The WATCHTOWER

The Destructive Power of Jealousy

Fine "Workers at Home"

Shepherds of the Flock Under One Lord

JULY 1, 1976

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

The WATCHTOWER

July 1, 1976
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A watchtower enables a person to see far into the distance and announce to others what is coming. Can a magazine serve similarly in our day? Yes, from its first issue (July 1879) onward, *The Watchtower*, published by Jehovah's witnesses, has done just that.

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We know that many sincere persons would appreciate a discussion of these things in their own home with a qualified person. One of Jehovah's witnesses will be glad to call on you free of charge. To arrange for this, simply write the publishers of this magazine or contact Jehovah's witnesses locally.

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IN THIS ISSUE

The Destructive Power of Jealousy	387
Fine "Workers at Home"	389
Hong Kong's New Kind of Prosperity	393
Insight on the News	396
Paul Writes Philippians a Letter of Love and Joy	397
Loving Oversight Builds Up	400
Shepherds of the Flock Under One Lord	406
Through a Dark Tunnel into the Past!	412
"A Bribe in the Bosom"	415
Questions from Readers	416

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THE DESTRUCTIVE POWER OF JEALOUSY

JEALOUSY can mean a proper zeal for what is right. Jehovah God, for example, is jealous for his good name, and so are his devoted servants. (Ex. 34:14; 1 Ki. 19:10, 14; Ezek. 39:25) However, all too often jealousy is wrongly motivated or misdirected. The jealous person may suspect others without cause or resent the attention that others receive, feeling that he alone is entitled to it.

Improper jealousy has destructive power. It can rob a person of contentment and breed anger and hatred. Doctors have found that jealousy can be a very harmful emotion. The jealous person may even reach the point where he suffers from sleepless nights, from vomiting, from stomach trouble or one of a host of other ills. It is just as the Bible proverb says: "Jealousy is rottenness to the bones."—Prov. 14:30.

Such jealousy can also ruin the best of relationships. This is well illustrated in the case of King Saul of Israel and his loyal subject David.

David's courage in going up against the Philistine giant Goliath and vanquishing him with a shepherd's sling impressed Saul. Therefore he placed David in command of the warriors. In this capacity, David loyally supported Saul's kingship and gained numerous victories over the Philistines. Eventually David came to be praised in song even more than King Saul. When greeting the returning victorious warriors, Israelite women would dance and sing: "Saul has struck down his thousands, and David his tens of thousands." Saul greatly resented this, believing that the honor that should have been given to him as king was going to David. This led to Saul's viewing David with suspicion—as a rival for the throne.—1 Sam. 17:57, 58; 18:5-9.

The good relationship that had once existed between Saul and David came to an end. Though there was no reason for suspicion, Saul no longer trusted David. He became obsessed with the idea that David was a threat to his kingship. It became Saul's determination to kill him. Hence, David was forced to live as a fugitive, running from Saul for his life.—1 Sam. 18:10-25; 19:9-12.

The kind of jealousy displayed by King Saul for David can be avoided. How? A person has to be careful not to be oversensitive about his position, abilities or reputation. When people commend others in a person's presence, he should not conclude that they are deliberately trying to minimize his own accomplishments. Even if the comments seem to attribute to others greater attainments, as was true with what the women said of David, a person should not lose sight of the fact that many things are spoken in innocence without any thought of drawing comparisons. Especially those expressions that are prompted by the emotional impact of the moment have to be understood in the light of the circumstances and cannot be taken as a criti-

cal evaluation of individuals. It is indeed sad, therefore, when such statements become the basis for a person's resenting someone else.

The Bible shows that love is essential for gaining the mastery over jealousy. In the Scriptures, we read: "Love is not jealous." (1 Cor. 13:4) If inclined to suspect others or to resent them because of the recognition granted them, a person would do well to get to know those of whom he is jealous. He should endeavor to see their fine qualities and strive to appreciate what they are doing. Rather than take the view that others are eclipsing his accomplishments, he should be willing to see credit being given where credit is due. Obviously no one person can do everything. Both modesty and sound reason should tell us that it is a blessing when there are many qualified people to shoulder responsibility.

The man Moses certainly had the right attitude in this regard. When Eldad and Medad received God's spirit apart from Moses' presence and began prophesying in the camp of Israel, Joshua, Moses' attendant, became jealous for his "lord." Joshua felt that their prophesying detracted from Moses' authority and that they should therefore be restrained. But Moses was not jealous over the fact that he was no longer alone in having God's spirit operate toward him in a special way. He corrected Joshua with the words: "I wish that all of Jehovah's people were prophets, because Jehovah would put his spirit upon them!" —Num. 11:10-29.

But what if the person being highly praised is not really deserving of it? What if he has been overrated? That, of course, can happen. The discerning writer of Ecclesiastes noted: "There exists something calamitous that I have seen under the sun, as when there is a mistake going forth on account of the one in power: Foolishness has been put in many high positions, but the rich ones themselves keep dwelling merely in a low condition. I have seen servants on horses but princes walking on the earth just like servants."—Eccl. 10: 5-7.

Due to human imperfection, officials, employers and others in authority may make serious mistakes in judgment. They may accord little respect to those who have worked hard and are 'princely' or noble in their attitude and ways, treating them as mere servants. At the same time, they may favor men who are far less qualified. This may be very disturbing.

Nevertheless, little would be gained by becoming unduly upset about such matters. This would only rob one of peace of mind and heart. It might also have a bad effect on one's physical health. Far better it is to wait patiently. The inspired psalmist admonished: "Wait longingly for [Jehovah]. Do not show yourself heated up at anyone making his way successful." (Ps. 37:7) In due time even those making the mistake may be obliged to recognize the folly.

We should also work hard to avoid arousing jealousy in others. The Israelite women who lauded David's exploits in song evidently had no idea that this would arouse feelings of intense jealousy in King Saul. Yet if they had given careful thought to the matter, they might have been more cautious in giving the appearance of attributing greater honor to a subject of the king than to the king himself. Recognizing that people are imperfect, we do well to exercise care when praising a person or his accomplishments before someone else. We should make sure that what we say will not likely be taken by the listener to mean that he is being unfavorably compared with the one being highly commended.

Considering how injurious improper jealousy can be, we should want to resist yielding to it ourselves and avoid stirring it up in others. To this end, we should

strive to cultivate ever greater love for all kinds of people, appreciating their fine qualities and accomplishments. We should also consider the effect our words and actions can have on others. This will do much to make us happy and contribute toward preserving good relationships with our fellowmen.

Fine "Workers At Home"

PAUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ, once urged elderly Christian women to set a good example for their more youthful spiritual sisters. Among other things, this would motivate the younger women to be "workers at home."—Titus 2:3-5.

What does the expression "workers at home" mean to you? In answering that question, a young Christian woman stated: "I feel that to be 'workers at home' would include many things. Obviously, it would mean keeping one's home neat and clean. But, also, it would include working to care for one's family, so that they would have wholesome meals to eat and proper clothing to wear. To put it very simply, she [the 'worker at home'] should follow the description of a good wife and mother at Proverbs 31:10-31." An elderly Christian woman said the expression "workers at home" reminded her of the same portion of the Bible book of Proverbs.

There we find certain "words of Lemuel the king," possibly those of Solomon. This description of "a capable wife" was based on "the weighty message that his mother gave to him in correction." (Prov. 31:1) But these words do not reflect merely human wisdom, for they were divinely inspired. Hence, what is said here represents God's view and surely merits careful consideration by Christian women who desire to be fine "workers at home."

VALUE OF "A CAPABLE WIFE"

First, King Lemuel discusses the value of a good wife. Well, what is a housewife's economic value? Recently, the United States Social Security Administration tried to determine this on the basis of wages in that country for such jobs as baby-sitting and cooking. According to 1972 data and figures described as "very conservative," a housewife's highest worth is attained between twenty-five and twenty-nine years of age, when her yearly economic value was placed at $6,417. Of course, some may wonder how a housewife's value can be determined at all, in view of the old saying, "Man may work from sun to sun, but woman's work is never done."

Even if a person does not agree with those statistics or that saying, there is no question that a good wife should be valued

highly. King Lemuel declared: "A capable wife who can find? Her value is far more than that of corals. In her the heart of her owner [her husband] has put trust, and there is no gain lacking. She has rewarded him with good, and not bad, all the days of her life." (Prov. 31:10-12) Yes, "a capable wife" is more precious than the highly prized ornaments that artisans fashion from the colorful corals taken from seas. She is trustworthy, too, and does good things for her husband throughout their life together. But what are her activities?

HER HOUSEHOLD ACTIVITIES

King Lemuel described "a capable wife" of ancient Israel. However, Christian women of today can profitably analyze their circumstances in the light of such a fine wife's activities. If a Bible is at hand, why not read Proverbs 31:10-31 right now? Then, suppose we step back in time and take a closer look at the pursuits of "a capable wife."

First, please consider this woman's interest in the *clothing* worn by her family. "Her hands she has thrust out to the distaff, and her own hands take hold of the spindle." (Prov. 31:19) Likely, in her left hand she holds the distaff, a stick on which fibers (perhaps of flax or wool) are loosely wound. These are attached to the spindle, a shorter stick with a hook at one end to hold the fibers and a heavy disk near the other end. With the right hand, the woman twirls the hanging spindle, thus twisting the fibers. What is her purpose? Why, this capable wife is even making her own thread or yarn!

"She has sought wool and linen," says Lemuel, "and she works at whatever is the delight of her hands." (Vs. 13) Among the Hebrews most garments were made of wool or linen. Probably this "capable wife" purchases the finest material she can find at the most reasonable prices. Then she works with willing hands to make this into excellent garments for her family. To her this work is a delight!

Members of this woman's household possess heavy double garments that protect them during cold, snowy weather. She herself is attired in costly clothing, though her fine garments are not gaudy or immodest. (Compare the apostolic counsel that Christian women "adorn themselves in well-arranged dress, with modesty and soundness of mind." [1 Tim. 2:9]) Her husband is dressed suitably for association with the older men, and her industriousness does not escape their notice. In fact, she has even made undergarments and belts that she can sell to merchants and thus realize a profit.

Lemuel put matters this way: "She does not fear for her household because of the snow, for all her household are clothed with double garments. Coverlets she has made for herself. Her clothing is of linen and wool dyed reddish purple. Her owner is someone known in the gates, when he sits down with the older men of the land. She has made even undergarments and proceeded to sell them, and belts she has given to the tradesmen."—Vss. 21-24.

The capable wife is just as industrious in providing wholesome *food* for the household. As merchant vessels bring fine products from afar, so this woman seeks choice foods, even if she must obtain them from distant places. "She has proved to be like the ships of a merchant. From far away she brings in her food."—Vs. 14.

It is not customary for this woman to sleep until the sun is shining brightly. She arises before dawn, perhaps to start baking bread. As for the young women in the household, they have no complaint for want of food or assigned work. This capable wife sees to it that they have something to eat and duties to perform. "She also gets up while it is still night, and gives food to her household and the pre-

scribed portion to her young women." —Vs. 15.

Certain aspects of *household management* are entrusted to this woman by her husband. She handles all these affairs with his approval and direction. For example, a certain plot of ground is for sale at a good price, but the woman buys it only after careful consideration. In fact, as a result of her own industrious and practical efforts, she has accumulated some funds that enable her to acquire property. She may even do some outdoor work. At least she sees to it that the ground acquired is put to good use. We are told: "She has considered a field and proceeded to obtain it; from the fruitage of her hands she has planted a vineyard."—Vs. 16.

Any observer can see that this woman is *industrious* and *capable*. "She has girded her hips with strength, and she invigorates her arms." (Vs. 17) This fine wife is not afraid to exert herself, but does her work with vigor. Furthermore, "she has sensed that her trading is good." Her activities are profitable, and she may give special attention to those that are most productive. So industrious is this woman that "her lamp does not go out at night." (Vs. 18) This may be a figurative expression meaning that she works industriously late into the night and even rises before dawn for further work.

Because this woman handles matters capably and her efforts are rewarding, she feels secure and does not experience anxiety about the future. Rather, she is confident, has a sound mind, and possesses the strength needed to endure the hardships of life. Indeed, "strength and splendor are her clothing, and she laughs at a future day."—Vs. 25.

The capable wife also thinks before she speaks, and her words are not spoken in a domineering tone. She may remind one of Abigail, who "was good in discretion and beautiful in form." (1 Sam. 25:3) Yes, the capable wife speaks with kindness, whether she is talking to the children, the servants or others. As a faithful wife and mother, she helps her husband to teach the children, also encouraging the young ones to accept and follow their father's fine discipline and instruction. Clearly, she is not an idle or lazy woman. "Her mouth she has opened in wisdom, and the law of loving-kindness is upon her tongue," says King Lemuel. "She is watching over the goings on of her household, and the bread of laziness she does not eat."—Vss. 26, 27.

This excellent wife also is *generous* and *a doer of good* to individuals outside the household. "Her palm she has stretched out to the afflicted one, and her hands she has thrust out to the poor one," seeking to be of aid. (Vs. 20) This woman is not selfish, but is quite loving and generous.

REWARDS OF "A CAPABLE WIFE"

Many are the duties of the capable wife. But she enjoys rich blessings and rewards for her good works. Her industry, discretion, wisdom and other fine qualities endear her to members of her family. "Her sons have risen up and proceeded to pronounce her happy; her owner [her husband] rises up, and he praises her. There are many daughters that have shown capableness, but you—you have ascended above them all." (Vss. 28, 29) Yes, the boys of the family are grateful for such a fine mother, and her husband is happy to have this excellent woman as his wife.

Charm and prettiness may fade with illness and age. But this woman has a lasting inner beauty because she is devoted to Jehovah God and has a healthy fear of displeasing him. Her love for God, coupled with her good works, brings the capable wife commendation and praise. Why, her fine deeds are spoken of approvingly even in the gates, the city's news center! She is reminiscent of Ruth, to whom Boaz said:

"Everyone in the gate of my people is aware that you are an excellent woman." —Ruth 3:11.

The capable wife has not inappropriately received the praise of others; it has come to her as a result of "her works." That is, she has earned such esteem. So, in concluding this description of "a capable wife," King Lemuel says: "Charm may be false, and prettiness may be vain; but the woman that fears Jehovah is the one that procures praise for herself. Give her of the fruitage of her hands, and let her works praise her even in the gates."—Vss. 30, 31.

A BALANCED LIFE

The capable wife undoubtedly maintained a clean, pleasant home. After all, cleanliness was emphasized among God's people. For instance, the priests were obligated to be physically and ceremonially clean when serving before Jehovah God. (Ex. 30:17-21) A clean, neat home is appreciated by every member of the family. But, of course, all can help to keep it that way by being neat themselves. On the other hand, the thoughtful 'worker at home' will be wise if she takes a balanced view and does not place such emphasis on tidiness that her husband and children are ill at ease about using certain furniture for its intended purpose.

The life of the capable wife was one of *balanced activity*. She did not spend so much time in one pursuit that she ignored other important duties. For example, she made articles of clothing, some of which she sold at a profit. But she did not let success in this pursuit draw her away from other essential work, such as giving food to her household. (Prov. 31:13-15, 21-24) A fine example for Christian "workers at home"!

For most people in ancient Israel, dawn opened the day's activity and dusk brought it to a close. The psalmist said: "The sun begins to shine . . . Man goes forth to his activity and to his service until evening." (Ps. 104:22, 23) But for many—including the capable wife—the workday began before sunrise. (Prov. 31:15) At any rate, when the husband left home for work, he could be confident that his capable wife would take good care of household matters. At day's end, he did not feel like staying away from home because it was an unpleasant place, neglected by a lazy wife. Rather, his helpmate had balanced out her activities so that she would not be negligent in some way and thus cause unhappiness.

So, the husband was eager to return to his comfortable, well-kept home. There he could spend delightful hours with his loving, capable wife and their children. No, his wife would not be working every moment. A balanced life calls for some relaxation. Sometimes it would be wholesome conversation, perhaps mixed with occasional humor, for there is "a time to laugh."—Eccl. 3:1, 4.

Because the capable wife balanced out her many responsibilities, she had time to do good things for the poor and afflicted. (Prov. 31:20) Similarly, Christian "workers at home" schedule their activities in such a way that they have time to do good to others, as when sharing with them the good news of God's kingdom.—Matt. 24:14.

Happiness and rich blessings are realized by Christian women who earnestly follow King Lemuel's divinely inspired description of "a capable wife." They thus enjoy the satisfaction of gaining the approval of their husbands. (1 Cor. 7:34) While not working merely to acquire praise, they do receive the commendation of their husbands, children and others. Most important of all, these Christian women have the joy that results from pleasing Jehovah God as fine "workers at home."

HONG KONG'S NEW KIND OF PROSPERITY

THE story of Hong Kong has been one of steady growth, progress and material prosperity. Situated on China's southern coast, this British colony is one of the world's most significant ports. From a humble beginning with some 23,000 inhabitants in 1842, Hong Kong has grown into a bustling commercial center of about four and a half million people.

Hong Kong is one of the most densely populated areas on earth, and its people live in very crowded quarters. However, over the years the standard of living has improved considerably. Today even those residing in the huge housing estates have some of the modern conveniences—telephone, refrigerator, television set and electric rice cooker. Yes, Hong Kong is enjoying material prosperity.

NEW KIND OF PROSPERITY

As the 1970's began, however, a new kind of prosperity became very evident in Hong Kong. This was a spiritual prosperity. By then, Jehovah's Witnesses had been preaching patiently in the colony for some twenty years, declaring the good news of God's kingdom. During July 1973, 271 shared in this preaching work. The "Divine Victory" International Assembly held here that month clearly showed that spiritual prosperity had come to Hong Kong. As the assembly opened, 462 persons were present.

By 1974 Hong Kong was feeling the crunch of the worldwide recession. News of currency devaluations around the world caused widespread concern. Prices went up and continued to rise. Many people here began to realize that their material prosperity really was not sound, and this resulted in a more favorable climate for Kingdom preaching.

INDUSTRIOUS EFFORTS TO AID OTHERS

By early 1976, Jehovah's Witnesses in Hong Kong numbered more than 500, associated with seven congregations. In view of the colony's large population, of course, these faithful Christians were few indeed. Interestingly, when one clergyman was asked about their work, he brushed them off with the comment, "They're just like a few ants on an anthill." Nevertheless, ants are known for their industrious work. —Prov. 6:6-8.

The Chinese people are well known for their industriousness and determination to get things done. These fine qualities have come to the fore as the few Jehovah's Witnesses in Hong Kong have taken advantage of their opportunities to preach the good news. Just consider what they have done.

In order to have a greater share in declaring the Kingdom message to others, many of Hong Kong's Witnesses take up the full-time preaching work for at least a month at a time. Some of these temporary pioneers, as they are called, work in factories from 8:00 in the morning until 5:00 in the afternoon. Upon finishing their secular work for the day, they quickly get a snack at a nearby food stall, then head right for their preaching territory. They

joyfully spend up to three hours in house-to-house or other preaching activity. Then these zealous Kingdom proclaimers go home, have their evening meal and enjoy their rest, satisfied that they have sought to aid others spiritually that day. In this way, many persons are contacted who work daily and might otherwise fail to hear the Kingdom message.

One of the first Chinese men to accept the truth of God's Word years ago has remarked that what has impressed him so much is the willingness of so many Christians to spend much time in the Kingdom-preaching activity after working secularly in a factory for six days a week. Surely, such industriousness and concern for the spiritual welfare of others is noteworthy.

YOUTH'S CONTRIBUTION

Industriousness and concern for others certainly are being manifested by young persons here who are embracing true Christianity in growing numbers. It is not unusual for visitors from overseas to remark, "You have so many young ones in your congregations." Yes, there are many in their twenties who rejoice that they can serve Jehovah God so early in life. —Eccl. 12:1.

Certain factors have promoted spiritual prosperity among the young. In the late 1960's Hong Kong entered the television age and this has had a marked effect on the populace. Those of the younger generation have become more exposed to the rest of the world and are thinking about the meaning of present woes. They are more receptive to new ideas and will listen when Jehovah's Witnesses tell them what the Bible has to say about world distress. Yet, the older generation still clings tenaciously to the traditional Chinese way of life.

So, young persons here have had to overcome problems to serve Jehovah. For example, one sixteen-year-old girl heard about Bible truth from a friend and began studying the Scriptures with one of the Witness missionaries. Before long, the girl was attending Christian meetings. At first, her mother would lock the iron gate, and, upon returning from meetings, the girl could not get into the home. She would sit patiently on the steps in the dark stairway until her mother decided to let her in, sometimes as late as two o'clock in the morning. Nevertheless, the girl persevered in pursuing true worship. Then came that happy evening when she returned home from a meeting and her mother served her a cup of hot tea. The girl could hardly believe it! Recently, she told her mother that she was going to be baptized in symbol of her dedication to Jehovah God. Though the mother did not actually approve, there was no more opposition. Grateful for Jehovah's blessing, this young girl now shares in spreading the good news and so contributes to the growing spiritual prosperity in this field.

Consider also the experience of a young man, a schoolteacher. He told his parents that he intended to leave his secular job and take up the full-time preaching activity, known as pioneer service. Though the parents voiced their disapproval, nothing more was said until two months later, when the young man actually began his full-time preaching work. The father bitterly opposed his son and ordered him to leave the home with all his belongings. Accordingly, the young man left and found temporary lodging with good friends. Confidently, he stood firm and began his pioneer work. After only a day, however, his mother could not bear having her son away from home and began quarreling with the father. The end result was that the son was asked to return home. He did so with complete freedom to pursue his desired vocation.

THE CHALLENGE TO REACH ALL

Whether young or old, Jehovah's Witnesses in Hong Kong have "plenty to do in the work of the Lord." (1 Cor. 15:58) The lifesaving activity of Kingdom-preaching now is reaching out into the small towns and villages of the countryside, known as the New Territories. A zealous missionary couple was assigned to the growing township of Yuen Long to cultivate the interest in Bible truth that was springing up there as a result of preaching work done by visiting Witnesses. Soon a congregation was established, and within a year twenty-four proclaimers of the good news were associated with it. As a result of such work, villages and settlements close to the border with China are hearing the good news of Jehovah's promised new order.

Off the coast of Hong Kong there are some fairly large inhabited islands. Most of the time, the homes are deserted, with only a few elderly illiterate persons caring for them. The rest of the family are away working in Hong Kong or are out fishing for days at a time. Others are busy tending their fields. How might these people be told the good news?

Well, what about special feast days and public holidays? These afford excellent opportunities to reach such islanders. On January 31, 1976, the first day of the Chinese New Year celebrations, the Hong Kong Congregation of Jehovah's Witnesses arranged to visit the island of Cheung Chau. Ninety-five Kingdom proclaimers made the trip and visited all the homes of the island. Besides having many fine Bible discussions, the ninety-five Witnesses placed with the islanders nearly 2,000 copies of the *Watchtower* and *Awake!* magazines, as well as 120 books.

REACHING INTO CHINA

During the recent Chinese New Year celebrations, thousands of persons flocked back to mainland China to visit relatives and friends there. Some of Jehovah's Witnesses took advantage of this opportunity to call on their relatives. Bible literature cannot be taken into that country because of the thorough search made by customs officials at the border. But when a Christian is with relatives in their quiet home, he can use his Scriptural knowledge to show the reason for world woes. Reports indicate that the way of life there is very rigid and controlled, the populace having just the bare necessities.

One Witness who had the opportunity to visit her relatives in China says that they could not understand why life was so oppressive. When she told them that there is a living God, the Creator, who cares for mankind and this earth, she found listening ears. She told them that unhappy conditions exist world wide, but that these are a sure sign that Jehovah God soon will act and bring about a change. This Witness feels that these persons, and perhaps many like them, would accept Bible truth if given the opportunity to hear it. Yes, Jehovah's Witnesses are speaking about the Kingdom hope even when going into China. Time alone will tell what will happen respecting true Christianity in that land.

Time also will reveal the extent to which spiritual prosperity will reach in Hong Kong. One of the missionaries remarked that much hard work has been done through the years. A great deal of time has been spent calling on the people and much Bible literature has been placed with them. He likened this hard and patient work to that of the hardworking farmer, who patiently "keeps waiting for the precious fruit of the earth." (Jas. 5:7) Similarly, Jehovah's Witnesses cheerfully work on in this field, patiently waiting for God to make things grow and grant further spiritual prosperity.—1 Cor. 3:5-9.

Insight on the News

Why the Failure?

● For centuries Italy has been a predominantly Catholic country. But George Armstrong wrote in "The Guardian Weekly," England, of April 4, 1976: "Rome has become the sixth of Italy's 20 regions to come under the control of the Communists and the Socialists. The Communist-controlled regions now stretch from Genoa to Rome." One might well ask: Why should a Catholic land become such fertile ground for Communism?

Doubtless religious failure has been a major cause.

Communists do not believe in God. Yet the Scriptures say: "The fool says in his heart, 'There is no God.'" (Ps. 14:1, "The New American Bible," translated by members of the Catholic Biblical Association of America) Apparently, then, the Roman Catholic Church has failed to instill true belief in God in the hearts of every one of its members.

The Church has failed also to teach that Christians must maintain neutrality in political affairs. Jesus Christ said of his followers: "They are no part of the world, just as I am no part of the world." (John 17:16) Jesus also taught his disciples to pray for God's kingdom. (Matt. 6:9-13) Obviously, the Catholic Church has failed to teach the people that man's true hope for good government rests, not with any human political system, but with the established kingdom of God.

The Christian View

● According to "The Times" of London, a recent report of the Church of England's doctrine commission states: "To speak of the Bible as 'the Word of God' or the 'Word of God in the words of men' is just as much a judgment of faith as to speak of some historical event as an 'act of God'. It is not a proposition that can be proved. There are many Christians who wish to keep this language when talking of the Bible; there are others to whom it does not come easily."

Hence, "The Times" says that "full personal acceptance of all the statements in the Bible . . . is not expected of members of the Church of England," according to the commission's report. On the surface, it may appear that the Church's doctrine commission is merely being broad-minded and that full acceptance of the Bible as God's inspired Word is not required of Christians.

However, Jesus Christ repeatedly quoted from the Scriptures already written by the time that he was on earth. Certainly, Jesus did not exclude any of such writings when he said: "Your word is truth."—John 17:17.

The Christian apostle Paul declared: "All Scripture is inspired of God." (2 Tim. 3:16, 17) Moreover, he told Christians at Thessalonica: "We also thank God incessantly, because when you received God's word, which you heard from us, you accepted it, not as the word of men, but, just as it truthfully is, as the word of God."—1 Thess. 2:13.

Consciences Stirred

● Jehovah's Witnesses are undergoing brutal persecution—beatings, rape, even murder—in the southeast African nation of Malawi. Why? Solely because they maintain Christian neutrality and thus refuse to buy political cards that would make them members of the Malawi Congress Party. (John 15:19; 18:36) But the brutality they have experienced has stirred consciences everywhere.

In fact, these atrocities prompted extended discussion in the Lower House of the German Parliament at Bonn in March 1976. For instance, responding to a question, Minister Wischnewski said, in part: "The federal government has taken the reports of persecution of Jehovah's Witnesses in Malawi as an occasion to have the ambassador express the German opinion to the Malawi government."

Jehovah's Witnesses are not asking worldly governments to act in their behalf. But they know that thinking people are appalled by such atrocities because of God-given conscience that cannot sanction heinous wrongdoing. Accordingly, the apostle Paul said that when people not possessing God's law "do by nature the things of the law," they "demonstrate the matter of the law to be written in their hearts, while their conscience is bearing witness with them and, between their own thoughts, they are being accused or even excused." (Rom. 2:14, 15) When will Malawi's public officials become so conscience-stricken that they bring an end to the brutal persecution of Jehovah's Witnesses?

Paul Writes Philippians

A letter of love and joy

THE city of Philippi was founded by the military genius Philip of Macedon (father of Alexander the Great), who named it after himself. It became the principal city of Macedonia, now part of northern Greece and southern Yugoslavia. Historians highly praise the fine qualities of the Macedonians, and it seems that the seeds of truth sown there by the apostle Paul did indeed fall upon good and fine soil.—Luke 8:8, 15.

Paul and his traveling companions visited Philippi on his second missionary journey, about 49-52 C.E. They had been forbidden by God's spirit to preach in certain other places. Then one night Paul had a vision in which a certain Macedonian man appealed to him: "Step over into Macedonia and help us." Luke notes: "Now as soon as he had seen the vision, we sought to go forth into Macedonia, drawing the conclusion that God had summoned us to declare the good news to them."—Acts 16:6-10.

It is quite likely that few Jews lived in Philippi. One indication of this is that, instead of going to the synagogue on the sabbath as was his usual custom, Paul went outside the city gate where women gathered for prayer at a riverside.

It is also of interest to note the role that the women played in the Philippian congregation. Paul went to a place where *women* gathered for prayer. It was a woman convert, Lydia, who displayed outstanding generosity and hospitality, such as later marked that congregation. After she had been baptized she entreated the missionary group: "If you men have judged me to be faithful to Jehovah, enter into my house and stay." And Luke adds: "She just made us come." (Acts 16:11-15) Also, it was two women about whom Paul was concerned, Euodia and Syntyche, 'who had striven side by side with Paul in the good news, along with Clement,' a brother. —Phil. 4:2, 3.

THE BOND OF LOVE

There was a warm bond of love between Paul and the Philippians. Of course, he showed love in the first place by journeying there and preaching to them, and they warmly responded. On at least four occasions they sent funds to Paul. Twice while he was in Thessalonica they were the only ones to do this, even as he tells it: "Not a congregation took a share with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you alone; because, even in Thessalonica, you sent something to me both once and a second time for my need." (Phil. 4:15, 16) Though Paul fell in need

when in Corinth, he did not become a burden to a single one of the brothers there, for 'the brothers that came from Macedonia abundantly supplied his deficiency.' (2 Cor. 11:9) Then, when Paul was a prisoner in Rome the Philippians sent a gift to Paul. (Phil. 4:10-14) It seems that this gift, together with the opportunity to communicate with them, occasioned the writing of the letter to the Philippians, about 60 or 61 C.E.

Paul's letter to the Philippians may truly be described as a letter of love or a "love letter." In keeping with this is the fact that Paul introduces himself not in his official capacity as an apostle but as a 'slave of Christ.' This is also indicated by there being, on the one hand, no expressions of righteous indignation, no censuring because of having accepted false teachings.

On the other hand, this letter contains such expressions of endearment as: "God is my witness of how I am yearning for all of you in such tender affection as Christ Jesus has." Paul is content to remain in the flesh because that is "more necessary on your account." He refers to them as his "beloved" brothers.—Phil. 1:8, 24; 2:12; 4:1.

A LETTER OF REJOICING

Paul's letter to the Philippians also abounds with good cheer. He himself is joyful and he admonishes them to rejoice. It might be said to overflow with the same kind of spirit that Paul and Silas had when, after being beaten, imprisoned and put in stocks right there in Philippi, they were heard at midnight singing as well as praying aloud.—Acts 16:25.

Thus at the outset Paul says that he offers supplication for them with joy. He further tells that his imprisonment has resulted in the advancement of the good news rather than otherwise. In fact, his prison bonds have become common knowledge among the emperor's soldiers, known as the Praetorian Guard, and the brothers have taken courage because of Paul's incarceration to speak the Word of God more boldly. True, some were preaching Christ out of bad or wrong motives, hoping to cause Paul more suffering. But since the result of all of this was to make Christ known still more, Paul's reaction was: "In this I rejoice. In fact, I will also keep on rejoicing."—Phil. 1:13-18.

Regardless of the sacrifices that it may be his lot to endure, Paul says: "I am glad and I rejoice with all of you. Now in the same way you yourselves also be glad and rejoice with me." He is sending Timothy to them so that when he returns he may be a cheerful soul. He is also sending Epaphroditus so that upon seeing him they may rejoice. "Therefore give him the customary welcome in the Lord with all *joy*." (Phil. 2:17-19, 25-29) He begins what is now chapter three in the same vein, admonishing: "Finally, my brothers, continue *rejoicing* in the Lord." And how does he begin chapter four? "Consequently, my brothers beloved and longed for, my *joy* and crown." And then adds: "Always *rejoice* in the Lord. Once more I will say, *Rejoice!*" Farther on, Paul again strikes a joyful note, saying: "I do *rejoice* greatly in the Lord that now at last you have revived your thinking in my behalf, to which you were really giving thought, but you lacked opportunity."—Phil. 4:1, 4, 10.

COUNSEL MOST FITTING FOR OUR DAY

Although he did not find it necessary to censure the Christians at Philippi, Paul nevertheless felt the need to give them fine upbuilding admonition as to right thinking, right conduct and zeal, all of which is most apropos for our day. He keeps praying "that your love may abound yet more and more with accurate knowledge and full discernment; that you may

make sure of the more important things, so that you may be flawless and not be stumbling others up to the day of Christ, and may be filled with righteous fruit." "Only behave in a manner worthy of the good news about the Christ." (Phil. 1:9-11, 27) How appropriate such counsel is for our day! With all the temptations to wrongdoing on every hand, how careful we have to be that we never get sidetracked by less important things! Also, how important that we back up our preaching of the good news with conduct worthy of it!

Continuing, Paul expresses the desire to hear that his Philippian brothers are "standing firm in one spirit, with one soul striving side by side for the faith of the good news, and in no respect being frightened by [their] opponents." (Phil. 1:27, 28) In view of the growing opposition to the preaching of the good news of God's kingdom, that admonition is equally fitting for our day.

Paul's next words encourage us to be united in love, compassion and tender affection, doing nothing out of contentiousness or out of egotism, but 'with lowliness of mind, considering others as superior to ourselves.' To reinforce his admonition he points to Jesus' example and reward: Though existing in God's form, Jesus was not ambitious to be equal to God but humbled himself not only to come to earth as a human but to the point of dying on the despised execution stake. Because of taking this course God gave him a name above every other name.—Phil. 2:1-11.

Again Paul counsels as to proper conduct: 'Keep free from murmuring and arguments, be blameless, innocent, without blemish.' The Christian obligation is to witness both by word and by deed, "shining as illuminators in the world, keeping a tight grip on the word of life." He also warns against those who take pride in the flesh. He points to all that he could boast of but he considers it as a lot of refuse that he might gain Christ. Forgetting all that he left behind, Paul stretches earnestly to the things ahead. (Phil. 2:12-16; 3:2-14) And is that not what all Christians should do?

In view of today's worsening economic situation world wide, as well as the ever-increasing crime and violence, how timely is Paul's counsel that we, in spite of everything, keep on rejoicing! Also, that we "do not be anxious over anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication along with thanksgiving let [our] petitions be made known to God." Then 'the peace of God that excels all thought will guard our hearts and our mental powers.' Yes, due to a fine relationship with his heavenly Father, a Christian can have calmness and tranquillity.—Phil. 4:6, 7.

Nor would we overlook the fact that Paul gives us fine indirect admonition by the good example that he set in zeal, appreciation, faith and contentment: "I have learned, in whatever circumstances I am, to be self-sufficient." "For all things I have the strength by virtue of him who imparts power to me."—Phil. 4:11, 13.

And certainly, never have words been penned that more beautifully and more fittingly tell us with what to fill our hearts and minds than those found at Philippians 4:8: "Finally, brothers, whatever things are true, whatever things are of serious concern, whatever things are righteous, whatever things are chaste, whatever things are lovable, whatever things are well spoken of, whatever virtue there is and whatever praiseworthy thing there is, continue considering these things." What a safeguard the considering of such things is against the flood of obscenities and pornography seen and heard on every hand!

Truly, Paul's letter to the Philippians is one of love and joy and is most beneficial for all Christians living today.

Loving Oversight BUILDS UP

"But speaking the truth, let us by love grow up in all things into him who is the head, Christ."—Eph. 4:15.

AS WE approach the "great tribulation," our appreciation of the Christian congregation continues to deepen. The apostle Paul described this congregation of the living God as a "pillar and support of the truth." He spoke also of "pillars" in reference to certain overseers of the congregation who were appointed by holy spirit "to shepherd the congregation of God." Likewise, in the Christian congregation today, overseers are appointed theocratically for building it up in love. —1 Tim. 3:15; Gal. 2:9; Acts 20:28.

[2] "And [Christ] gave some as apostles, some as prophets, some as evangelizers, some as shepherds and teachers, with a view to the readjustment of the holy ones, for ministerial work, for the building up of the body of the Christ, until we all attain to the oneness in the faith and in the accurate knowledge of the Son of God, to a full-grown man, to the measure of stature that belongs to the fullness of the Christ; in order that we should no longer be babes, tossed about as by waves and carried hither and thither by every wind of teaching by means of the trickery of men, by means of cunning in contriving error."—Eph. 4:11-14.

1. How do the Scriptures describe the Christian congregation and its overseers?

2, 3. (a) What "gifts" did Christ give to the congregation, and for what purpose? (b) What fine example should overseers try to follow?

[3] Though we may not have the "apostles" and "prophets" who served by special assignment in the early congregation, yet 'evangelizers, shepherds and teachers' are still appointed by holy spirit to take the lead in God's service. What a fine example these have in Jehovah himself, "the shepherd and overseer of [our] souls"! (1 Pet. 2:25) How tenderly he leads the sheep in "tracks of righteousness for his name's sake"! (Ps. 23:1-6) How kindly and understandingly he cares for the sheep! "For this is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah has said: 'Here I am, I myself, and I will search for my sheep and care for them. . . . In a good pasturage I shall feed them. . . . The lost one I shall search for, and the dispersed one I shall bring back, and the broken one I shall bandage and the ailing one I shall strengthen.' " (Ezek. 34:11-16) Jehovah sees to it that all the "sheep" are taught through his wifelike organization, their "mother," so that they may have abundant peace and be firmly established in righteousness.—Isa. 54:13, 14; Gal. 4:26.

[4] "Readjustment of the holy ones" has progressed over the years. As the light of understanding shines ever brighter, old ideas have been replaced. Now, in these 1970's, it can truly be said that "the day

4. What has resulted from the "readjustment of the holy ones"?

is firmly established" among Jehovah's people and that the congregation is "full-grown." The flock of God world wide is united in a "oneness in the faith" that stands in clear contrast to the divisions in worldly Babylonish religions, particularly those of Christendom. Never has such a unity been seen over the face of this earth as that now to be found in every land among the Christian witnesses of Jehovah. United in speaking Bible truth and in the bond of love, they are unaffected by the tempestuous 'winds of teaching' that now afflict Christendom. They have been diligent to follow through on Paul's admonition: "Speaking the truth, let us by love grow up in all things into him who is the head, Christ."—Eph. 4:15; Prov. 4:18.

5 In recent years we have gained deeper appreciation of the divine arrangement for appointing elders in each congregation. This is for our blessing. However, do all fully realize this? Are some still inclined to view the elders from a mere human, fleshly viewpoint? Are some reluctant to discuss pressing personal problems with an elder? Do some question the ability of an elder in their own congregation to understand their problem and give appropriate Scriptural advice? Do they feel that the only solution is to write to the Watch Tower Society? Of course, the Society and the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses are glad to help where they can. But remember that the elders, appointed by holy spirit, are the Governing Body's representatives on the spot, in a position to consider all factors.

6 We should never slight the elder arrangement. It is a loving arrangement of Jehovah that elders 'keep watch over our souls.'—Heb. 13:17; Ps. 19:7-9.

7 In this respect, it is profitable for us to examine Paul's words at Galatians 6:2, 5: "Go on carrying the burdens of one another," and, "Each one will carry his own load." Is this a contradiction? No, for there is a difference between a "burden" and a "load." The Greek word for "burden" is *ba'ros,* which always has reference to something burdensome and heavy. Thus, if a Christian gets into some spiritual difficulty that is hard for him to bear, loving fellow believers should "fulfill the law of the Christ" by extending a helping hand. Elders, especially, should help out. The 'burdened' one should not hesitate to seek such help. But at the same time he must "carry his own load." Here Paul uses the Greek word *phor·ti'on,* signifying something to be carried, without any reference to its weight. It is a "load" that we all have to shoulder, regardless of circumstances—our own load of responsibility to prove faithful as a dedicated slave of Jehovah God.—Gal. 6:4; 2 Cor. 10:12.

8 If you need help in 'carrying your burdens' do not hesitate to seek help and counsel from the elders. They will be happy to assist to the extent possible. However, you should not expect the elders to make decisions for you. Decisions are your own personal "load," your responsibility. It is not proper or fair to ask an elder: What would you do if you were in my position? He is not in your position. But he will be glad to review scriptures with you and to help you to weigh matters in the light of Bible principles. (Prov. 11:14) Often the answer to a question or problem becomes clear on talking it over with someone who has a good background in Bible knowledge and practical experience. It can aid you to make *your own* decision. —Prov. 15:22.

9 Elders can help in many ways. How?

5, 6. (a) What questions are appropriate as to the elder arrangement? (b) How should we regard this arrangement?

7. (a) What "burdens" may we carry for one another? (b) What is the "load" that each must carry individually?

8, 9. To what extent may elders help in 'carrying your burdens'?

WHEN PERSONAL AND FAMILY PROBLEMS ARISE

[10] Are you battling with a weakness that persists despite conscientious efforts to cope with it? James 5:13-15 counsels: "Is there anyone suffering evil among you? Let him carry on prayer. . . . Is there anyone [spiritually] sick among you? Let him call the older men of the congregation to him, and let them pray over him, greasing him with oil in the name of Jehovah. And the prayer of faith will make the indisposed one well, and Jehovah will raise him up. Also, if he has committed sins, it will be forgiven him." As the applying of literal oil to one's head is soothing and refreshing, so also is the application of God's Word to a spiritually sick person to soothe, correct, comfort and heal him. (Ps. 141:5; Isa. 1:6) No one can help better in this respect than an understanding elder.

[11] Is there any wrongdoing in the past that causes you grief, shame and doubts about Jehovah's having forgiven you? An elder can help you to examine your changed course and attitude to see if there is any real reason not to believe that Jehovah has forgiven you. Remember how Nathan, a prophet and no doubt an elder in Israel, was used by Jehovah in creating in King David 'a pure heart and a new spirit.' (2 Sam. 12:1-13; Psalm 51) As in David's case, you can be confident that sincere prayers of repentance will be heard by Jehovah. Having repented and turned around, you can go forward with a clear conscience, appreciative of Jehovah's mercy.—Ps. 86:15-17; Acts 3:19, 20.

[12] Are you discouraged over a health problem? An elder cannot cure miraculously, but he can offer warm encouragement and perhaps practical suggestions to help you to endure and keep joyful. Talk to him about it. Those "presiding . . . in the Lord" are the ones who are to take the lead in speaking "consolingly to the depressed souls." The elders are the ones who can help to "strengthen the weak hands . . . and make the knees that are wobbling firm," and can "say to those who are anxious at heart: 'Be strong. Do not be afraid.' " Elders certainly can help to sustain you spiritually.—1 Thess. 5:12, 14; Isa. 35:3, 4.

[13] Do you have a domestic problem, perhaps with an unbelieving mate? No doubt you are familiar with the Scriptural counsel, such as 1 Corinthians 7:10-16 and 1 Peter 3:1-9. But you wonder, How can I apply the Scriptures for better success? An elder may be able to offer the practical advice that you need. He may be able to visit when you are both at home together, and to help in breaking down the tensions, giving workable suggestions for improving relationships.

[14] Oftentimes, the unbelieving mate has been barraged with negative talk about Jehovah's Witnesses from workmates or relatives—on neutrality, blood, "holiday" or image-worship issues. In an understanding way, an elder can explain how everything ties in to the main positive issue of the Kingdom, which brings enduring happiness and peace, "satisfying the desire of every living thing."—Ps. 145:9-16.

[15] Have you had a personal misunderstanding with someone, causing hurt feelings, so that reconciliation has been difficult? Perhaps you have had a problem in trying to apply the good advice of Ephesians 4:26, 32. If you talk to an elder about it, he may be able to help you to overlook the offense. If advisable, he may arrange to talk with both of you, assisting you to find a solution by applying Bible principles.—Ps. 119:97; 133:1.

10. (a) What is the wise course if you are unable to overcome some persistent weakness? (b) What is indicated by 'greasing with oil,' and who can best help in this regard?

11. How may some find aid in gaining a clear conscience?

12. How, perhaps, can elders assist with health problems?

13-15. What practical assistance may elders give with respect to: (a) domestic problems, (b) personal misunderstandings?

[16] Are you extremely shy, having a problem in conversing with and enjoying association with others? If you ask an elder, he may be able to help you to take the initiative more in speaking to others. Perhaps he can show you how to find real joy in your associations at the meetings, as well as at other times. "A joyful heart has a good effect on the countenance," and as your own countenance brightens up you will experience more and more the joy of friendships among Jehovah's own people. (Prov. 15:13) Elders, you can take the initiative in aiding shy persons to become more outgoing.—John 13:34, 35; Phil. 2:4.

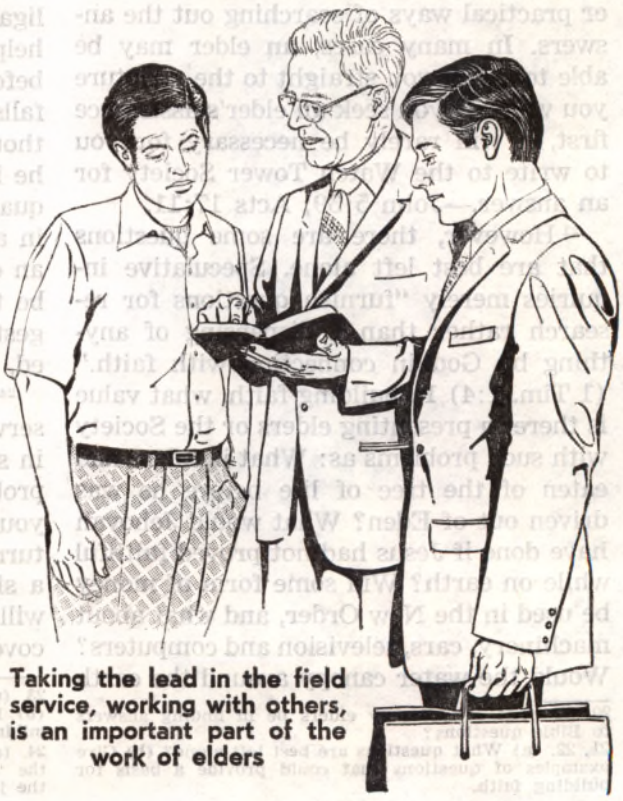
ASSISTING ALL IN FIELD SERVICE

[17] According to Ephesians 4:8, 11, "evangelizers" are included among Christ's "gifts in men." Truly, in their capacity as evangelizers, elders are privileged not only to set a zealous example in proclaiming the Kingdom, but also to help their brothers and sisters to develop abilities in this service. Already, some may be zealous in distributing magazines and literature from door to door. Others may have aptitude for re-visiting interested persons and starting new studies. Others may excel in teaching at Bible studies and in directing new ones to the meetings. Elders can help in training Kingdom proclaimers to widen out their activity and to become proficient in other fields. They can help members of the flock to fight discouragement due to difficult territory, or when hard problems of life interfere with their service.—Isa. 32:1, 2.

[18] Elders can give practical instruction on preparation for field work, perhaps rehearsing Bible sermons together with new ones. They can encourage a healthy attitude toward Jehovah's service. Distributing much literature in the field does not always indicate success, for it is desirable, also, to start Bible studies and to teach well with a view to making disciples. (Matt. 28:19) Elders can encourage one and all to continued diligence in 'preaching the good news' and to watchfulness in view of the great urgency of the times. (Mark 13:10, 32-37) As elders and all others of the flock work hard in the field service, we can be confident of angelic direction and of Jehovah's blessing in gathering in "those who belong to him."—2 Tim. 2:19; Matt. 25:31-33; Mark 4:3-8.

[19] Are you desirous of expanding your

19. How may elders encourage prospective and present pioneers?



Taking the lead in the field service, working with others, is an important part of the work of elders

16. How may elders help shy persons?
17. In what ways may elders assist in 'readjusting' with regard to problems encountered in the evangelizing work?
18. What attitude and confidence should elders encourage?

privileges, perhaps to become a full-time "pioneer" proclaimer of the good news or a "temporary pioneer"? Here, again, an elder can help you with practical suggestions. From experience, he is usually familiar with the adjustments that must be made, the problems that must be faced and the kind of schedule that must be worked out. The elders can help to make arrangements for you to work with other full-time publishers of the Kingdom. Your service with these can build you up, and all of you can rejoice together as you have good success.—1 Tim. 4:15.

WHEN YOU HAVE BIBLE QUESTIONS

[20] Do you have difficulty in finding the answers to Bible questions? Elders may be able to show you how to make effective use of the *Watch Tower Publications Indexes*. Or if the *Indexes* are not available in your language, elders can show you other practical ways of searching out the answers. In many cases, an elder may be able to direct you straight to the scripture you want. If you seek an elder's assistance first, it will rarely be necessary for you to write to the Watch Tower Society for an answer.—John 5:39; Acts 17:11.

[21] However, there are some questions that are best left alone. Speculative inquiries merely "furnish questions for research rather than a dispensing of anything by God in connection with faith." (1 Tim. 1:4) In building faith, what value is there in presenting elders or the Society with such problems as: What if Adam had eaten of the tree of life before he was driven out of Eden? What would Jehovah have done if Jesus had not proved faithful while on earth? Will some form of money be used in the New Order, and what about machinery, cars, television and computers? Would the water canopy around the earth have fallen if Adam had not sinned? How fast do angels travel, and how long does it take a spirit creature to travel from heaven to earth?

[22] Rather, those humbly seeking the truth will be asking questions of the kind that sincere truth-seekers inquired of Jesus.—Matt. 9:14; 13:10; Mark 9:11; 10:9, 10; John 3:4; 16:17, 18; Acts 1:6.

RESPOND TO ELDERS' COUNSEL

[23] Elders should be most interested in helping all to attain to the goal of everlasting life. This does not mean that they must delve into every private aspect of people's lives. But there may be times when elders find it necessary to speak to certain ones about their conduct. If they observe that someone in the congregation is doing things that may endanger his spirituality or at last result in his falling away from the truth, then it is their obligation to warn that one. Thus they can help him to "nip it in the bud," as it were, before he reaches a point of no return and falls into serious sin. "Brothers, even though a man takes some false step before he is aware of it, you who have spiritual qualifications try to readjust such a man in a spirit of mildness, as you each keep an eye on yourself, for fear you also may be tempted." (Gal. 6:1) Counsel and suggestions can be given, and should be heeded, in the "spirit of mildness."

[24] An elder may thus be of invaluable service in calling attention to a trend, even in small things, that could lead to serious problems. "My brothers, if anyone among you is misled from the truth and another turns him back, know that he who turns a sinner back from the error of his way will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins." (Jas. 5:19, 20)

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20. Of what service may elders be in finding answers to Bible questions?

21, 22. (a) What questions are best left alone? (b) Give examples of questions that could provide a basis for building faith.

23. (a) What motivates elders in caring for the flock? (b) How may elders "readjust" some "in a spirit of mildness"?

24. (a) Why do elders expend themselves on behalf of the "sheep"? (b) But what sins should they refer to the judicial committee?

Undershepherds of Christ well appreciate that "it is not a desirable thing with [the] Father who is in heaven for one of these little ones to perish," and that there is "joy in heaven over one sinner that repents." (Matt. 18:14; Luke 15:7) So these elders expend themselves on behalf of the sheep. But cases of gross sin they refer to the judicial committee in the congregation.

25 The young son of a Christian mother, the wife of an unbeliever, may behave obstreperously at the Kingdom Hall. In kindness and with tact, an elder may talk with the mother, offering to help her with her problem. If she is agreeable to receiving such advice, the elder may suggest practical ways of disciplining at home, so that the child may be helped to cultivate good manners, respect for others and, above all, the quality of love. A regular study with the children may help the "problem child" to receive loving assistance through this means. Readjusting that takes place at home may be clearly apparent soon in good behavior at the Kingdom Hall meetings.—Prov. 22:15; 23:13, 14; Deut. 11:18, 19.

26 At times elders may have to call attention to clothing styles or grooming that bring an atmosphere of worldliness into the congregation or that may give a wrong impression to those on the outside. (1 Tim. 2:9, 10; Rom. 12:2) It may be as difficult for them to give this counsel as it is for some who have an independent spirit to accept it. But what will make for harmony, unity and peace in the congregation? Why, our humbly following advice from the "older men," who have our spiritual welfare at heart. And remember, "the result of humility and the fear of Jehovah is riches and glory and life."—Prov. 22:4; 1 John 2:15-17.

27 Elders should warmly encourage other brothers to reach out for added privileges in the congregation. "If any man is reaching out for an office of overseer, he is desirous of a fine work." (1 Tim. 3:1) All have abilities that can be developed with the help of Jehovah's spirit, and all dedicated brothers should be anxious to become as useful as possible in the Christian congregation. Elders can stimulate this positive attitude in others, training them to accept and fulfill responsibilities. —Matt. 6:33; Phil. 3:13.

28 All of the flock of God—young and old, brothers and sisters—will appreciate kindly shepherding. A Christian woman, for example, may shy away from enrolling in the Theocratic School. But loving, understanding encouragement from an elder may give her courage to share in this privilege. Encouraging counsel from the elder presiding over the School may aid many to become more capable workers in the field. A willing response to counsel and encouragement from the elders may result in fine spiritual benefits.

"GROW UP IN ALL THINGS"

29 In what are the elders vitally interested? They want to see that all in the congregation continue to "grow up," to become more Christlike in their service and way of life. Whether associated for a few months only, or for many years, all should have spiritual progress as the goal. God's organization is on the move. It never slows down. So, why should we slow down?

30 Lives—souls—are involved. That is

25. What help could an elder give toward 'readjusting' an unruly child?
26. What will result from humility in heeding elders' counsel with regard to clothing and hairstyles, and so forth?
27. How may elders be of valuable service in encouraging other brothers in the congregation?
28. What spiritual benefits may result from elders' encouraging advancement through the Theocratic School?
29. What should be the goal of elders and all others in the congregation?
30. Why should all respond readily to the shepherding of the elders?

why the elders are intensely interested in each individual in the congregation. So all should pay careful attention to Hebrews 13:17: "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." It is by their zeal in God's service and their kindly shepherding that they are taking the lead. Their watching over your souls is not a probing into private affairs, but, rather, a watchfulness as to your spiritual welfare, in which they have a keen brotherly interest. It is indeed a joy to the shepherds when the flock responds to their loving oversight. Truly, we are encouraged to "imitate their faith." —Heb. 13:7.

[31] These "gifts in men," the elders as 'evangelizers, shepherds and teachers' in the congregation, are truly a timely provision from Jehovah through Christ Jesus. Recognizing them as such a provision, let us look to their zealous example, and not hesitate to go to them with our problems and questions. They are indeed the ones 'given' to aid us in love, that we may "grow up in all things into him who is the head, Christ."—Eph. 4:7, 8, 11, 15.

31. What attitude should the congregation take, then, toward the elders?

SHEPHERDS OF THE FLOCK UNDER ONE LORD

WHEN the Lord Jesus Christ was upon the earth, he identified himself as the "fine shepherd." Those who listened to his voice and followed him were his "sheep." He said he surrendered his soul in their behalf. (John 10:1-15) Thus the followers of Christ Jesus who make up the congregation were compared by Christ Jesus to sheep in a flock. At Luke 12:32 Jesus spoke of a "little flock" who would be given the Kingdom, and at John 10:16 Jesus mentioned "other sheep" who would also listen to his voice and who would become part of the one flock with Jesus Christ as their shepherd.

[2] Christian Bible writers later used similar expressions when addressing Christian overseers who were assigned to serve as shepherds under the Lord Jesus Christ. To the Ephesian overseers, Paul said: "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." (Acts 20:28) Here Paul emphasized the need for these shepherds to recognize that the congregation belongs to God and that it was purchased with the blood of his own Son, which blood God regards as very precious. Hence, these shepherds must deal with the flock as something extremely precious in the sight of God and Christ, to whom the flock belongs.

[3] By the time that Paul gave that counsel, the sheeplike members of the Christian congregation were not located in one place or one city, but were to be found in congregations located in many cities of the

1. Who is the "fine shepherd," and what is his relation to the "sheep"?
2. Why must undershepherds treat the flock as precious?
3. (a) In the first century, what was expected of every member of the flock? (b) How was unity built up in the congregation?

Roman Empire. They were in many places but they were still one flock, under the one shepherd, Christ Jesus, and every member of the flock was expected to be at unity with the others, in accord with the prayer of Jesus before his death: "I make request, not concerning these only, but also concerning those putting faith in me through their word; in order that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in union with me and I am in union with you, that they also may be in union with us, in order that the world may believe that you sent me forth." (John 17:20, 21) Those who were assigned to serve the congregations in the first century were to work in building up their unity by directing attention to the appointed Head of the congregation, Jesus Christ, and by encouraging all to imitate him in sticking to the truth and in demonstrating genuine love. As it is written at Ephesians 4:15, 16: "Speaking the truth, let us by love grow up in all things into him who is the head, Christ. From him all the body, by being harmoniously joined together and being made to cooperate through every joint that gives what is needed, according to the functioning of each respective member in due measure, makes for the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love." So, although there were many varieties of work to be performed, those who performed the work were all really one body of many members, under the one Head, Jesus Christ.

[4] Peter was one who did shepherding work under the direction of the Chief Shepherd, Jesus Christ. Following his resurrection Jesus emphasized to Peter, as recorded at John 21:15-17, that love for Christ is demonstrated by feeding or shepherding the "little sheep." Many years later Peter wrote to fellow Christians who had also come to be in the office of older men in the Christian congregation, saying at 1 Peter 5:1-4: "Therefore, to the older men among you I give this exhortation, for I too am an older man with them and a witness of the sufferings of the Christ, a sharer even of the glory that is to be revealed: Shepherd the flock of God in your care, not under compulsion, but willingly; neither for love of dishonest gain, but eagerly; neither as lording it over those who are God's inheritance, but becoming examples to the flock. And when the chief shepherd has been made manifest, you will receive the unfadable crown of glory." In this way these older men, these shepherds under Christ Jesus, were reminded that the flock belongs to God, that it needs care and that it should be of great concern to them as older men.

[5] A Christian shepherd is *an overseer,* but this is not understood in the same way that the world might view an overseer of a construction crew or of a plantation. In the Christian congregation there is no lording it over those who are God's inheritance. Oversight does not mean exaltation of men. Peter had learned about this very well from Christ Jesus many years earlier at the celebration of the last evening meal that Jesus had with his apostles. The record at Luke 22:24-27 reads: "However, there also arose a heated dispute among them over which one of them seemed to be greatest. But he said to them: 'The kings of the nations lord it over them, and those having authority over them are called Benefactors. You, though, are not to be that way. But let him that is the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the one acting as chief as the one ministering. For which one is greater, the one reclining at the table or the one ministering? Is it not the one reclining at the table? But I am in your midst as the one ministering.' " The disciples were wrong

4. (a) What did Jesus emphasize to Peter? (b) Of what did Peter remind the older men?

5. (a) What is meant by Christian oversight? (b) How did Jesus emphasize this?

in having this heated dispute, and yet how kindly was Jesus in correcting them!

6 The Chief Shepherd was an excellent example to those prospective shepherds. John's record of that evening meal of Jesus with his disciples gives an instance of this, saying: "While the evening meal was going on, . . . [he got up] and laid aside his outer garments. And, taking a towel, he girded himself. After that he put water into a basin and started to wash the feet of the disciples and to dry them off with the towel with which he was girded." (John 13:2-5) Jesus was a good teacher, so he went on to explain why he had washed their feet, saying: "Do you know what I have done to you? You address me, 'Teacher,' and, 'Lord,' and you speak rightly, for I am such. Therefore, if I, although Lord and Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash the feet of one another. For I set the pattern for you, that, just as I did to you, you should do also."—John 13:12-15.

7 Peter was thoroughly impressed by the example of Christ Jesus and the need for a shepherd to deal with the flock in humility, always being ready to serve them. So Peter wrote: "Neither as lording it over those who are God's inheritance, but becoming examples to the flock." This humility is a quality that Christ Jesus wanted to see in those who do shepherding work in the flock of God. Hence, Peter went on to say: "In like manner, you younger men, be in subjection to the older men. But *all of you* gird yourselves with lowliness of mind toward one another, because God opposes the haughty ones, but he gives undeserved kindness to the humble ones. Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time." (1 Pet. 5:5, 6) There is an advantage in being humble. It makes one easy to approach with a view to solving problems, and this spirit draws the entire congregation together in love. Serving in love and humility rules out any autocratic or arbitrary action or a lording it over others who are God's inheritance. A true shepherd is concerned about becoming an example to the flock.

8 The word "overseer," which is translated from the Greek word *episkopos,* designates one who is a guardian or who watches over something. Protective care is a basic idea inherent in the word *episkopos.* So the Christian overseer is one who is concerned about the flock of God and who cares for such flock in the way a shepherd would care for literal sheep. As an overseer he is not to lord it over God's flock. The word "lord" is from the Greek word *kýrios* and it signifies one having power and authority over others such as a master of a house or the head of a family. It is also translated "master," "owner" and even "sir." A slaveowner would come into that class, but slaveowners are rare today. However, modern employers or bosses would fit the description of a *kýrios* or "lord." But elders should not view their relationship with their brothers as being like that of an employer and an employee. The elders are shepherds, and shepherds guide and lead sheep to good pasture and watering places, as well as protect them and endeavor to heal their wounds or sicknesses. In the Christian congregation the shepherds encourage their brothers in the work of the Lord by being fellow workers with them, recognizing that we all have one heavenly Lord and Master under whom we serve and to whom we must answer.

9 Peter himself was a fine example of

6, 7. (a) How was Jesus an excellent example to the prospective shepherds? (b) What quality did Peter also stress? (c) How does this quality benefit the congregation?

8. (a) What is the basic idea of the Greek word *episkopos*? (b) Why is this word more applicable to Christian overseers than the Greek word *kýrios* is?

9, 10. (a) How was Peter a fine example of humility? (b) In contrast with false religion, what quality of true shepherds contributes to unity, and how did Jesus emphasize this?

this; he did not exalt himself. When he wrote as recorded at 1 Peter 5:1, addressing his words to older men, he described himself, saying: "I too am an older man." This is far from the worldly religious view of Peter, which tries to exalt Peter to a certain primacy or position of pope. That is not the example that Peter set.

10 There is no doubt that Peter remembered clearly the words of Jesus when he spoke of the scribes and the Pharisees exalting themselves and then said, as recorded at Matthew 23:8-12: "But you, do not you be called Rabbi, for one is your teacher, whereas *all* you are brothers. . . . Neither be called 'leaders,' for your Leader is one, the Christ. But the greatest one among you must be your minister. Whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted." Christian humility on the part of the shepherds who serve under Christ Jesus contributes to the unity of the flock and results in Jehovah's blessing.

11 On one occasion, Paul and Barnabas as traveling overseers were faced with the problem of certain men teaching circumcision as necessary for salvation. Acts 15:2 indicates that Paul and Barnabas did not agree with that teaching but disputed it. Nevertheless, for the sake of the unity of the whole organization, they brought the question to the governing body of apostles and elders at Jerusalem. When the matter had been thoroughly considered and the decision was reached by the governing body, local traveling overseers, such as Paul, wholeheartedly accepted the decision and conveyed to the congregations the important spiritual instruction. Acts 16:4, 5 reports: "Now as they traveled on through the cities they would deliver to those there for observance the decrees that had been decided upon by the apostles and older men who were in Jerusalem. Therefore, indeed, the congregations continued to be made firm in the faith and to increase in number from day to day." This had the effect of increasing the unity and singleness of thought among all in the flock and was evidently pleasing to Jehovah, for Jehovah prospered the congregations and added increase. In their respect for the governing arrangement of the Christian congregation, Paul and Barnabas set a good example for overseers today.

12 While Paul had a part in spreading the truth and seeing the expansion of the work, in an exemplary way he gave the glory to Jehovah, drawing attention away from himself and other servants of God by saying: "Neither is he that plants anything nor is he that waters, but God who makes it grow." (1 Cor. 3:7) This letter to the Corinthians also discloses that there was need to remind the overseers of the Corinthian congregation concerning certain requirements of God's law that they were not enforcing. Chapter 5 shows that fornication was reported in the congregation but that no action had been taken. There is no record that Paul wanted to see all the overseers there disqualified or removed from their assignments in the congregation because of their shortcoming. Rather, Paul instructed them to have no company with anyone who claimed to be a brother who was a violator of God's law and to remove the wicked one from among themselves. Paul was patient with them, allowing them opportunity to improve their shepherding and to correct themselves. That does not mean, however, that an overseer or a ministerial servant would never lose a privilege of service. If he definitely proved to be unfaithful or

11. What good example did Paul and Barnabas set for overseers today?

12. (a) To whom did Paul always give the glory? (b) How did Paul deal with the overseers in the congregation?

became reprehensible, he would be disqualified.

A UNIFYING SERVICE

[13] An overseer bears a heavy responsibility. But it is a joyful responsibility—a great privilege! Viewing it as such helps to lighten the load. Remember, the "fine shepherd" tells us: "My yoke is kindly and my load is light." (Matt. 11:30) That is the way Jesus viewed it. His undershepherds, who are yoked to Jesus in doing Jehovah's will according to his example, should regard it the same way. Much depends on putting 'first things first.'—Matt. 6:33.

[14] Let us look more closely at Jesus' example. What was his big work on earth? When John the Baptizer was arrested and imprisoned, Jesus went into Galilee and took up his service there. "From that time on Jesus commenced preaching and saying: 'Repent, you people, for the kingdom of the heavens has drawn near.'" (Matt. 4:17) Preaching the Kingdom was Jesus' principal work. And, principally, that is what he trained his disciples to do. (Luke 8:1; 9:1, 2; 10:1, 8, 9) Toward the end of his service on earth he told Pilate: "For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth." (John 18:37) Should undershepherds, who are yoked to Jesus, have any lesser goal?

[15] However, with many overseers this presents a problem, and understandably so. So much time is spent in caring for family responsibilities and in making shepherding calls that it is hard to find opportunities for taking a zealous lead in house-to-house and other field activity. Even so, could not a reasonable balance be arranged between evangelizing, shepherding and teaching? (Eph. 4:11) In the event that an overseer plans a regular share in evangelizing with a service group, consider other activities that may be tied in with this: Often, the overseer will be able to plan to take his own family along with him in this service, giving them practical training along with others in the group. There is great joy to be had in regular family participation in service together, and this can be an example to others in finding joy.

[16] What about shepherding calls? While returning from service, an overseer may make a point of dropping in on some person or family, and no doubt his relating fresh experiences from the field will have a stimulating effect. Some have made brief calls, also, while returning home from secular work. If calls are well planned, they need not encroach too much on evangelizing time. Overseers today can express themselves the same as did the apostle Paul: "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!" (1 Cor. 9:16) How refreshing it is to a Christian to keep active in proclaiming the good news, and how the flock appreciates such a fine example on the part of the overseer!

[17] All who serve as 'evangelizers, shepherds and teachers' may learn much from the way Jesus performed his service. He proclaimed the Kingdom wherever he could find people. Today we do this principally from door to door. But note how Jesus combined his public preaching with privately teaching his disciples. On one occasion Jesus went aboard a boat and talked to great crowds that gathered on the beach. "He told them many things by illustrations." After he had related the illustration of the sower, his disciples asked him why he spoke by the use of illustra-

13. How should an overseer regard responsibility?
14. What was Jesus' big work, and in what did he train his disciples?
15, 16. (a) Toward what problems of overseers should all show understanding? (b) What blessings may result through overseers' balancing evangelizing, shepherding and teaching responsibilities?
17. How did Jesus perform his service?

tions. So, privately, he answered their question. Then he spoke many other things "to the crowds by illustrations." Afterward, when "he went into the house," the disciples came to him again and he helped them to "get the sense" of his teaching. —Matt. 13:1-3, 10, 11, 34-36, 51.

[18] So, Jesus' service was field-oriented. Many overseers today should be able to follow a similar pattern. In working with a group in field service, they can accompany different ones in talking with people at the doors. This can encourage the group greatly. As they work with various individuals they can take an interest in explaining the whys and wherefores of situations that they are called on to handle at the doors, and show them how to overcome local problems. There may be opportunities, especially as they complete their service, of discussing questions that individuals may have. Thus, while building up the group's enthusiasm for the evangelizing work, overseers can give attention at the same time to shepherding and teaching.

[19] At John 10:3, 4, we read concerning the "fine shepherd": "He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. . . . He goes before them, and the sheep follow him, because they know his voice." Likewise, undershepherds today can give most valuable encouragement as they lead the flock out in Kingdom service, lovingly considering the needs of the individuals in the service group and taking kindly interest in building up each one so that all may improve their abilities in preaching and teaching the good news. It was Jesus himself who set the outstanding example of such service to the flock.—Ps. 40:9.

[20] On occasion, problems may consume considerable of the overseers' time, and they are problems that should not be neglected. None should be critical of overseers if at times these problems prevent them from leading others out in Kingdom service. All the flock appreciate their labors of love. They appreciate that the overseers are trying to strike a proper balance between evangelizing, shepherding and teaching. As circumstances allow, they are most happy when the overseers are their constant companions in the evangelizing work. Often, ministerial servants and others in the congregation can lighten the overseers' load by taking care of detailed work or other responsibilities that do not particularly call for attention by an overseer. Ministerial servants and other assistants who serve loyally alongside the overseers, and who "help out" wherever possible, are a great blessing in the congregation.—Ps. 149:1.

[21] As overseers, ministerial servants and all others in the congregation unite in "speaking the truth" zealously in Kingdom service and with one another, and as the entire congregation cooperates in every detail with a view to advancing the Kingdom-preaching and disciple-making work, all will indeed "by love grow up in all things into him who is the head, Christ." —Eph. 4:15.

18. What benefits may result from field-oriented service by overseers?

19. What outstanding example did Jesus set as the "fine shepherd"?

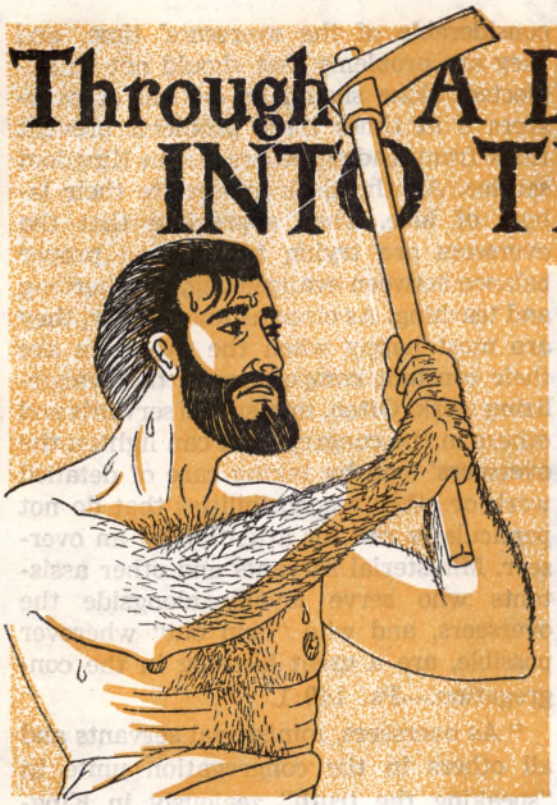
20. (a) Why should the flock not be critical of the overseers? (b) How may members of the flock loyally support the overseers' labors of love?

21. What will result from united service in "speaking the truth"?

IN COMING ISSUES

- **What Will You Do in the Face of Satan's Attack?**
- **Catholics, Is Your Church "on the Watch"?**
- **Keeping a Balanced View of Time.**

Through A Dark Tunnel INTO THE PAST!



THE light you carry lets you see for only a short distance, emphasizing the darkness in the tunnel ahead. On each side and above are rough stone walls. Water is flowing up to your knees, so you must move carefully. Does this sound frightening—or fascinating?

You would have every reason to be fascinated by a trip through this dark tunnel in Jerusalem, under the ancient City of David. Why so? Because in wading through this stream you would be wading in a part of history that remarkably confirms the Bible record.

The long rock tunnel is commonly called Hezekiah's Tunnel or the Siloam Tunnel. (2 Ki. 20:20) For your trip through it you probably would find sneakers and shorts to be practical dress. With flashlight in hand you could in less than an hour confirm an account written in the Bible nearly three thousand years ago. But before doing so, whether in the actual flowing water or here on the printed page, briefly consider this impressive tunnel's past.

When Hezekiah became king of Judah back in 745 B.C.E. the powerful nation of Assyria was oppressing the people of Israel and Judah. By 740 B.C.E. the Assyrian hordes had conquered and desolated the northern kingdom of Israel and then began invading Judah. One after another the fortified cities fell to the brutal Assyrians. (2 Ki. 18:9-11, 13) Then came Jerusalem's turn. How could the city survive the invincible armies of the second world power of Bible history?

King Sennacherib of Assyria sent a high official entitled Rabshakeh to intimidate the Jews. Shouting out in Hebrew to the people on the walls, Rabshakeh tried to destroy the Jews' morale and their will to resist. Considering the heat of the Middle Eastern climate, you can imagine the frightening implications of his threat that the Jews would "die by famine and *by thirst.*" (2 Chron. 32:11) But was it really to be—'surrender or die of thirst'?

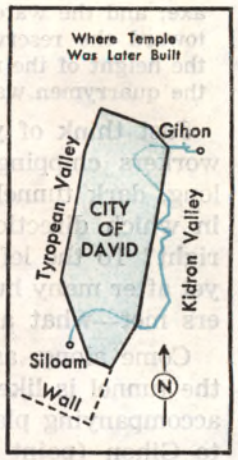
No, since King Hezekiah had earlier arranged for his men "to stop up the waters of the springs that were outside the city." (2 Chron. 32:2-4) Thus the besieging Assyrians would be hard pressed to find enough water for themselves. Then what possible water would the Jews have, with Hezekiah and the people confined "like a bird in a cage," as Sennacherib boasted? Yes, the Jews knew that there

was water aplenty in the cave of the Gihon spring on the eastern slope of the city. That spring was "stopped up" or hidden so the Assyrians would not know of it. Still, Gihon was outside Jerusalem's walls. So how could it keep the Jews alive?

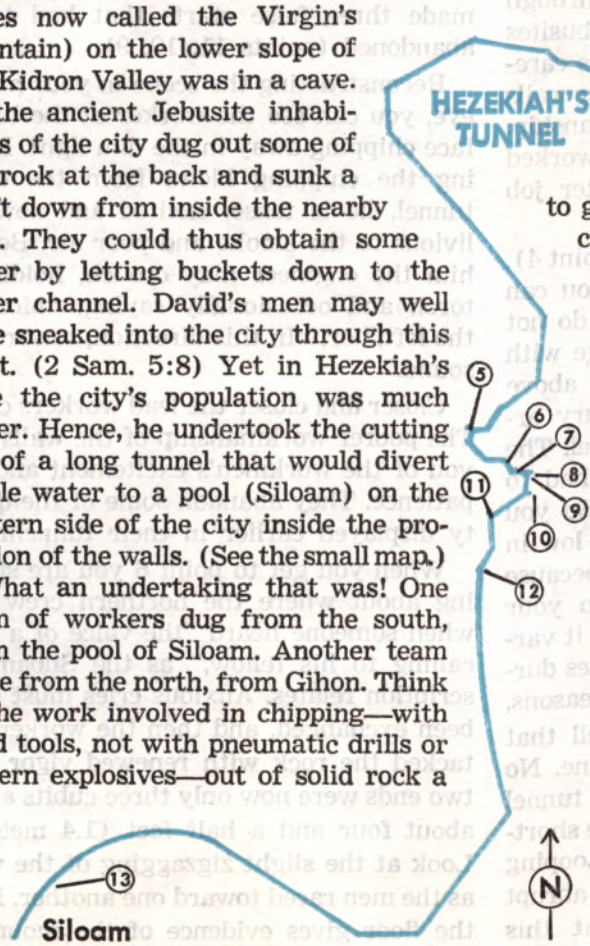
The Bible tells us. It says that Hezekiah "stopped up the upper source of the waters of Gihon and kept them directed straight along down to the west to the city of David." (2 Chron. 32:30; 2 Ki. 20:20) How did he do that? By a water tunnel cut out of solid rock. That tunnel is still there. Experts view it as "one of the great engineering feats of antiquity." And you as a visitor can wade through it.

It seems that the spring of Gihon (sometimes now called the Virgin's Fountain) on the lower slope of the Kidron Valley was in a cave. So the ancient Jebusite inhabitants of the city dug out some of the rock at the back and sunk a shaft down from inside the nearby wall. They could thus obtain some water by letting buckets down to the water channel. David's men may well have sneaked into the city through this shaft. (2 Sam. 5:8) Yet in Hezekiah's time the city's population was much larger. Hence, he undertook the cutting out of a long tunnel that would divert ample water to a pool (Siloam) on the western side of the city inside the protection of the walls. (See the small map.)

What an undertaking that was! One team of workers dug from the south, from the pool of Siloam. Another team came from the north, from Gihon. Think of the work involved in chipping—with hand tools, not with pneumatic drills or modern explosives—out of solid rock a tunnel averaging about six feet (1.8 meters) high and about two feet (.6 meters) wide. But what is more staggering is its length, 1,749 feet (533 meters). Imagine, through solid rock for almost a third of a mile!



In that confined area only one man at a time could chip at the tunnel face. So even with 'round the clock' crews, it was likely six to eight months before the crews met. Though you cannot speak with any of those dedicated workers to get their impressions of the job, you can come close to that. How so?



Well, back in 1880 a lad playing near the Siloam outlet of the tunnel fell into the water. As he got up he discovered an inscription in the wall. It was carved in early Hebrew and is an invaluable example of the Hebrew writing style of the period, a style such as the prophet Isaiah himself may have used. The space cleared for the inscription was never completely filled, but in part the six lines that were written said:

> "And this was the way in which it was cut through:—While [. . .] (were) still [. . .] axe(s), each man toward his fellow, and while there were still three cubits to be cut through, [there was heard] the voice of a man calling to his fellow, for there was *an overlap* in the rock on the right [and on the left]. And when the tunnel was driven

through, the quarrymen hewed (the rock), each man toward his fellow, axe against axe; and the water flowed from the spring toward the reservoir for 1,200 cubits, and the height of the rock above the head(s) of the quarrymen was 100 cubits."

Just think of yourself as one of those workers chipping away deep inside the long, dark tunnel. How would you know in which direction to head? Dig to the right? To the left? Higher? Lower? And yet after many hundreds of feet the workers met—what an accomplishment!

Come along, as it were, and see what the tunnel is like, keeping an eye on the accompanying plan. Descending the steps to Gihon (point 1), you find the spring itself (point 2). Then you pass through part of the channel dug by the Jebusites (point 3). If you examine the walls carefully here, you will see that the upper walls and ceiling reflect better craftsmanship. Evidently Hezekiah's workers reworked some of this section, doing a better job than the earlier Jebusites.

Soon we take a sharp left turn (point 4), where Hezekiah's tunnel begins. You can move along quite easily. Now you do not have to crawl in a cramped passage with as little as four inches of airspace above the water, as did nineteenth-century archaeologists who explored the tunnel. The deep layer of mud silt that they had to crawl on has now been removed. So you can wade upright, though stooping low in some places. And wade you will, because the gurgling water may be up to your knees or even up to your waist, for it varies in general depth at different times during the day and during different seasons.

As you move ahead you can tell that you are not following a straight line. No one today knows exactly why the tunnel was dug in an S shape instead of the shorter straight route, but it was. Looping around we come to point 5. Why the abrupt change in direction? Evidently at this point, when the ends were about 100 feet (30 meters) apart, the workers coming from the north first heard the sound of ax blows made by the southern crew. And those coming from the south heard the faint sound of blows when they were at point 12. You can determine this from the tunnel. Both crews began a succession of twists and corrections. Imagine the rising excitement as the men realized that they were approaching one another. Sometimes false echoes may have caused tunneling in a certain direction. But then probably a Hebrew engineer would discern the error and redirect the workers' efforts. It seems that the crew coming northeast toward Gihon had the greater difficulty, for they made three false starts that had to be abandoned (points 11, 10, 9).

Reconstructing the scene in your mind's eye, you can see the worker at the tunnel face chipping away in the dim light. Hearing the chipping blows from the other tunnel, he is tense, excited and now oblivious to the smoke and poor air. Behind him the engineer may crouch, holding a torch and occasionally saying, "More to the left," or, "In this direction, toward the sound."

Closer and closer the lead workers come. The poorer workmanship of the walls tells you of the workmen's excitement and impatience. They abandon some of the quality displayed earlier in their tunneling.

When you get to point 6 you are standing about where the northern crew was when someone heard "the voice of a man calling to his fellow," as the *Siloam* inscription relates. Anxious cries must have been exchanged, and then the workers attacked the rock with renewed vigor. The two ends were now only three cubits apart, about four and a half feet (1.4 meters). Look at the slight zigzagging of the walls as the men raced toward one another. Even the floor gives evidence of the mounting

tension, for from points 6 and 8 the floor begins to rise, the workers not cutting as deep.

The voices get louder and louder. Then finally, at point 7, the tip of an ax breaks through. There is a light, and a face! Yes, remarkable as it seems in view of the simple equipment available at the time, the two tunnel projects met as one life-sustaining passageway deep under the City of David. By examining the change of direction in the chipping patterns, you can determine the exact spot of the meeting. And the inscription carved about twenty feet (6 meters) from the Siloam entrance memorializes that feat (point 13). The original stone inscription is now kept in an Istanbul museum. But you can see a plaster copy of it in Jerusalem's Israel Museum.

For the cool water to flow from Gihon to the Pool of Siloam, the tunnelers had to make some adjustments in the tunnel floor level at the Siloam end. You can see this, for there the tunnel's height is more than in the other sections. But once that was done, the water could flow smoothly, with a drop of about seven feet (2.1 meters) over the course of the tunnel's length. The book *The City of David* speaks of the "perfectly graduated downward slope from the Spring Gihon to the Pool of Siloam" as "another miracle of ancient technology."

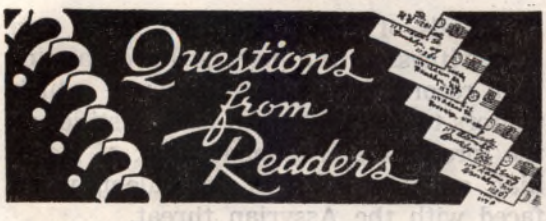
Completing your trip at Siloam, where women wash their clothes in now somewhat more brackish water, you can reflect on the history involved in what you have just experienced. Though the Bible's mention of Hezekiah's tunnel was recorded thousands of years ago, you today can bear witness to the historical accuracy of that record. The tunnel through which visitors to Jerusalem can wade testifies to the foresight and diligent work of Hezekiah and the Jews in Jerusalem, when faced with the Assyrian threat.

Still, even though this tunnel was dug to provide an abundance of water to withstand any long enemy siege, King Hezekiah did not rest his trust on such defense preparations. Hezekiah ultimately relied on Jehovah to protect and uphold His worshipers. Strengthened by the prophet Isaiah, King Hezekiah told the people: "Be courageous and strong. Do not be afraid nor be terrified because of the king of Assyria and on account of all the crowd that is with him; for with us there are more than there are with him. With him there is an arm of flesh, but with us there is Jehovah our God to help us and to fight our battles."—2 Chron. 32:7, 8.

And that He did. While the Jews inside the city were being supplied with water that flowed from Gihon through the tunnel, the Assyrians encamped at some distance from the walls. Then in one night an angel of Jehovah struck down 185,000 Assyrians, "every valiant, mighty man and leader and chief in the camp of the king of Assyria." (2 Chron. 32:21; 2 Ki. 19:35) So wading through Hezekiah's tunnel should do more than bring to mind the history of an engineering project. It should strikingly impress on your mind and confirm in your heart that Jehovah takes an active interest in supporting those devoted to him.

"A Bribe in the Bosom"

● Proverbs 21:14 speaks of "a bribe in the bosom." In this case the "bosom" evidently refers to the upper fold of a garment above the belt. It was there that the bribe was kept concealed until such time as it would be transferred, in secrecy, to the "bosom" of another person.



● Does 2 Chronicles 16:14 mean that King Asa was cremated?

No, the "funeral burning" here mentioned was of aromatic spices.

When faithful King Asa died, he was buried with honor. We read: "They buried him in his grand burial place that he had excavated for himself in the city of David; and they laid him in the bed that had been filled with balsam oil and different sorts of ointment mixed in an ointment of special make. Further, they made an extraordinarily great funeral burning for him."—2 Chron. 16:14.

Some readers have thought that this meant the "burning" of his body. However, the Hebrews did not normally cremate their dead; they buried them in caves, tombs or earthen graves. Evidently cremation as part of an honorable burial occurred only in unusual cases, such as with Saul and his sons.—1 Sam. 31:8-13.

But the Hebrews did use fragrant spices and ointments as part of burials. (John 19:40) Thus, after mentioning such sweet-smelling substances used at Asa's burial, the account speaks of "an extraordinarily great funeral burning *for* him." Note, the burning was "for" him, not "of" him. The verse itself, then, indicates that what was burned were the aromatic spices, giving a fragrant scent.

Such "burnings" are mentioned only in the case of kings. In foretelling the peaceful death of King Zedekiah, Jeremiah said: "As with the burnings for your fathers, the former kings . . . they will make a burning for you." (Jer. 34:5) But after God struck down unfaithful King Jehoram of Judah, the king was not given a grand burial. We are told: "His people did not make a burning for him" and he was not buried in the "burial places of the kings." (2 Chron. 21:18-20) No fragrant spices were burned at his burial.

August 1: Loving Oversight Builds Up. Page 400. Songs to Be Used: 5, 45.

August 8: Shepherds of the Flock Under One Lord. Page 406. Songs to Be Used: 36, 94.