

The WATCHTOWER

**Are You
Walking
as in
God's
Presence?**

JUNE 15, 1977

ANNOUNCING JEHOVAH'S KINGDOM

The WATCHTOWER

June 15, 1977
Vol. 98, Number 12

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.

How can it benefit you? Consider: Do you long for a better world, one of true justice and free from sorrow, hatred and war? Do you want to live at a time when genuine peace and love prevail among people of all races? Then this magazine can aid you. Using God's Word, the Bible, as its authority, it points out the clear evidence that the present wicked system of things will soon end, destroyed by God. But it also announces the coming in of a righteous new order. There, under the rule of God's kingdom, his heavenly government, people will enjoy life forever in true peace, health and happiness on a paradise earth.

Faithfulness to the Word of God lifts *The Watchtower* above the contradicting religious teachings and philosophies of men. It stays strictly neutral as regards political affairs. It wholeheartedly upholds the highest moral standard—that of man's Maker, Jehovah God. From this source, it shows solutions to the problems of daily life.

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

Are You Walking as in God's Presence?	355
"Apostate Mockers for a Cake"	356
Disregarding God's Warnings	
Brings Calamity	357
Insight on the News	359
A College-bred Newshound Finds	
the Best News	360
Life in Ancient Ephesus	364
"The Lord Be with the Spirit You Show"	368
"Keeping a Tight Grip	
on the Word of Life"	373
What Did the Wise Man Mean?	378
Feminine Modesty	379
The Influential Pharisees	380
The "In-Between" People	382
Questions from Readers	383

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Are You Walking as in God's Presence?

DUE to inherited human weakness, many employees need to be watched or they may steal or loaf on the job. That is why, for example, every large post office in the United States has inspectors stationed high above the mail clerks. It is their job to detect any worker with "sticky fingers," who might be tempted to pocket a piece of valuable mail. The inspectors work behind one-way mirrors; they can see the clerks but the clerks cannot see the inspectors.

Not that postal employees are the only ones that need to be watched. Employee dishonesty runs rampant throughout the world, causing losses that mount to many thousands of millions of dollars. Statistics show that the greatest amount of dishonesty, dollarwise, is found among supervisors and executives.

Clearly, none of these would be erring if they were walking as in God's presence. To be walking in God's presence means, first of all, having faith that God really exists. The evidence to our senses all about us testifies to the existence of the Creator, Jehovah God. And so do the pages of His Word, the Bible. But to believe that God exists is not enough, even as his Word reminds us: "You believe there is one God, do you? You are doing quite well. And yet the demons believe and

shudder." (Jas. 2:19) We must go farther. We must have faith in God's justice, wisdom and power; we must appreciate that he knows and cares about what is going on in the earth among men.

Yes, God sees everything; his powers of vision are far superior to those of a postal inspector and He does not need one-way mirrors to keep humans from seeing him. Whether he personally takes note of everything or does so through his vast angelic organization is beside the point. The effect, the result, is the same: "The eyes of Jehovah are in every place, keeping watch upon the bad ones and the good ones." We can rest assured that "there is not a creation that is not manifest to his sight, but all things are naked and openly exposed to the eyes of him with whom we have an accounting." Note, we are *accountable* to God.—Prov. 15:3; Heb. 4:13.

The fact that we are accountable to God should make us take our walking as in his presence seriously. It means for us to walk, that is, to conduct ourselves, knowing that God is watching continually what we do. Moses, Jehovah's prophet and the ancient leader of Israel, was one who was fully aware of that fact, for of him we read that "he continued steadfast as seeing the One who is invisible." God was truly real to him and He should be to us also.—Heb. 11:27.

If we are walking in God's presence it will keep us from getting into trouble with him, for it means that we will be fearful of displeasing him, knowing that there is no escaping his judgments. It will keep us from the course of the wicked one of whom it is written that "there is no dread of God in front of his eyes." (Ps. 36:1) That the fear of God will keep us from yielding to temptation and so getting into trouble can be seen from the response that the young man Joseph, the favorite son of the patriarch Jacob, made when he was importuned by the wife of his Egyptian master Potiphar: "How could I commit this great badness and actually sin *against God*?" (Gen. 39:9) He walked as in God's presence, as though God were watching him all the time, as though he at all times could see God. Doing so served as a safeguard for him.

Whether the attacks of our adversary Satan the Devil are in the form of temptations to engage in immoral conduct and other forms of selfishness, or in the form of pressures to compromise our loyalty to Jehovah God, our only safety is to be walking as in God's presence. That means that God must be very real to us. To aid us toward that end we must give thought to God. One way in which we can do this is by regularly praying to God. If we make a habit of prayer we will instinctively call on him for help when we are faced with temptations or pressures. Praying to God

strengthens our faith, for prayer is an expression of faith, and God answers prayers directed to him in the right manner and in regard to right matters. (1 John 5:14, 15) But it follows that we must do our part; we must work at what we pray for, wholeheartedly.—Phil. 4:6, 7.

One way in which we can do that is to increase our knowledge of Jehovah God by a study of his Word and the Bible helps that he has provided. We can benefit by the weekly congregation meetings. The more we get to know God the more we will love him and the more he will be in our thoughts and be the primary object of our feelings. Of course, all of this takes time, for which reason the apostle Paul admonishes us: "Keep strict watch that how you walk is not as unwise but as wise persons, buying out the opportune time for yourselves, because the days are wicked." True, we need a certain amount of time for providing things honest in the sight of all men, a certain amount of time for eating and sleeping, but beyond that, are we wasting much of it on excessive recreation, pleasure-seeking or hobbies?—Eph. 5:15, 16.

One reason why lawlessness is increasing in these perilous last days is that people are less aware than ever that God sees all and that all are accountable to him. If we are wise we will not ignore these facts but at all times will be walking as in God's presence.

"Apostate Mockers for a Cake"

In one of his psalms, David tells of the abuses that he had to endure. "Among the apostate mockers for a cake," said David, "there was a grinding of their teeth even against me." (Ps. 35:16) These ridiculers were apostates in the sense that they could not be numbered among God's faithful people. They were outcasts, the very dregs of society. Just to get a cake from the one (likely King Saul) who would be pleased with their words, these base men would make fun of David. They would grind their teeth at him, that is, express anger, derision and scorn.

Disregarding

GOD'S WARNINGS

WHEN God gives a warning it is not without reason, nor is it done merely to show his authority. It is always for the personal benefit of all who hear. It will save them from grave and costly mistakes. Before the nation of Israel entered the Promised Land, God warned them of the danger of disregarding his law, and added: "For it is no valueless word for you, but it means your life."—Deut. 32:46, 47.

Furthermore, by listening to Jehovah's warnings we learn how he feels about certain matters, how he views them, and we come to know his ways. And this is the most important thing of all—to *know* Jehovah God intimately, thereby coming into closer relationship with him. He tells us not to brag about riches, wisdom or mightiness that we may have, "but let the one bragging about himself brag about himself because of this very thing, the having of insight and the having of knowledge of me, that I am Jehovah, the One exercising loving-kindness, justice and righteousness in the earth; for in these things I do take delight."—Jer. 9:23, 24; John 17:3.

The warnings that God gave were often in the form of prophecies, or were commands that, in effect, were prophetic. A case in point is the declaration made with regard to Jericho by Joshua, the successor of Moses and commander of Israel's armies. Joshua was under orders from God to vanquish the Canaanite inhabitants in the Promised Land, because they practiced extremely degraded sex worship and idolatrous, demonistic rites, and were polluting the land with immorality, disease and bloodshed. (Deut. 20:15-18; Lev. 18:24-30) Jericho was the first city that the army of Israel encountered in the land. As such, it was the "firstfruits" of the conquest of Canaan. Just as the firstfruits of all the produce of the Israelites—grain, cattle, and so forth, were considered sacred, "devoted," so Jericho was to be. (Lev. 23:10-14; Josh. 6:17) And just as the firstfruits were "devoted," to be offered to Jehovah before any of the crop could be eaten by the farmer, so Jericho was to be completely "devoted," nothing being taken from the city for personal use. Therefore Joshua *utterly*

destroyed and burned the city, turning over its metal to Jehovah's temple (tabernacle).

This requirement of God was like the law, which applied later, regarding a city of Israel that should fall away to idolatry. Such a city was "made sacred by ban." Its inhabitants were to be put to death and the city burned, never to be rebuilt. Nothing from that city was to be appropriated for any personal use. It was to be viewed by Israel as absolutely detestable. They were not even to toy with the idea of using such things.—Deut. 13:12-17.

Accordingly, when Joshua destroyed the city of Jericho, he pronounced an oath, saying: "May the LORD's curse light on the man who comes forward to rebuild this city of Jericho: the laying of its foundations shall cost him his eldest son, the setting up of its gates shall cost him his youngest."—Josh. 6:26, *New English Bible*.

What did Joshua mean? His words evidently did not mean that the site of Jericho, "the city of palm trees," would not be inhabited, for Joshua himself allotted the site of the city of Jericho to the Benjamites, and it is mentioned later as an inhabited place. (Judg. 3:13; 2 Sam. 10:5) The emphasis is on a walled "city." Joshua's words show that he had reference to the rebuilding of the city. This included a wall. The laying of the foundations would be the foundations of the walled city. The setting up of its gates would not be erecting doors on the homes, but setting up the city gates, which could not be hung without walls. The man who would do this in disregard of Joshua's prophetic oath would pay the price of his eldest and youngest sons. This expression may mean 'all his sons,' so that he would have no one to carry on his name in Israel.

A strong warning, this, but it was nonetheless ignored after Israel fell into gross idolatry. Under the reign of Ahab over

the ten-tribe northern kingdom of Israel, Baal worship had been brought in. Indicative of the low level to which Israel had fallen was the action of Hiel the Bethelite. The account reads: "In [Ahab's] days Hiel the Bethelite built Jericho. At the forfeit of Abiram his firstborn he laid the foundation of it, and at the forfeit of Segub his youngest he put up its doors, according to Jehovah's word that he spoke by means of Joshua the son of Nun." —1 Ki. 16:34.

Whether the boys died in accidents connected with the building of the fortifications, or by other means, is not stated. Nevertheless, the declaration of Joshua had proved to be prophetic.

All other declarations of God in his Word are likewise sure of fulfillment. Therefore we should carefully avoid things that God declares to be dangerous. We can learn the things that God considers good and the things that he views as detestable by closely considering the Bible. We should feel as he does about the things he condemns; we should train our hearts and consciences so that we have *no leaning at all* toward the things against which he warns and should stay completely away from them for safety. We should not delay, but should take *immediate action* to free ourselves from any connection or association with things disapproved by God. Jesus Christ was deeply conscious of what pleased and what displeased his Father. (Heb. 1:9) He said: "I always do the things pleasing to him." (John 8:29) Note how instantly he rejected Peter's wrong advice, not entertaining it for even a second. (Matt. 16:21-23) He proved Jehovah's words true: "Not by bread alone does man live but by every expression of Jehovah's mouth does man live." (Deut. 8:3; Matt. 4:4) The sad calamity that overtook Hiel the Bethelite is one of the Bible's many examples that emphasize the danger of disregarding God's warnings.

Insight on the News

● "In all history there had been no sterner, swifter visitation of death," says "Science Digest" of the 1918 Spanish influenza epidemic. The article notes that the sixth-century plague of Justinian "supposedly claimed 100 million lives—but it endured for 50 years."

Influenza Mystery

The 14th-century bubonic plague was said to have taken 62 million lives world wide, but it lasted for three years. However, though the first world war "had killed over 21 million people in four years of dogged conflict," observes "Science Digest," "the influenza epidemic took approximately the same toll in about four months."

The magazine marvels: "With an irony that surpasses man's understanding, the plague faded almost simultaneously with the ending of the Great War. . . . Why it began, why it ended, where it went, no one knows to this day."

Yet many students of Bible prophecy know that Jesus Christ had predicted just such events to mark the beginning of the end of this present system of things. Adding to his prophecy that "nation will make war upon nation, kingdom upon kingdom," Jesus said that there would be "famines and PLAGUES in many places," heralding the "end of the age." —Luke 21:7-11; Matt. 24:3-8, "New English Bible."

● A recent "Redbook" magazine survey of 65,000 women's views on how religion affects their lives revealed that only 14 percent believe 'it's a sin to take part in any war.'

Religion— For Peace or War?

"Redbook" also noted: "Very religious women say that 'taking part in a war is a sin' far less often than nonreligious or slightly religious women." Hence, the magazine remarked, "if our government were to become more pious, that might not herald an era of peace on earth."

Similarly, the "National Observer" published a poem that commented on the religious conflicts in Ireland, Lebanon and the Hanafi Muslim siege of buildings in Washington, D.C. It concludes:

"How historically constant, yet unseemly odd,

This hatred and gore in the name of God."

Throughout history, world leaders have seemingly been blind to worldly religion's role, both in fomenting wars and in fostering blood lust during political wars. Will such religions always escape responsibility? No.

Bible prophecy pictures the world's politically meddling religions as being like a "great harlot . . . with whom the kings of the earth committed fornication" and who bears responsibility for the blood "of all those who have been slaughtered on the earth." Soon, the prophecy shows, these same "kings of the earth" "will hate the harlot . . . and will completely burn her with fire," ending her bloody career.—Rev. 17:1, 2, 12, 16; 18:24.

● A Florida circuit court judge recently ruled that a Jewish couple would have to pay \$90 in back dues to their former synagogue. The temple had filed suit when the pair fell behind on their pledge during the 1974 business recession. "What's the price of God?" asked the wife. "Judaism is

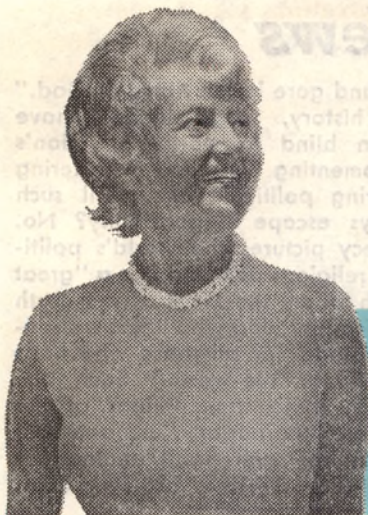
'What Price God?'

not a business," countered the synagogue's executive director, but "where it is housed, is." He also told the court that most of 20 other families who had been sued for non-payment had settled out of court.

Similarly, a Catholic in Rhode Island complained to the Providence "Evening Bulletin" that after seven generations with a parish, "I've just gotten a letter from my priest, saying we are no longer entitled to full services . . . because we have not fulfilled our budget obligations. . . . My friend, an 80-year-old parishioner, has no money at all, but she got the same letter."

How unlike the spirit of the Biblical Jewish and Christian congregations! "Whosoever is of a willing heart" and "of every man whose heart maketh him willing ye shall take My offering" was God's own expression on how to obtain the needs of the ancient tabernacle.—Ex. 35:5; 25:2, "Jewish Publications Society."

And of the early Christian practice, Tertullian (c. 190 C.E.) wrote: "Even if there is a chest of a sort, it is not made up of money paid in entrance-fees, as if religion were a matter of contract. . . . for nobody is compelled."—"Apology," XXXIX, 5.



A College-Bred Newshound Finds

THE BEST NEWS

As told by Vora C. Hannan

IN 1975, through the generosity of my brother's widow, I returned to Wellesley College in the United States for my fiftieth class reunion. The natural beauty of the campus near Boston, Massachusetts, has changed little, but the same couldn't be said of the dozens of us former classmates—fifty years does take its toll.

"What have you done during the past fifty years? How have you used your life?" We were curious about one another. And it was interesting to hear the kind of lives that various ones of us had lived.

I hadn't accumulated material wealth as some had. Nor did I have a prestigious position or worldly fame to show for my fifty years. But after listening to others, I do believe that I've had a more exciting and, yes, happier, more rewarding life than any of them. And it wasn't just my years as a news reporter that made it so. Let me explain.

A LITERARY, RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND

My thirst for knowledge began when I was only eight. I used to hide books in my bed to read when I was supposed to be asleep. Also, at the same age, I started playing the violin. My parents were an

encouragement. Father gave me the six-foot shelf of the Harvard Classics for my bedroom. I devoured these, as well as scores of volumes from the public library.

Both my parents were very religious. After attending the Congregational Church Sunday morning we wouldn't go riding in the family auto, nor could we read the Sunday comics. All pleasure was reserved for weekdays.

In time, mother became disillusioned with father's religion and went back to her girlhood faith, the Episcopal Church. I went with her. Finally, mother started to read the *Studies in the Scriptures*, and became convinced that we were living in the last days foretold in Bible prophecy. —Matt. 24; Luke 21; 2 Tim. 3:1-5.

This time I didn't follow my mother. Although I read everything else, I couldn't be induced to read her books. My reaction was: "If the world is coming to an end, then I'm going to enjoy myself." But father insisted that I go to college; so at age seventeen off I went to Wellesley.

At the time a course in Biblical history was required for all freshmen. I was interested to learn that God's name is *Yahweh*

in Hebrew. But it wasn't long before I clashed with what was taught. We were told that the early chapters of Genesis were written by three different men, and that these writings were unreliable. That struck right at the basis of my belief in the Bible as the Word of God, and I communicated my distress to mother.

During my first vacation I confronted the Congregational minister. "Well, Vora," he explained smoothly, "you mustn't take the Bible too seriously. You know it was written by many different men, and each wrote as he saw things." That view of God's Word was enough to set me afloat from organized religion. Back at college, the acquiring of knowledge became my religion.

A CAREER

After graduating from college I thought I'd be a high school teacher. However, during my first year at it I was more interested in training the school orchestra than in teaching Latin. So I lost my position. Back home I concentrated on music, practicing my violin five or six hours a day.

As far as mother's Bible literature was concerned, I was stubborn. I would read only the Bible. I had been burned once at Wellesley, and I didn't want to be disillusioned again.

In 1930 I became a news reporter for the summer, or so I thought. However, I found the work so fascinating that I kept on. Soon I was free-lancing for three papers and also the Associated Press. It was exciting work, the most exciting in the world, I thought. I was also playing and teaching violin. As a result, even in the midst of the Great Depression I was doing well financially.

Still, from my varied experiences in reporting, I began to realize that things weren't going well in the world. Everything was false. I'd sit beside the time-

keeper at a wrestling match and he'd tell me the outcome of each match before it started. Each event that had spectators on the edges of their seats was fixed.

Similar hypocrisy existed in political, social and religious gatherings. As I listened to seemingly endless speeches, I'd pick out some inadvertent remark that exposed weaknesses or wrongs in the system. Then I would highlight that remark in an article. I wanted to call attention to the wrongs in the hope that someone would try to rectify the condition. People like to read such things, but they aren't at all interested in changing them. Everybody loves scandal, it seems, but not reform.

A REPORTER OF BETTER NEWS

I continued my Bible reading and in time became convinced that mother's beliefs were Scripturally sound. Still I was stubborn about reading anything except the Bible. One day in April 1933 I drove mother to a baptism talk in Boston as a favor to her. As I sat in the balcony, I thought: "Why, I've always wanted to do the will of Jehovah." Something seemed to nudge me, almost pushed me to go downstairs to present myself for baptism. Mother was completely taken by surprise but, of course, was overjoyed.

In time I realized that the literature provided by Jehovah's Witnesses is a shortcut to Bible knowledge, and I forgot my foolish prejudice. Then my thirst for reading took over and I devoured all the books and magazines as they came along.

It was getting difficult for me to be a lone Witness in Newburyport, and at the same time work as a well-known reporter. Some Irish Catholic police officers refused to cooperate with me on police stories. They even made fun of Jehovah when I entered the police station.

Then a special representative of Jehovah's Witnesses, Robert Hannan, was as-

signed to witness in Haverhill, where the nearest congregation was located. Soon afterward we were married, and I shared with him in the preaching work. Gradually he tried to persuade me to leave the newspaper and become a full-time proclaimer of Bible truth too. But I felt that I had to keep working for our maintenance.

The large national assembly of Jehovah's Witnesses at St. Louis, Missouri, brought things to a head. I told my editor that I would like a few days off to attend the assembly. He commented that being a Witness and a reporter didn't make a good combination. I agreed. He thought I'd give up my religion. Instead I gave up my newspaper work, and on September 15, 1941, became a pioneer, just in time to escape being a war correspondent.

When the United States entered the second world war, my husband and I started the special pioneer work in Walpole, Massachusetts. Now I could really do something to better the lives of the people I met. Not only could I call attention to the injustices, as I had done in the newspaper, but now I could show them the best news—how Jehovah God was going to solve all difficulties by means of his righteous Kingdom government.

Then in 1943 we heard that Gilead School for missionaries had started. How I wanted to go! We received an invitation to attend the fifth class beginning in February of 1945. Our missionary assignment was Chile, where we arrived in Santiago late in 1946. After a whole day's train trip farther south, we arrived at Concepción, the third largest city of Chile. Here we were on our own, together with the four who had accompanied us.

NEWSPAPER EXPERIENCE HELPS

For a while life was almost too difficult for me. The second month I was bitten by a fly that was a carrier of anthrax, which

kills horses, and had to undergo a sulphur treatment for a month. The next month, in my weakened condition, I contracted typhoid and spent the next two months in the hospital with a high fever. First, I lost my hearing, then my hair; I was reduced to a bag of skin and bones.

After two more months in bed I had to consider how I was going to get started in the preaching work. With my loss of hearing, and being unable to express myself in a new language, it looked hopeless. But I remembered that as a news reporter I always had overcome obstacles to get my story. Now some way must be found to conquer these difficulties.

First, mother sent me a wig to cover my baldness until my hair grew back. That took care of my appearance. How to get around my lack of hearing? That was the major problem.

Most Chileans were at the time nominal Catholics. I used a thin Catholic New Testament that fitted nicely in my book bag, and practiced some appropriate texts. A news reporter asks questions. He never gives discourses. So I decided to follow that method.

Using words taken from a Bible text, I formed pertinent questions. Even though I didn't hear the householder's response, I always had something interesting in the Bible to show them that had to do with the current news in their papers. Relating the Bible to news items made it seem like a living book to them. If I didn't get the sense of their questions, and, as a result, showed them a Bible text on another subject, they excused me because I was a *gringuita*, an American.

NEWS THAT TRANSFORMS LIVES

As time went on, my hearing improved slightly, and I was able to conduct many Bible studies. One of the first was with a man whose wife had abandoned him to marry another man. But she did not both-

er to dissolve the original marriage. Not wanting to expose his wife to a charge of bigamy, and yet now desiring to be in a morally clean position to serve Jehovah, this man gradually persuaded his wife to initiate annulment proceedings.

This opened the way for the man to be legally, as well as Scripturally, free to marry the woman with whom he had been living. He, his new wife and their three children all dedicated their lives to Jehovah. Eventually two of the children served as special pioneers for a time, and the man became a presiding overseer.

So the missionary work took on a life-transforming aspect. It amazed me to watch Jehovah's spirit at work on those I was teaching. By 1950 there were so many who wanted to serve Jehovah that we had to have a series of baptisms in the beautiful San Pedro Lake on the other side of the river from Concepción.

Although my husband and I were located in Concepción, we roamed the province carrying the good news of God's kingdom to outlying areas. Riding in third-class trains between baskets of fish, crabs and fresh-baked bread, we visited mining towns, fishing villages and textile settlements. Our preaching laid a foundation for the many congregations that were formed later.

Over the years many missionaries served in Concepción for a while and then left.

IN COMING ISSUES

■ **Evolution in Retreat.**

■ **Your Future—Can It Be Predicted?**

■ **Humility—A Most Desirable Quality.**

But my husband and I stayed fixed, just shifting a little from one part of the territory to another. It led to our being called *los padres* (the parents) of all the congregations. Our continued presence seemed to give a certain visible stability.

With the formation of new congregations, the territory for myself and my husband was more restricted. Although living in Concepción, I began to work across the river in San Pedro. There on the outskirts I found a woman living with her six children in a ventilated shack. She had been abandoned by her heavy-drinking husband, who years before took off for Santiago to live with another woman.

One day this woman received a letter from her husband. He offered to give her money for the support of the children if she would come to Santiago. The woman and her children eventually joined her husband, and he began accompanying his wife to Christian meetings. When, after a long struggle, he was finally able to conquer his addiction to alcohol, the good news from God's Word had accomplished another remarkable transformation. A split-up, unhappy family was brought together and happily united in true worship.

Being able to bear news that has such a grand effect on people's lives has been ever so much more rewarding to me than serving as a newspaper reporter.

Over the years I've seen transformations in the lives of literally hundreds of persons whom I've personally assisted to learn the best news. And what is that news? *That God cares and that his Kingdom government will soon eliminate all causes for human suffering.*

No, I don't have money or worldly prestige to show for my more than fifty years since graduation, as do a number of my former college classmates, but I do have something much more precious—the satisfaction of having helped many persons to become active servants of Jehovah God.



Life in ANCIENT EPHESUS

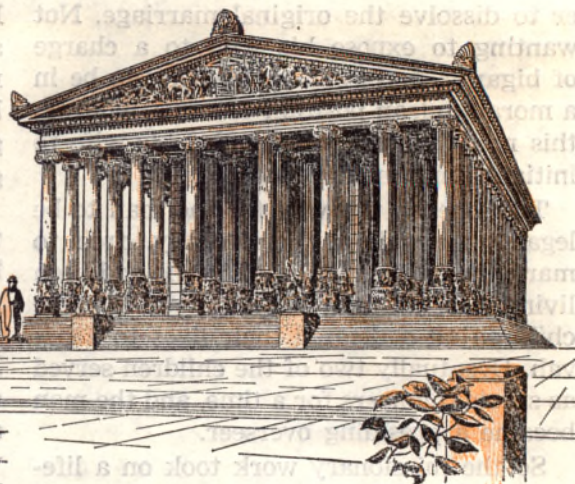
DESIRABLE. Likely that is what many people thought about life in ancient Ephesus in Asia Minor. In fact, that city's Greek name probably meant just that—desirable.

Visitors of today may find it hard to imagine that Ephesus ever was a desirable city. All that they see there are moldering ruins. So, tourists may well ask, "Could anyone have enjoyed life in ancient Ephesus?"

A TEEMING METROPOLIS

Ephesus once had at least an estimated 225,000 inhabitants. The city was important from both commercial and religious standpoints. Wealth abounded, although not every resident was prosperous.

The location of Ephesus contributed to its importance. Situated near the mouth of the



Cayster River on the western coast of Asia Minor, it lay nearly opposite the island of Samos. Perhaps you can better fix its location in mind by noting that the ruins of Ephesus are some thirty-five miles (56 kilometers) southeast of Izmir, Turkey.

Ephesus had an artificial harbor that was kept open by dredging. With the passing of years, however, silt deposits apparently choked it, so that the site now is several miles inland. Nevertheless, in the city's heyday, the largest seagoing vessels could be seen in its harbor. Moreover, Ephesus lay astride the main trade route between Rome and the East. By sea it was connected with Rome, and by land routes with much of Asia. So, many goods could be bought in the city's shops and markets.

The founding of Ephesus is shrouded in legend. Eventually, though Ionian Greeks settled there. The Lydians took the city in 560 before the Common Era, but only three years later the Persians were in control. It came under Macedonian domination in the days of Alexander the Great. Years thereafter, Attalus III, king o

Pergamos (Pergamum), bequeathed Ephesus to Rome, along with the rest of his kingdom. In 190 B.C.E. the Roman province of Asia was established, with Pergamum as its capital and Ephesus eventually as the principal city.

A WALK THROUGH THE CITY

Shall we now take a look at some of the sights of ancient Ephesus? The agora, or marketplace, was a rectangular colonnaded area entered through gateways. It was surrounded by chambers and halls. Nearby was the library of Celsus, probably dating from the second century of the Common Era. This structure was built with columns, as well as an outer and an inner wall. The two walls protected the library's papyrus documents from deterioration due to humidity.

In the heart of the city was the stadium, rebuilt during Roman Emperor Nero's reign (54-68 C.E.). Likely, this was the scene of athletic events, and perhaps of gladiatorial combats.

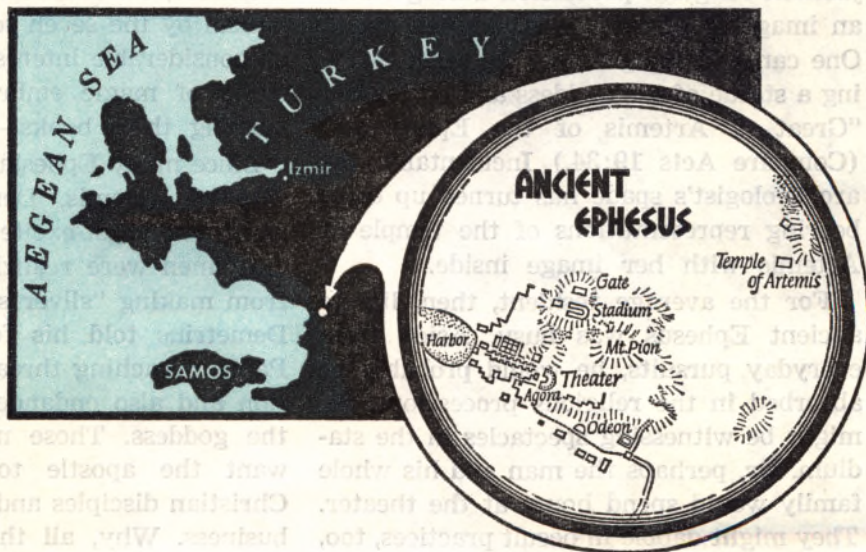
Another notable site was the theater, the remains of which are situated on a slope of Mount Pion. About 495 feet (150 meters) in diameter, the theater had a facade decorated with pillars, niches and fine statues. Marble seats radiated upward from the stage to the number of sixty-six rows. Some 25,000 persons could be seated here, and the acoustic properties were excellent. Even today, in the theater's ruined state, words spoken in a low voice at the stage's location can be heard in the top row.

In front of the theater was the "Arkadiane," a thirty-six-foot-wide (eleven-meter-wide) marble-paved street running to the harbor. On each side, this

avenue was flanked by colonnades, with shops and storerooms behind them. A mammoth gateway was at each end of the street. Impressive indeed! But even more so was its temple.

THE TEMPLE OF ARTEMIS

This famed structure was one of the so-called 'Seven Wonders of the World.' The temple of Artemis (or, Diana) had been rebuilt according to the plan of an earlier Ionic temple said to have been burned in 356 B.C.E. by Herostratus. Erected on a platform about 239 feet (72 meters) wide by 418 feet (127 meters) long, the temple of Artemis had an approximate width of 164 feet (49 meters) and a length of 343 feet (104 meters). It was a cedar, cypress and marble building of brilliant color, with white marble roof tiles. Reportedly, instead of mortar, gold was used between the joints of the marble blocks. The inner sanctuary was about 70 feet (21 meters) wide and 105 feet (32 meters) long and is thought to have been open to the sky. Possibly, a



statue of Artemis stood behind the large altar.

Artemis of the Ephesians, as her representations indicate, was a fertility goddess with many breasts. Both the Holy Scriptures and an ancient inscription identify Ephesus as the "temple keeper of the great Artemis." (Acts 19:35) So sacred was her temple considered to be that treasures were placed there without fear of thievery. Even foreign monarchs and peoples deposited money in the temple, and these funds were loaned. Hence, a banking enterprise was linked with this edifice. Also, criminals were able to find asylum within an area extending some 600 feet (180 meters) outward around the temple, though the distance varied at different periods. Therefore, a village of thieves, murderers and other lawbreakers sprang up around this 'wonder of the world.'

Nevertheless, pilgrims flocked to the temple of Artemis, even as multitudes go to Rome and Mecca today. Why, during the month of Artemision (March-April), hundreds of thousands of visitors from all over Asia Minor crowded into the city! A notable feature of the festivities was a jubilant religious procession during which an image of Artemis was paraded about. One can just imagine her devotees carrying a statue of the goddess and crying out "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!" (Compare Acts 19:34.) Incidentally, the archaeologist's spade has turned up coins bearing representations of the temple of Artemis with her image inside.

For the average resident, then, life in ancient Ephesus was busy. Aside from everyday pursuits, he would probably be absorbed in the religious processions. He might be witnessing spectacles in the stadium. Or, perhaps the man and his whole family would spend hours at the theater. They might dabble in occult practices, too,

as Ephesus was widely known for magical arts. In fact, Greek and Roman writers referred to books or rolls containing magical formulas as "Ephesian writings."

CHRISTIANITY COMES TO EPHEBUS

Now, suppose we center our attention on the first century C.E. Things were going to change for some residents of Ephesus. It was probably in 52 C.E. that the Christian apostle Paul came to the city with Aquila and Priscilla and began to preach in the Jewish synagogue. Paul soon left, but he returned to Ephesus later, likely in the winter of 52/53 C.E. This time the apostle taught in the synagogue for three months. Opposition arose and he directed those who had become believers to the school auditorium of Tyrannus, where the apostle spoke daily for two years. The result? We are told in Scripture: "All those inhabiting the district of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks."—Acts 18:18-21; 19:1-10.

Paul's ministry was accompanied by miraculous healings and the expelling of demons. Many Ephesians became believers in Jehovah God and Jesus Christ. Furthermore, an unsuccessful attempt at exorcism by the seven sons of Sceva stirred up considerable interest, and former practitioners of magic embraced true worship, burning their books.—Acts 19:11-20.

Since many Ephesians forsook the worship of Artemis, Demetrius the silver-smith really got excited. He and his fellow craftsmen were realizing "no little gain" from making "silver shrines of Artemis." Demetrius told his fellow workers that Paul's preaching threatened their occupation and also endangered the worship of the goddess. Those men surely did not want the apostle to continue making Christian disciples and cutting down their business. Why, all those pilgrims might

start going elsewhere! That glorious temple and the goddess herself might be esteemed as nothing. Then what would happen to the business of making "silver shrines of Artemis"?—Acts 19:23-27.

At any rate, Demetrius succeeded in throwing the city into an uproar. This culminated in a two-hour riot at the theater. After quieting the disorderly mob, the city recorder asked: "Men of Ephesus, who really is there of mankind that does not know that the city of the Ephesians is the temple keeper of the great Artemis and of the image that fell from heaven?" So, the Ephesians thought that they possessed an image of Artemis that had a heavenly origin. Some theorize that what 'fell from heaven' was a meteorite, thereafter fashioned into virtual human form and treated reverentially.—Acts 19:28-41.

Be that as it may, Christianity had made its mark in Ephesus. After the riot, Paul left the city. But a Christian congregation came into being there. Later, from Miletus the apostle summoned the overseers of the Ephesus congregation. Among other things, he was able to point to the fact that "night and day" he "did not quit admonishing each one with tears" for "three years," evidently using a round figure for the time he spent in Ephesus.—Acts 20:1, 17-38; compare Acts 19:8-10.

It is interesting that the apostle Paul asked the Christians of Corinth: "If, like men, I have fought with wild beasts at Ephesus, of what good is it to me?" (1 Cor. 15:32) Paul could have been referring to conflicts with brutish men opposed to his preaching work in that city. But if his words are to be taken literally, perhaps he had to defend himself against literal wild animals and was miraculously delivered by Jehovah in the very stadium near the temple at ancient Ephesus.—Compare Corinthians 4:9; 2 Corinthians 1:8-10; 1:23-27.

THE CITY'S LATER YEARS

About 60-61 C.E., during Paul's imprisonment in Rome, he wrote a divinely inspired letter to Ephesian Christians. In it the apostle stressed the importance of spiritual riches, giving very beneficial counsel for persons living in this fabulously wealthy city. (Eph. 1:7, 15-18; 2:6, 7; 3:8, 14-16) Ephesus was noted also for its immorality. So Paul appropriately warned against taking delight in discussing fornication and engaging in obscene jesting. (Eph. 5:3-5) Since demonistic practices were rampant in the city, Paul gave excellent counsel on resisting wicked spirit forces. (Eph. 6:10-20) Naturally, the apostle's godly admonition benefits those applying it in life today, especially if they live in an environment like that of ancient Ephesus.

As the years wore on, Christians in Ephesus faithfully endured much suffering for righteousness' sake. But the glorified Jesus Christ found that by the end of the first century C.E. some members of the congregation there had lost the consuming love that they once had for Jehovah God.—Rev. 2:1-6.

During the rule of Antoninus Pius (138-161 C.E.) a large part of Ephesus was rebuilt. About 262 C.E., however, the Goths ravaged the city, and the great temple of Artemis was destroyed. With the city's historical significance gone, little can be said about Ephesus in later times, except that it changed hands often. For instance, the Turks took it in 1308 and built a town at nearby Ayassoluk. Both fell to the Knights of Saint John of Jerusalem during the fourteenth century. Little by little, the once resplendent city—"desirable" Ephesus—was abandoned, leaving in its ruins only a hint of the city's former grandeur.

"The Lord be with the Spirit You Show"

EVERYONE has a certain spirit. That is, he has a particular disposition, inclination or motivating force. Hence, it is not surprising that people often become well known for the motivation behind what they say and do.

² The Holy Scriptures mention the qualities of some individuals that moved them to action. To illustrate: Jehovah God's prophet Moses is described as "by far the meekest of all the men who were upon the surface of the ground." (Num. 12:3) Abigail, who eventually became the wife of Israel's King David, was "good in discretion."—1 Sam. 25:3, 39.

³ True Christians have put on the "new personality" and should therefore have a fine spirit. After all, they have

1, 2. How might a person's spirit be defined? Please illustrate this by Scriptural examples. (Philem. 25)
3. (a) Why should Christians have a fine spirit? (b) What was Paul's desire regarding Timothy's spirit?

clothed themselves with such motivating forces as love, compassion, kindness, lowliness of mind, mildness and long-suffering.

They cultivate and demonstrate the fruits of God's spirit—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, mildness and self-control.

(Gal. 5:22, 23; Eph. 4:20-24;

Col. 3:9-14) Certainly, within

the Christian congregation personal attitudes are important, for the apostle

Paul, in writing to his co-worker Timothy, expressed himself this way: "The



"The Lord be with the spirit you show. His undeserved kindness be with you people."—2 Tim. 4:22.

Lord be with the spirit you show. His undeserved kindness be with you people.” (2 Tim. 4:22) Paul desired that God, by the Lord Jesus Christ approve the actuating force displayed by Timothy.

THE “SPIRIT” OF A CONGREGATION

⁴ Just as a person manifests a particular spirit, so an entire congregation of God’s people has a certain spirit. It is very likely that an observant person will notice the effects of that force at work in their minds and hearts, perhaps producing a spirit of friendliness, love, or one of tranquillity and peace, or of zeal and enthusiasm. Of course, the spirit could be one that produces negative effects. But what a blessing when that spirit is a fine one! Obviously, the apostle Paul desired that the congregations display such a spirit. To the congregation of Christians in the city of Philippi, he wrote: “The undeserved kindness of the Lord Jesus Christ be with the spirit you show.” (Phil. 4:23) The apostle expressed himself similarly when writing to Galatian Christians.—Gal. 6:18.

⁵ Are you one of Jehovah’s Witnesses? If so, what is the spirit of the congregation with which you are associating? It may be an excellent spirit. The congregation may be very responsive to counsel from the Scriptures. Moreover, it may have a loving, warm, cooperative, hospitable spirit. Those associated with the congregation may be very spiritual in their viewpoint. In that case, ‘the undeserved kindness of the Lord Jesus Christ is with the spirit you people show.’—Philem. 25.

SAVING THE CONGREGATION’S SPIRIT

⁶ Such a fine spirit should be maintained. The importance of preserving a congrega-

tion’s spirit was emphasized in ancient Corinth. The apostle Paul learned that among the Christians in that city sexual immorality was being tolerated, “such fornication as is not even among the nations, that a wife a certain man has of his father.”—1 Cor. 5:1.

⁷ Overseers of that congregation had not expelled this person, but Paul urged them to “hand such a man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh.” They were to put him out of the Christian congregation into the world ruled by Satan the Devil and where destruction awaits. (1 John 5:19) Why take this action? As Paul said, “in order that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord,” Jesus Christ.—1 Cor. 5:3-5.

⁸ This man had to be disfellowshipped if the “spirit,” or spirituality of the congregation, based upon God’s Word, was to be saved. Otherwise, ‘a little leaven would ferment the whole lump,’ that is, a spiritually corrupting influence would permeate the congregation and Jehovah would cut off that congregation. Today it is just as vital that the congregation’s spirit, based on Jehovah’s inspired Word, be saved.—1 Cor. 5:6.

EARLY CHRISTIAN CONGREGATION —PATTERN FOR TODAY

⁹ True, elders of the first-century congregations had to be vigilant spiritually if the ‘spirit was to be saved.’ Admittedly, problems arose at times. Nevertheless, nothing abounds with greater warmth, love and real mutual concern than the spirit of early Christian congregations in general. Jesus Christ had declared: “By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love among yourselves.” (John 13:35) Such love was being manifested constantly. For instance, the apostle John

7, 8. Why, according to Paul, was it necessary to disfellowship the immoral Corinthian?

9. The first-century congregations in general displayed what spirit?

(a) Does a congregation have a spirit? (b) In this connection, what is desirable?

1. An excellent congregational spirit might have what features?

2. What kind of improper condition was being tolerated in the Corinthian congregation?

spoke of his fellow worshiper Gaius as "the beloved, whom I truly love."—3 John 1.

¹⁰ The apostles were working *with* their brothers and sisters in the faith, not brow-beating them. They were not issuing harsh commands. Rather, these men made appeals to the hearts of fellow believers. Fittingly, Christian associates were referred to as "brothers," "beloved ones" and "sharers . . . in the undeserved kindness." (Phil. 1:7; 4:8; 1 Pet. 4:12; 1 John 4:1) This loving attitude was based on deep interest in the spiritual welfare of others as fellow heirs of life.—Jas. 2:5; 1 Pet. 3:7.

HUMBLE, LOVING OVERSEERS

¹¹ The love and mutual regard permeating the first-century congregations reflected the inner qualities of the early Christians as individuals. Take the traveling overseer Paul as an example. His heart had "widened out" to encompass affectionately fellow believers in Corinth. (2 Cor. 6:11-13) Moreover, he had a heart full of love for his spiritual brothers and sisters everywhere. No wonder that daily there rushed in on him "the anxiety for all the congregations"!—2 Cor. 11:28.

¹² Was Paul arrogant, domineering, thus lording it over other worshipers of Jehovah? Certainly not! For instance, he did not scold and make authoritarian demands when admonishing Christian elders in Ephesus. His appeals to them were based on love. Those overseers knew that the apostle spoke the truth when he said: "Bear in mind that for three years, night and day, I did not quit admonishing each one with tears." (Acts 20:18, 19, 31) What a sincere and humble elder! And that is the spirit his Lord expected him to dis-

play, for Jesus Christ had said: "You know that the rulers of the nations lord it over them and the great men wield authority over them. This is not the way among you; but whoever wants to become great among you must be your minister, and whoever wants to be first among you must be your slave."—Matt. 20:25-27.

¹³ Now, please think about the overseers of Ephesus themselves. Were they cool, aloof? No, indeed! That is not the picture portrayed in God's Word. When Paul was about to bid them farewell at Miletus, we are told: "He kneeled down with all of them and prayed. Indeed, quite a bit of weeping broke out among them all, and they fell upon Paul's neck and tenderly kissed him, because they were especially pained at the word he had spoken that they were going to behold his face no more." (Acts 20:36-38) Only loving and humble persons would act that way. Certainly, 'the Lord was with the spirit they showed.'

THE SPIRIT THAT OTHERS MANIFESTED

¹⁴ But what about others associated with the early Christian congregation? The fine spirit displayed by many of them, as disclosed in Scripture, furnishes an excellent example for Christians today. For instance, among the first persons to embrace Christianity in Europe were Lydia and her household, residents of Philippi. Lydia accepted the good news preached by Paul, was baptized, and immediately displayed hospitable qualities. "If you men have judged me to be faithful to Jehovah," she said, "enter into my house and stay." In fact, Paul's traveling companion Luke wrote, "She just made us come." (Acts 16:11-15) Perhaps at least partially due to Lydia's hospitality, the apostle later told Philippian Christians: "I thank my God always upon every remembrance of you . . . because of the contribution you

10. What kind of relationship did the apostles have with fellow believers?

11. How would you describe the apostle Paul's attitude toward his spiritual brothers and sisters? (1 Thess. 2:7) 12, 13. (a) With what spirit did Paul admonish Christian elders in Ephesus? (b) With what reaction did the elders of Ephesus respond when Paul bade them farewell?

14. Lydia manifested what particular trait?

have made to the good news from the first day until this moment." (Phil. 1:3-5) Yes, 'the Lord was with the spirit shown' by those Philippians, including faithful Lydia.

¹⁵ The Jew Aquila and his wife Priscilla also had a fine spirit. Banished from Rome by the decree of Emperor Claudius against the Jews (in 50 C.E.), they became residents of Corinth. Some months later, the apostle Paul arrived there and was received into their home. In fact, all three worked together making tents. Undoubtedly, Aquila and Priscilla also helped the apostle to build up the new congregation in Corinth.—Acts 18:1-11.

¹⁶ When Paul sailed for Syria in 52 C.E., Aquila and Priscilla accompanied him as far as Ephesus. There this married couple opened their home as the congregation's meeting place. In Ephesus, Aquila and Priscilla also were privileged to 'expound the way of God more correctly' to Apollos. (Acts 18:18-26; 1 Cor. 16:8, 19) They were able to provide such instruction because of their good mental grasp or comprehension of God's Word and will.

¹⁷ By the time the apostle Paul wrote to Roman Christians, about 56 C.E., Aquila and Priscilla had returned to Rome. There they again opened their home as a place of Christian assembly. Paul greeted them as his "fellow workers in Christ Jesus, who have risked their own necks for my soul, to whom not only I but also all the congregations of the nations render thanks." (Rom. 16:3-5) At some time, Aquila and Priscilla had put their lives in jeopardy for Paul. Shortly before suffering martyrdom about 65 C.E., Paul, through Timothy, sent greetings to this fine married couple, then residing in Ephesus. By that time, Aquila and Priscilla had been

Christians for years and still 'the Lord was with the spirit they showed.'—1 Tim. 1:3; 2 Tim. 4:19, 22.

¹⁸ Toward the end of the first century C.E. the aged apostle John addressed his third divinely inspired letter to a fellow believer named Gaius. The apostle had love for this fine Christian man. Gaius was "walking in the truth," and others had 'borne witness to his love before the congregation.' John knew Gaius to be a hospitable and loving man.—3 John 1-8.

¹⁹ But what a contrast there was between Gaius and a certain Diotrephes! John said: "I wrote something to the congregation, but Diotrephes, who likes to have the first place among them, does not receive anything from us with respect. That is why, if I come, I will call to remembrance his works which he goes on doing, chattering about us with wicked words. Also, not being content with these things, neither does he himself receive the brothers with respect, and those who are wanting to receive them he tries to hinder and to throw out of the congregation." (3 John 9, 10) Certainly, the Lord was *not* with the spirit Diotrephes showed.

²⁰ Here and there, a person like Diotrephes might appear on the scene. But the congregations of that time were comprised of many faithful, spiritually strong Christians. Yes, there were loving, hospitable individuals like Lydia and Gaius. There were persons like Aquila and Priscilla, who had fine spiritual comprehension and were willing to open their homes for congregation meetings. Unquestionably, 'the Lord was with the spirit such persons showed.' What lover of God today would not want to be like them?

18. What kind of person was the apostle John's friend Gaius?

19. Why must we say that the Lord was *not* with the spirit Diotrephes showed?

20. The early Christian congregations were comprised of many persons of what kind?

5-17. (a) Why were Aquila and Priscilla able to 'expound the way of God more correctly' to Apollos?
b) How can it be said that the Lord was with the spirit shown by Aquila and Priscilla?

UPBUILDING FELLOW WORSHIPERS

²¹ As noted earlier, the apostle Paul showed concern for the spirit of the Corinthian congregation. Moreover, he expressed the hope that 'the Lord Jesus Christ would be with the spirit shown' by congregations and individuals. (1 Cor. 5: 1-5; Gal. 6:18; Phil. 4:23; 2 Tim. 4:22; Philem. 25) Similarly, the glorified Jesus Christ was concerned about the spirit manifested by the seven congregations addressed in Revelation. (Rev. chaps. 2, 3) Therefore, Christian elders of today should be deeply interested in the spirit shown by the congregations with which they serve.

²² As a man appointed by holy spirit to "shepherd the flock of God," an overseer should know the appearance of that flock. (1 Pet. 5:2; Acts 20:28; compare Proverbs 27:23.) He might well ask himself: Are the brothers and sisters in the congregation truly happy? (Ps. 128:1) Do their faces indicate that they are serving Jehovah with "joy of heart"? (Deut. 28:45-47) Are they attending Christian meetings regularly? (Heb. 10:24, 25) Do they study the Bible privately at home? (Josh. 1:7, 8) Are these fellow believers really "healthy in faith"? (Titus 2:2) Do they keenly appreciate spiritual things? (Ps. 27:4) Is it evident that they cherish their relationship with Jehovah God and truly desire to praise him?—Ps. 9:1, 2.

²³ A candid appraisal may reveal a need to cultivate greater spirituality in the congregation. For this the public platform often serves quite well. The overseer Timothy had to face some persons within the congregation who 'fought about words' and were "not favorably disposed" toward the truth. (2 Tim. 2:14, 23-25) Their presence would produce a "troublesome season" for the congregation. So Timothy was

to "preach the word"—not human wisdom, but the unadulterated "word" of God. (2 Tim. 4:1, 2; compare 1 Corinthians 2:1-5.) Similarly, for the spiritual good of congregations today, elders need to "preach the word," basing their comments on the Bible, whether from the public platform or in private conversation.

²⁴ Another way to upbuild fellow believers spiritually is by visiting them in their homes. Jesus Christ did this, seeking to aid people in a spiritual way. (Luke 7:36-50; 19:1-27) Similarly, the apostle John desired to visit Gaius and others in order to speak with them face to face about spiritual matters.—2 John 1, 12; 3 John 1, 13, 14.

²⁵ Motivated by Christian love, present-day elders may visit fellow believers in their homes. This is not done to 'check up' on them, but to offer spiritual aid and encouragement. Moreover, overseers do well to mention their Christian brothers and sisters in prayer. Interestingly, the prophet Samuel told the Israelites: "It is unthinkable, on my part, to sin against Jehovah by ceasing to pray in your behalf." (1 Sam. 12:20, 23) Also, the apostle Paul set a fine example for overseers by praying in behalf of fellow worshipers of Jehovah.—1 Thess. 1:1, 2; 2 Tim. 1: 1-4; Philem. 4.

²⁶ A fine, joyous spirit will exist in a congregation of God's people if they pray for one another. Additionally, a good spirit will prevail if Christian overseers lovingly shepherd the "flock." (Phil. 2:19, 20; 1 Pet. 5:1-4) Indeed, 'the Lord can be with the spirit you show,' but this requires something very specific on your part as an individual. You need to have a good grasp on God's Word, in order to be fully pleasing to Jehovah.

21, 22. (a) Why should Christian elders of today be deeply interested in the spirit of the congregations with which they serve? (b) What questions might an overseer ask himself regarding the congregation he serves?

23. If elders are to "preach the word," what must they do?

24, 25. (a) For what purpose may elders visit fellow believers in their homes? (b) Is there Scriptural reason for elders to pray in behalf of other worshipers of Jehovah?

26. If the Lord is to be with one's spirit, what does the individual need?

“Keeping a TIGHT GRIP on

The Word of Life”

“Keep doing all things free from murmurings and arguments, that you may come to be blameless and innocent, children of God without a blemish in among a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you are shining as illuminators in the world, keeping a tight grip on the word of life.”

—Phil. 2:14-16.

IF YOUR father lived in a distant land, how would you react upon receiving a letter from him? Would you leave it unopened? Or, would you read merely a sentence or two and then file the letter away with other correspondence?

² If you really loved your father, you would receive his letter with deep appreciation. Eagerly you would open it. With keen interest, you would read every word. Doubtless you would appreciate and apply any sound counsel that the letter contained. In fact, you might read that letter again and again, out of pleasure, or to make sure that you understood its contents. Is that not true?

³ Well, if you have dedicated your life to Jehovah God, you possess something of

1-3. (a) How would one react upon receiving a letter from one's beloved father? (b) What "letters" have been received from Jehovah God, and what results from applying the counsel that they contain?

greater importance than any correspondence from a human parent. From your heavenly Father you have received a volume of sixty-six "letters," God's own holy Word, the Bible. By applying its counsel, anointed followers of Jesus Christ have remained innocent "in among a crooked and twisted generation" and have proved to be spiritual illuminators in the world. Whether you are of their number or entertain the hope of eternal life on earth in God's promised new order, it is vital that you 'keep a tight grip on the word of life.'—Phil. 2:14-16.

⁴ What is the "word of life"? It is God's message about the hope of life, which began with his promise of the Seed. (Gen. 3:15) This assured the eventual triumph of righteousness. For some four thousand years, Jehovah added to that "word," until the Bible's completion about the year 98 C.E. Since

then the "word of life" has consisted of the Holy Scriptures in their entirety. They reveal that God makes life eternal possible through Jesus Christ. (John 3:16) Persons desiring divine approval and eternal life must understand God's Word, declare it to others and live according to the Bible, thus "keeping a tight grip on the word of life."

⁵ There is great value in "keeping a tight grip on the word of life." Any person having such a grip on it can maintain a close relationship with Jehovah God. Also, the individual is better able to cope with life's problems. Furthermore, "keeping a tight grip on the word of life" makes it possible for the Christian to endure adverse circumstances. Please observe now just how true this is.

4. What is the "word of life"?

5. Why is there great value in "keeping a tight grip on the word of life"?

DEALING WITH ILLNESS

⁶ Sickness befalls poor and rich alike. (Eccl. 5:16, 17; 6:1, 2) Jesus Christ described his spiritual brothers as being ill at times. (Matt. 25:39, 40) And early Christians such as Epaphroditus, Timothy and Trophimus were stricken with sickness. (Phil. 2:25-30; 1 Tim. 5:23; 2 Tim. 4:20) So, Jehovah's modern-day servants can draw some comfort from the knowledge that illness is not a unique experience among God's people today.

⁷ However, it is strengthening to know that Jehovah God can remove illness. (Deut. 7:15) The physical recovery of ailing King Hezekiah is a case in point. God healed him, answering Hezekiah's prayer. (2 Ki. 20:1-11) When on earth, Jesus Christ brought about both physical and spiritual healing. (Matt. 8:14-17; Isa. 53:4) The basis for these cures was the ransom sacrifice that God provided through Christ, which climaxed the course Jesus

6, 7. Regarding illness, Jehovah's servants can draw comfort and strength from what knowledge?

followed after God's spirit came upon him at the Jordan River in 29 C.E. Therefore, Christians can be confident that by means of the resurrected Jesus Christ and under the rule of God's kingdom obedient mankind will receive permanent release from sin, disease and death. How fitting, then, that David blessed Jehovah as the One "who is healing all [our] maladies"!—Ps. 103:1-3.

⁸ In the meantime, what can an ailing Christian do? While undergoing appropriate treatment, he can properly pray to Jehovah for fortitude to bear his illness, and for spiritual strength to maintain integrity to God under these difficult circumstances. Such a person can be certain that "Jehovah himself will sustain him upon a divan of illness."—Ps. 41:1-3.

COPING WITH STRESS

⁹ For many, including some Christians, stress is a notable problem today. Trying,

8. What can an ailing Christian now do?

9, 10. (a) What will aid one to maintain balance under stress? (b) How were King Saul's emotions soothed?



nerve-racking situations can develop in life. Sometimes the stress becomes so intense that considerable mental strain is felt. Yet, "a tight grip on the word of life" aids one to maintain balance.

¹⁰ What may help to calm a person who is experiencing great emotional stress? The Bible gives some insight on this. When a bad spirit came upon and terrorized Israel's King Saul, David played the harp for him. With what effect? Says the Biblical account: "There was relief for Saul and it was well with him, and the bad spirit departed from upon him." (1 Sam. 16:14-23) Yes, soft, calm music can soothe a person and produce a feeling of peace.

¹¹ David himself knew stress. More than once, suspicious King Saul tried to pin him to the wall with a spear. (1 Sam. 18:6-11; 19:9, 10) Saul also outlawed David, forcing him to live as a hunted fugitive. Certainly, David underwent stress then and at later times. For aid he turned to Jehovah God in prayer. "Turn your face to me, and show me favor; for I am solitary and afflicted," David begged Jehovah. "Distresses of my heart have multiplied; from the stresses upon me O bring me out." (Ps. 25:16, 17) Well, can Jehovah be relied upon to aid his servants in times of stress? Indeed he can! David was able to say: "Jehovah will become a secure height for anyone crushed, a secure height in times of distress. And those knowing your name will trust in you, for you will certainly not leave those looking for you, O Jehovah."—Ps. 9:9, 10.

CONSOLATION FOR THOSE DEPRESSED

¹² Persons "keeping a tight grip on the word of life" also can find consolation in Scripture if they experience mental depression. They will note that others who

11. In times of stress, where can the greatest aid be found?

12, 13. (a) Is it true that mental depression should never be experienced by those serving Jehovah? (b) How was Paul able to endure hardships that could have resulted in depression? (2 Cor. 12:7-10)

served Jehovah in the past were depressed at times. Certainly, Isaac and Rebekah experienced depression due to the two Hittite wives of their son Esau, for we are told: "They were a source of bitterness of spirit to Isaac and Rebekah."—Gen. 26:34, 35.

¹³ Depression apparently troubled some early Christians, because the apostle Paul advised fellow believers in Thessalonica to "speak consolingly to the depressed souls." (1 Thess. 5:14) Paul himself underwent hardships that could have resulted in depression, but he dealt with these circumstances in the strength that God gives. The apostle wrote: "We are pressed in every way, but not cramped beyond movement; we are perplexed, but not absolutely with no way out; we are persecuted, but not left in the lurch; we are thrown down, but not destroyed." (2 Cor. 4:8, 9) Yes, Paul is an encouraging example for all Christians.

¹⁴ Perhaps you are depressed because of personal problems or other matters of great concern. If so, remember Nehemiah. He was gloomy in the presence of King Artaxerxes, being depressed over the devastated condition of Jerusalem and its walls. When questioned by the Persian ruler, Nehemiah "prayed to the God of the heavens." Thereafter he asked permission to go to Jerusalem for the rebuilding work. The king responded favorably, granting this request. Truly, the 'good hand of God' was upon Nehemiah. (Neh. 2:1-8) Similarly today, Jehovah's people should pray to him for aid and direction regarding problems or other matters of concern. Then they can be confident that Jehovah will be with them, if they follow his direction.

¹⁵ In times of mental depression, how vital it is to place our reliance upon Je-

14. If depressed because of personal problems, why should we remember Nehemiah?

15. What did Peter indicate we should do in times of depression?

hovah God! As the apostle Peter said: "Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time; while you throw all your anxiety upon him, because he cares for you."—1 Pet. 5:6, 7.

ENDURANCE OF GRIEF

¹⁶ At one time or another, humans experience grief. Many are its causes. The psalmist declared: "Distress and grief I kept finding." (Ps. 116:3) A notable cause of intense grief is the death of a loved one.

¹⁷ The patriarch Abraham wept due to the death of his beloved wife Sarah. (Gen. 23:2) David was deeply grieved over Absalom's death, exclaiming: "My son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! O that I might have died, I myself, instead of you, Absalom my son, my son!" (2 Sam. 18:33) Even the perfect man Jesus Christ "gave way to tears," so greatly grieved was he over the death of his friend Lazarus.—John 11:35.

¹⁸ "A tight grip on the word of life" helps the bereaved one to endure grief. Naturally, if a person thinks longingly on past joys shared with the deceased, grief may increase. So, how much better it is to think of the future! The Bible indicates that billions of human dead will be raised to life. Paul had hope that there would be "a resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous." (Acts 24:15) Of course, God determines who is to be resurrected. However, a faithful Christian who gains life in the future earthly paradise can entertain the hope of seeing again another loyal servant of Jehovah who had died with similar prospects.—John 5:28, 29.

16, 17. The death of a loved one can cause what, as shown in Scripture?

18, 19. (a) How can the bereaved one be helped to endure grief? (b) How can he draw comfort from Bible accounts?

¹⁹ A bereaved person having "a tight grip on the word of life" can draw comfort from Bible accounts. For instance, imagine the happiness of Mary and Martha when their fleshly brother Lazarus was resurrected by Jesus. (John 11:38-44) And do you recall what happened when Jesus Christ restored to life the young daughter of Jairus? "Well," says the account, "her parents were beside themselves" with evident joy. (Luke 8:40-42, 49-56) Just think how happy inhabitants of God's promised new order will be when they welcome back the resurrected dead! Such thoughts can be of aid to one in enduring the grief that can strike when a loved one dies. Above all, at the time of bereavement, Christians need to draw close to Jehovah in prayer, for he is "the Father of tender mercies and the God of all comfort."—2 Cor. 1:3.

DEALING WITH TIMIDITY AND FEAR

²⁰ Some who have dedicated their lives to Jehovah God have had quite a struggle against emotions such as shyness or timidity, and fear. Being extremely shy, certain persons have found it difficult to express their inward faith in words. But those who have acquired "a tight grip on the word of life" realize that other servants of God have coped successfully with problems not unlike their own.

²¹ For instance, the prophet Moses apparently had difficulty expressing himself in speech. When God spoke to Moses about sending him back to Egypt to lead the Israelites out of slavery there, Moses was very diffident and said: "Excuse me, Jehovah, but I am not a fluent speaker, neither since yesterday nor since before that nor since your speaking to your servant for I am slow of mouth and slow of tongue." Jehovah sent Moses to Egypt

20, 21. (a) Timid persons can learn what from Moses' experience? (b) What can be learned from the experience of Jeremiah? (Jer. 1:5-8)

anyway, providing Aaron as his spokesman. But Moses did not give up, always letting someone else speak for him. Later, he confidently spoke to the Israelites himself.—Ex. 4:10-17; Deut. 1:1-5.

²² Consider also the apostle Paul's counsel to Timothy. Whether Timothy had become somewhat fearful, we cannot say with certainty. However, Paul told him: "God gave us not a spirit of cowardice, but that of power and of love and of soundness of mind. Therefore do not become ashamed of the witness about our Lord, neither of me a prisoner for his sake, but take your part in suffering evil for the good news according to the power of God."—2 Tim. 1:7, 8.

²³ A Christian can cope with problems like the one that confronted Moses. Also, it is possible to dispel shyness or timidity, and fear, by praying earnestly to Jehovah God for strength. (Phil. 4:6, 7, 13) Lovers of Jehovah can always seek his face in prayer without fear or dread, and they can courageously speak God's truths to others. "This is how love has been made perfect with us," wrote the apostle John, "that we may have freeness of speech in the day of judgment, because, just as that one is, so are we ourselves in this world. There is no fear in love, but perfect love throws fear outside, because fear exercises a restraint."—1 John 4:17, 18.

AVOIDING IMMORAL CONDUCT

²⁴ On the other hand, there is a proper fear and thus the Bible says that "the fear of Jehovah is pure," and it "means the hating of bad." (Ps. 19:9; Prov. 8:13) It is not morbid dread, but it involves reverence and a wholesome fear of displeasing Jehovah. This is a protection against following a bad course. Naturally,

a person having "a tight grip on the word of life" knows, for instance, that the Scriptures condemn sexual immorality. (Deut. 5:18; 1 Cor. 6:9, 10) Yet, the Bible shows that such morally corrupt conduct may also lead to distress. After King David's son Amnon violated his own half sister Tamar, he "began hating her with a very great hatred." Amnon had Tamar put out of his house as a person now repugnant to him, and whose presence likely made him feel unclean.—2 Sam. 13:1-19.

²⁵ By way of contrast, what a fine example we have in Joseph, the son of Jacob! Repeatedly tempted by the wife of his master Potiphar, Joseph firmly refused to have sexual relations with her. Though falsely accused and imprisoned for his refusal, Joseph had not sinned against God. (Gen. 39:7-23) His conduct can be recalled with profit if temptation to engage in sexual immorality should arise in the life of one "keeping a tight grip on the word of life."

"SHINING AS ILLUMINATORS"

²⁶ Certainly, then, those with "a tight grip on the word of life" have many reasons to appreciate the sixty-six divinely inspired books of the Holy Bible. Among other things, applied counsel from the Scriptures enables Christians to cope with illness and stress. In God's Word they find consolation when depressed. The Bible also aids them to endure grief, to deal successfully with timidity and fear, and to avoid immoral conduct.

²⁷ Furthermore, those "keeping a tight grip on the word of life" are able to remain "blameless and innocent" as regards the misdeeds of this "crooked and twisted generation," the world of mankind alienated from God. Among them, Christians

²² As to fearfulness, what fine counsel did Paul give Timothy?

²³ How may shyness or timidity, and fear, be dispelled?

²⁴ (a) How may "the fear of Jehovah" serve as a protection? (b) Sexual immorality can lead to what consequences?

²⁵ When tempted, why can one profitably recall Joseph's conduct?

²⁶⁻²⁸ (a) Summing up, "a tight grip on the word of life" can aid us in what ways? (b) How may we continue to 'shine as illuminators'?

continue to 'shine as illuminators.' (Phil. 2:14-16) Associated with the anointed followers of Jesus Christ, who have the prime responsibility to serve as such spiritual "illuminators," are a "great crowd" who have the prospects of eternal life on a paradise earth.—Rev. 7:4-9.

²⁸ Relying upon Jehovah God, all faithful Christians will continue reflecting spiritual light. With divine aid they will go on manifesting the proper motivation or spirit, one that befits persons who are

What Did The WISE MAN Mean?

The Value of a Good Name

A good name or reputation is something of value that deserves to be safeguarded. Wise King Solomon observed: "A name is better than good oil, and the day of death than the day of one's being born." (Eccl. 7:1) In ancient times good oil was highly prized. It gave off a pleasant scent. Yet even more pleasing than the fragrance of good oil is a fine reputation. It is during the full course of life that a person's

worshiping Jehovah God. They will seek to cultivate and display the fruits of God's spirit and wisely will bear in mind the fine qualities of the early Christians and others who have served Jehovah down through the centuries. And, surely, the Lord will continue to be with the spirit shown by all godly persons of today who truly are "keeping a tight grip on the word of life." Are you among those showing the proper Christian spirit, and have you a good, tight grip on the "word of life"?

name takes on real meaning, identifying him as to the kind of person he is. At death that name or reputation is sealed, finalized. Since a person has no reputation at birth, the 'day of death is better than the day of one's being born.'

A serious view of life is essential if one is to preserve a good name. Solomon recommended: "Better is it to go to the house of mourning than to go to the banquet house, because that is the end of all mankind; and the one alive should take it to his heart."—Eccl. 7:2.

When death strikes a household it is certainly no time for a person to forget the bereaved and callously go ahead with his feasting and reveling. Rather, this provides an opportunity to comfort the mourners. At the same time a person's going to the "house of mourning" can have a wholesome effect on him. He is forcefully reminded of the brevity of life and how quickly one's plans and activities can be halted. This can occasion serious reflection on how a person is living his own life. The spirit prevailing in a banquet house, on the other hand, is not conducive to such sober thinking.

Solomon continues: "Better is vexation than laughter, for by the crossness of the

face the heart becomes better. The heart of the wise ones is in the house of mourning, but the heart of the stupid ones is in the house of rejoicing."—Eccl. 7:3, 4.

One at the "house of mourning" is made to appreciate the brevity of life and is vexed over its unforeseen occurrences. The individual's face takes on a sad and severe appearance instead of being wreathed with smiles, as at a "banquet house." The serious attitude reflected in the face can have a good effect on the heart, prompting a change in one for the better. "The heart of the wise ones is in the house of mourning" in that their heart gives consideration as to how they should live their life, and why. The heart does not reflect the shallow, reckless spirit associated with a place of revelry.

Continuing this line of argument, Solomon says: "Better is it to hear the rebuke of someone wise than to be the man hearing the song of the stupid ones. For as the sound of thorns under the pot, so is the laughter of the stupid one; and this too is vanity."—Eccl. 7:5, 6.

The person who strays from the right course would surely be benefited by the rebuke of a wise person. But of what value would be the fool's song or empty flattery? Such could conceal faults and confirm a person in a wrong course, ruining his reputation. When the frivolous laughter of a fool comes at an inappropriate time, it can grate on the ears much like the crackling of burning thorns under a pot, the fool's laughter making a disagreeable sound and offering no edification.

Feminine Modesty

● Is "modesty" a quality in many of the modern styles of women's dress in your area? Throughout the earth men and women would answer with a resounding "No!" Even when longer skirts are in fashion, frequently the garments that are worn are very revealing or immodest. You likely have been made aware of that.

Should Christian women, then, make the effort to purchase or to sew clothes that accord with the quality of modesty? Thousands of female Christian witnesses of Jehovah in various nations realize that this is the advisable course. While taking an interest in being neat and attractive in their grooming, they guide their thinking by the inspired advice that Christian women should "adorn themselves in well-arranged dress, with modesty and soundness of mind."—1 Tim. 2:9.

The Puerto Rico branch office of the Watch Tower Society received an interesting note regarding this from a young Witness. It read:

"We had an experience that really brought us joy the other day, and I wish to tell you about it. Two other young sisters and I were walking down the street on our way to share in the house-to-house preaching work when a man called for us to stop. At first we did not want to stop because we were not sure of his motives, but, since he insisted, we did stop to find out what he wanted. He said: 'I want to congratulate you on your manner of dress.' We explained that we were Jehovah's Christian witnesses and that the Bible says that we should dress modestly, so that is what we do. 'It is for this reason that I want to congratulate you,' said the man, 'because I belong to the Evangelist religion, but I can see that you people are the only ones that dress properly according to the Bible.' So we want to say how happy and grateful we are for the fine Bible counsel on how we should dress."

THE INFLUENTIAL PHARISEES

The Pharisees constituted a prominent sect of Judaism in the days of Jesus' earthly ministry. They tried to keep themselves separate from others, including fellow Jews. The name "Pharisees" may, in fact, mean "separated ones." The exact origins of this sect of Judaism are unknown today. By the latter half of the second century B.C.E., however, the Pharisees already were an influential body.

*Writing of this period in the time of John Hyrcanus, the Jewish historian Josephus says of them: "These have so great a power over the multitude, that when they say any thing against the king, or against the high priest, they are presently believed."**



WHEN Jesus was on earth the Pharisees' influence was so strong that prominent men were afraid to acknowledge openly that he was indeed the Christ. The Bible reports: "Many even of the rulers actually put faith in him, but because of the Pharisees they would not confess him, in order not to be expelled from the synagogue; for they loved the glory of men more than even the glory of God."—John 12:42, 43.

As a body, the Pharisees were concerned about establishing their own righteousness. They scrupulously paid the tenth of such small products as mint, dill and cum-

min. (Matt. 23:23) On a regular basis, they would fast for religious reasons. (Matt. 9:14) They were concerned about observing traditions to the letter, especially in connection with Sabbath observance and the washing of hands.—Matt. 12:1, 2; 15:2.

Along with this, the Pharisees wanted to impress others with their righteousness and therefore made a public display of it. They did this even in their dress. The Mosaic law required the Israelites to have fringed edges on the skirts of their garments. This was to serve as a reminder to them of their holy standing before Jehovah God and the need to observe his

* *Antiquities of the Jews*, Book XIII, chap. X, par. 5.

commands. (Num. 15:38-41) The Pharisees took this a step farther. They enlarged the fringed edges of their garments in order to stand out among the people. Similarly, while the custom had developed among the Jews to wear small scripture-containing cases on the forehead and the left arm, the Pharisees stood out by wearing larger ones.—Matt. 23:2, 5.

Because of what they did, the Pharisees felt superior to fellow Israelites who did not observe the Law according to the Pharisees' traditional interpretation. Their attitude is reflected in a prayer that Jesus Christ, in one of his illustrations, represents as being spoken by a Pharisee: "O God, I thank you I am not as the rest of men, extortioners, unrighteous, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week, I give the tenth of all things I acquire." (Luke 18:11, 12) The Pharisees actually looked with contempt upon those who failed to observe the great body of rabbinic tradition. When officers sent to arrest Jesus came back empty-handed because of having been impressed by his teaching, they said: "You have not been misled also, have you? Not one of the rulers or of the Pharisees has put faith in him, has he? But this crowd that does not know the Law [that is, the rabbinic interpretation given to it] are accursed people."—John 7:45-49.

Confident of their own righteousness, the Pharisees believed that they were entitled to special privileges and that others should acknowledge their superior standing. When entertained at evening meals, they expected to have the most prominent places. At the synagogue, they preferred the front seats. These seats faced the audience and were reserved for the presiding officer and distinguished guests. Even in busy marketplaces they wanted to be given special attention and to have their presence acknowledged by greetings. It pleased

them when people called them "Rabbi" (Teacher).—Matt. 23:6, 7.

Due to trusting in their own righteousness the Pharisees were among the foremost enemies of Jesus Christ. He often did not act according to their traditional interpretation of the Law. That is why they condemned him.

It appears the Pharisees thought that defilement resulted from contact with people who did not observe the Law according to their traditional view. (Luke 7:36-40) So Jesus' associating and even eating with reputed sinners and tax collectors gave them occasion to object. (Luke 15: 1, 2) They did not appreciate that such ones were in need of spiritual help and that Jesus, moved by loving concern and compassion, was willing to render that help.—Luke 15:3-32.

When Jesus made a clay to put on the eyes of a blind man and thereby effected a cure on the Sabbath, some of the Pharisees declared: "This is not a man from God, because he does not observe the Sabbath." (John 9:16) Seeing Jesus' miraculous healings on the Sabbath, they did not rejoice with those who were cured but were enraged about what they considered to be violations of the Sabbath. It was this insensibility of their hearts that grieved Jesus. Because of their traditional view, the Pharisees not only ignored human considerations but became so angry that they wanted to kill Jesus for what they labeled as violations of the Law.—Mark 3:1-6.

Jesus Christ's denouncing the Pharisees was indeed warranted. Their attitude toward God's law and fellow Israelites did violence to the spirit of that law, making it burdensome to the people. They lost sight of the weightier matters of the Law—justice, mercy, faithfulness and love of God. (Matt. 23:23; Luke 11:42-44) As Jesus pointed out regarding the Sabbath:

"The sabbath came into existence for the sake of man, and not man for the sake of the sabbath." (Mark 2:27) In areas that really touched the lives of people, their sticking to human precepts was responsible for serious injury. For example, children could get out of helping aged and needy parents by claiming that all their property was dedicated to God.—Matt. 15:3-9.

Of course, not all the Pharisees took a totally unreasonable view of matters. There were exceptions. The learned Pharisee Gamaliel urged fellow members of the Sanhedrin not to meddle with the followers of Jesus Christ, saying: "Let them alone; (because, if this scheme or this work is from men, it will be overthrown; but if it is from God, you will not be able to overthrow them;) otherwise, you may perhaps be found fighting actually against God." (Acts 5:38, 39) The Pharisee Nicodemus manifested interest in the work and activity of Jesus Christ. (John 3:1, 2; 7:47-52; 19:39) And when the truth was revealed to Paul, he ceased being a Pharisee and became a devoted disciple of Jesus Christ.—Acts 26:5; Phil. 3:5.

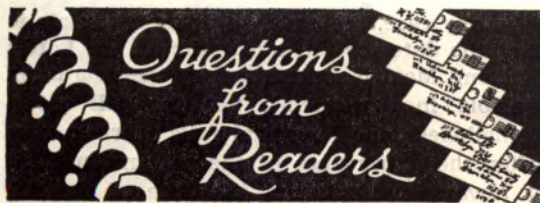
Nevertheless, as a body, the Pharisees can serve as a warning example for Christians today. Their case illustrates the dan-

ger of trusting in one's own goodness and righteousness. Recognizing that, as Jesus said, "all you are brothers," devoted servants of God will not expect or desire to be viewed as superior, nor will they seek special attention, prominence and favors from fellow believers because of their position in God's congregation.—Matt. 23:8; 1 Pet. 5:1-4.

In view of what the Pharisees did, elders in the congregations of God's people will do well to remember that they have no authority to make rules that go beyond what is clearly stated in the Bible. True, at times certain arrangements must be made for orderliness in matters, but even here we need to ask ourselves: Are we in any way slipping into a course like that of the Pharisees who, while believing that zeal for righteousness was motivating them, failed to show Godlike consideration for human needs and feelings? Not only those in authority need to be on guard, but all within the Christian congregation should watch that they treat one another as beloved brothers and sisters, not becoming sticklers for unscriptural rules and thereby overlooking the truly important things—the divine qualities of justice, faithfulness, mercy and love.

The "In-Between" People

"Jews have no dealings with Samaritans," said Gospel writer John. (John 4:9) And a study of Jewish writings bears this truth out, as Bible scholar A. Edersheim writes: "Matters proceeded so far, that they were entirely excluded from fellowship." Yet we might call them an "in-between" people, for Jews did not view them "as Gentiles, but placed [them] on the same level as an ignorant Jew . . . they were not treated as heathens, and their land, their springs, baths, houses, and roads were declared clean." Samaritans being socially despised yet viewed by the Jews as having certain legal and moral privileges, we can see how Jesus could drink water at a Samaritan woman's hand, his disciples could buy food in their city and Jesus could spend two days with them.—John 4:7, 8, 40.



● When a sister is interpreting for the deaf, would Paul's counsel at 1 Corinthians 11:3-16 make it necessary for her to cover her head?

Since the sister serving as interpreter would not be originating the thoughts expressed, she would not be teaching in the congregation so as to require a head covering. She would be just relaying information in another language, in this case the sign language. The same would be true when interpreting a prayer. But she may feel better if she covers her head. She would be in a position of some prominence before the audience and it would be expected that she would put feeling and urgency into the talk, as required, in order to convey faithfully the feelings of the speaker. She might also feel that covering her head would help to prevent any false impressions that she was teaching or praying in the congregation without a head covering. Sisters who serve as interpreters can discreetly decide according to the circumstances in each situation and their own conscience.

Occasionally at a congregation meeting the only dedicated brother is deaf. If he is able to speak audibly with clarity and understanding to all present, it would be fitting that he preside and offer prayer, if he is otherwise qualified. If he speaks only by sign language, he might preside as well as offer prayer, if there is a sister present who is able to interpret well for others in attendance. A head covering would not be mandatory, but, as discussed above, circumstances and her conscience may make it advisable. But if the brother does not speak well or at all, and there is no qualified interpreter present, then a qualified sister should preside and also offer prayer as required with her head covered. The apostle Paul counsels that one who *speaks in a "tongue"* not understood by others present should remain silent unless there is an interpreter present. (1 Cor. 14:27, 28) To avoid embarrassment and misunderstanding, where there is a possibility that situations of this nature may develop elders can make appropriate arrangements in advance.

● I understood that the Memorial celebration was always on the evening of a full moon. But in 1977 the Memorial was on April 3, and my calendar gave April 4 for the full moon. Why the difference?

Often the celebration of the Lord's Evening Meal and the full moon do coincide, but not always. There may, for example, be a day's difference, depending on where you live and the calendar used.

To see why this is so you need to understand the basic method presently used by the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses in establishing the date for the annual Memorial celebration.

It was on the 14th of the Jewish month Nisan, the date of the Passover, that Jesus directed his followers to commemorate his death. (Luke 22:14-20) Appropriately, the date for the Memorial celebration is arrived at as the Jews back then determined the date for the Passover. They began the month of Nisan when they could first see the new moon in the spring nearest the equinox. Passover came fourteen days later.—Isa. 66:23; Ex. 12:2, 6.*

Jehovah's Witnesses now follow this ancient pattern in determining the Memorial date. Please note that the first thing that needs to be established is when the *new moon* nearest the spring equinox (about March 21) will be *visible in Jerusalem*. This is not the astronomical new-moon time listed on a calendar or astronomical table. Why? Because the first thin sliver of the new moon is not visible until eighteen to thirty hours *after* the moment of astronomical new moon.

Let us take 1977 as an example. In determining the matter months beforehand so as to inform the congregations earth wide, the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses had to calculate when the new moon would become visible in Jerusalem. From the astronomical standpoint the instant of new moon was at 20:33 (8:33 p.m.) Jerusalem clock time on March 19, 1977. Of course, that new moon was not then visible nor would it be for many hours. But could the first sliver of the new moon be seen the next evening about sunset? Because of various involved factors it seemed unlikely that the moon could be sighted in the rather bright sky west of Jerusalem about sunset on March 20, 1977. Consequently, the Gov-

* See *Aid to Bible Understanding*, pages 1076 and 1176.

erning Body settled on March 21, 1977, as the time when, with assurance, the new moon would be in position to be seen from Jerusalem about sunset. Nisan 14 would thus commence at sunset on April 3. That is when Jehovah's Witnesses held the Lord's Evening Meal. What about the full moon that month? When was it?

Astronomical tables list the full moon as occurring on April 4 at 04:09 (4:09 a.m.), Greenwich (England) Mean Time. But at that same moment if you live in another time zone obviously your clock would show a different time. For instance, Stockholm (Sweden) and Rome (Italy) are in the next time zone to the east of Greenwich. Hence, for them the moment of full moon occurred on April 4 at 05:09 (5:09 a.m.). New York (U.S.A.) and Lima (Peru), though, are five time zones to the west of Greenwich, so for them the full moon was at 23:09 (11:09 p.m.) on April 3, 1977. Because of this variation according to time zones some 1977 local calendars indicated that the full moon occurred on April 4 and others said April 3.

Jehovah's Witnesses now follow this ancient pattern in determining the Memorial date. Please note that the first thing that needs to be established is when the new moon nearest the spring equinox (about March 21) will be visible in Jerusalem. This is not the astronomical new-moon time listed on a calendar or local new-moon time listed on a calendar or astronomical table. Why? Because the first thin sliver of the new moon is not visible until eighteen to thirty hours after the moment of astronomical new moon.

Let us take 1977 as an example. In determining the matter months beforehand so as to inform the congregations earth wide, the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses had to calculate when the new moon would become visible in Jerusalem. From the astronomical standpoint the instant of new moon was at 20:33 (8:33 p.m.) Jerusalem clock time on March 19, 1977. Of course, that new moon was not then visible nor would it be for many hours. But could the first sliver of the new moon be seen the next evening about sunset? Because of various involved factors it seemed unlikely that the moon could be sighted in the rather bright sky west of Jerusalem about sunset on March 20, 1977. Consequently, the Gov-

In any case, the basic point to appreciate is that the date for the celebration of the Lord's Evening Meal is determined by the *new* moon (visible in Jerusalem), not the *full* moon. Nonetheless, the Memorial falls fourteen days after the appearance of the new moon. Thus it always occurs *about* the time of the full moon. It is good to know this in case some of Jehovah's Witnesses are cut off from contact with the Governing Body and do not know what date for Memorial has been determined. In that situation, if they observed the Memorial on the evening of the calendar date for the full moon after the spring equinox, they would likely be celebrating it on the same date as the rest of their brothers or at least very close to it.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

July 24: "The Lord Be with the Spirit You Show." Page 368. Songs to Be Used: 49, 52.

July 31: "Keeping a Tight Grip on the Word of Life." Page 373. Songs to Be Used: 20, 100.

Occasionally at a congregation meeting the only dedicated brother is absent. If he is able to speak audibly with clarity and understanding to all present, it would be fitting that he preside and offer prayer. If he is otherwise qualified, he speaks only by sign language, he might preside as well as offer prayer. If there is a sister present who is able to interpret well for others in attendance, a head covering would not be mandatory, but as discussed above circumstances and her conscience may make it advisable. But if the brother does not speak well or at all, and there is no qualified interpreter present, then a qualified sister should preside and also offer prayer as required with her head covered. The apostle Paul counsels that one who speaks in a "tongue" not understood by others present should remain silent unless there is an interpreter present. (1 Cor. 14:27, 28) To avoid embarrassment and misunderstanding, where there is a possibility that situations of this nature may develop, elders can make appropriate arrangements in advance.