8:4; 1 Cor. 9:16.

Christians also have a responsibility toward their neighbor, because they must love their neighbor as they do themselves. Love of neighbor requires them to warn their fellowmen of the urgency of our times, that time is running out and soon there will be no more opportunity to escape Armageddon's destruction.—Mark 12:31.

The heads of families have a special responsibility to which they must keep awake. It is not enough for them to provide food, clothing, shelter and schooling for their offspring. These also must be made ready for the final inspection at Armageddon. Parents, read the Bible to your children, study the Bible with them, pray with them, take them to Christian meetings where they can learn more about God's Word, along with you, and then have them accompany you in the preaching work. It is easy to neglect these responsibilities unless you keep awake.—Deut. 6:5-7.

And then there are certain responsibilities in connection with the local Christian congregation. Mature male Christian ministers are charged with the oversight, smooth operation and progress of a congregation of ministers consisting of men, women and children. Included in their responsibilities is their keeping blameless and without any reason for reproach by people on the outside. Like good shepherds, they must seek out the "lambs" that have strayed, become lost or sick and give them special attention, so as to restore them to the flock and to spiritual vigor.

Today, more than ever before, the counsel recorded at 1 Thessalonians 5:6 is pertinent: "Let us not sleep on as the rest do, but let us stay awake and keep our senses." So let each Christian keep awake to his responsibilities to his God, to his neighbor, to his family and to his congregation. Doing that, he will gain Jehovah's approval and can hope to survive the coming battle of Armageddon to enjoy endless life in God's new world.

* For details see *The Watchtower*, February 1, 1961.

Questions from Readers

● What is the meaning of Amos 8:9? Is this prophecy to be taken literally?—S. P., United States.

Amos 8:9 reads: "'And it must occur in that day,' is the utterance of the Lord Jehovah, 'that I will make the sun go down at high noon, and I will cause darkness for the land on a bright day.'" This scripture quite clearly refers to Armageddon. At that time, when the enemies of Jehovah God are expecting to have a bright time, as at high noon when the sun is at its zenith, Jehovah God causes darkness to befall his enemies and destroys all their hopes. It brings them to ruin. It does not necessarily mean a literal darkness, although Jehovah God doubtless will do some strange things in the realm of nature during the universal war of Armageddon.

● In the *Watchtower* article of September 15, 1956, "Marriage Ceremony and Requirements," paragraph 20 states that a consensual wife who accepts the truth and wants to have the marriage legalized and registered, but cannot get the man she lives with to agree, may sign a written statement that she will be faithful to her consensual marriage partner as to a husband and will get the marriage legalized as soon as she can get the man to legalize it, and then she may be baptized. Does this apply in all countries of the world, to all or any forms of consensual marriage?

The *Watchtower* was here discussing consensual marriage and showed a difference between it and common-law marriage. This same paragraph was referred to in the *Watchtower* of November 15, 1960, under the heading "The Need for Legalizing Marriage."

While common-law marriage is legally recognized in some states or provinces of the land and is a legal marriage, in other states or provinces of that land or in other lands it may not be recognized as legal. Therefore the Watch

Tower Bible and Tract Society requires that those living together in common-law marriage should have a legal marriage ceremony performed and that this should be definitely registered in the registry of the civil government. Not before then will the Watch Tower Society recognize the dedication by the parties to common-law marriage and consider them worthy of water baptism and admission to the New World society. This procedure will provide for proper legal standing for their children in any land or state and is in full accord with the law of God.

However, if a woman who is living in common-law marriage in a state where common-law marriages are recognized as legal is not successful in persuading her common-law husband to have the marriage legally registered, the Society makes a concession. It allows such a woman who learns the truth to present evidence to the congregation committee that she has made a conscientious effort to persuade her common-law partner to register the marriage legally. The congregation committee will then allow her to sign a declaration vowing faithfulness in marriage relationship to the unwilling man and she may be accepted for baptism and share in the activities of the congregation. The same would hold true for a man who cannot get his common-law wife to register the marriage.

In states or provinces where common-law marriage is not recognized as legal, unmarried persons living together consensually or by mutual consent would be living together in fornication. Such persons cannot be admitted to baptism by the New World society until they have legalized their position with an appropriate legal marriage ceremony. There is no law preventing them from legalizing their marriage, since they are single persons. In all lands single persons have the privileges of marriage; so this legal marriage requirement applies in all parts of the world. Therefore in such cases the Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society does not accept a signed statement from single persons living together consensually. They must either have the appropriate legal marriage ceremony or else separate, before they may be accepted for water baptism.

If one of the parties to the consensual cohabitation would happen to be still legally married to someone else, he or she would be required

to obtain a divorce decree dissolving the legal marriage by the laws of the land and then get legally married to the consensual partner before presenting himself for water baptism.

In certain lands under strict religious domination no divorces are allowed. It sometimes happens that an undivorced married person has been living for many years with a single person because his legal mate deserted him and took up living in adultery with someone else. This undivorced person then comes to a knowledge of the truth and wants to serve Jehovah. But he is unable by law to obtain a divorce. He may have a family in his consensual union and in fact the woman may also desire to serve Jehovah and raise the children in the admonition of Jehovah. In such lands we have made the concession to the pair who are living together without the benefit of marriage when they learn the truth.

Though unable to get a divorce from a legal married mate, they must take whatever legal steps are available to record the separation from the legal married mate; and then they must write a confession and set forth a declaration vowing faithfulness to each other in the marriage arrangement and that they will stay together despite legal ties to others which cannot be dissolved according to the existing law. They must also agree to having their relationship to each other legalized as soon as the legal obstacle would be removed, which would mean the death of the separated legal marriage mate.

We do this because the country's law is unreasonably prohibitive and refuses divorce because it does not recognize God's law, which allows divorce on the grounds of fornication or adultery. If the couple had been living in another land where divorce was available they would doubtless have straightened out their marital situation long before now and presented themselves to the New World society as legally married persons. Because of Jesus' statement at Matthew 19:8, 9, the Society has made this concession, and we trust this meets with God's approval.

Suppose an individual is living in such consensual arrangement, where the legal obstacle exists in a land where there is no divorce. If now he should learn the truth but the one with whom he is living does not recognize the truth and will not cooperate in signing a written statement vowing faithfulness, then the New World society will accept a statement signed by just the person who has learned the truth and who wants to make a dedication and serve God. It is in such consensual union situation that the declaration vowing faithfulness is accepted, as mentioned in paragraph 20, page 573, of the September 15, 1956, *Watchtower*. The declaration would not be accepted in a land where divorce is permitted under the law.

(Congregations having *Kingdom Service Questions* on file should make a note of this matter in the booklet for future reference, especially in connection with page 11.)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

FIELD MINISTRY

In view of the clear information in the Bible concerning our times, there is no need for a person to wonder what his responsibility as a Christian is. Awake to their responsibility, Jehovah's witnesses will call at homes during May offering the Bible-study aid *From Paradise Lost to Paradise Regained*, on a contribution of only 75c.

AROUND THE WORLD WITH "PARADISE"

Literally encircling the earth, the book *From Paradise Lost to Paradise Regained* is rapidly becoming one of the most popular Bible-study

aids ever published. It is now available in over thirty languages, with new translations already under way. One of the many reasons for its outstanding reception is the understandable way in which the Bible's account of man's creation, fall from divine favor, way of redemption and hope of life unfolds. Get your copy. Send only 75c.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

June 10: Overseers of Life, ¶1-21. Page 265.

June 17: Overseers of Life, ¶22-24, and Overseers, Fully Accomplish Your Ministry. Page 270.