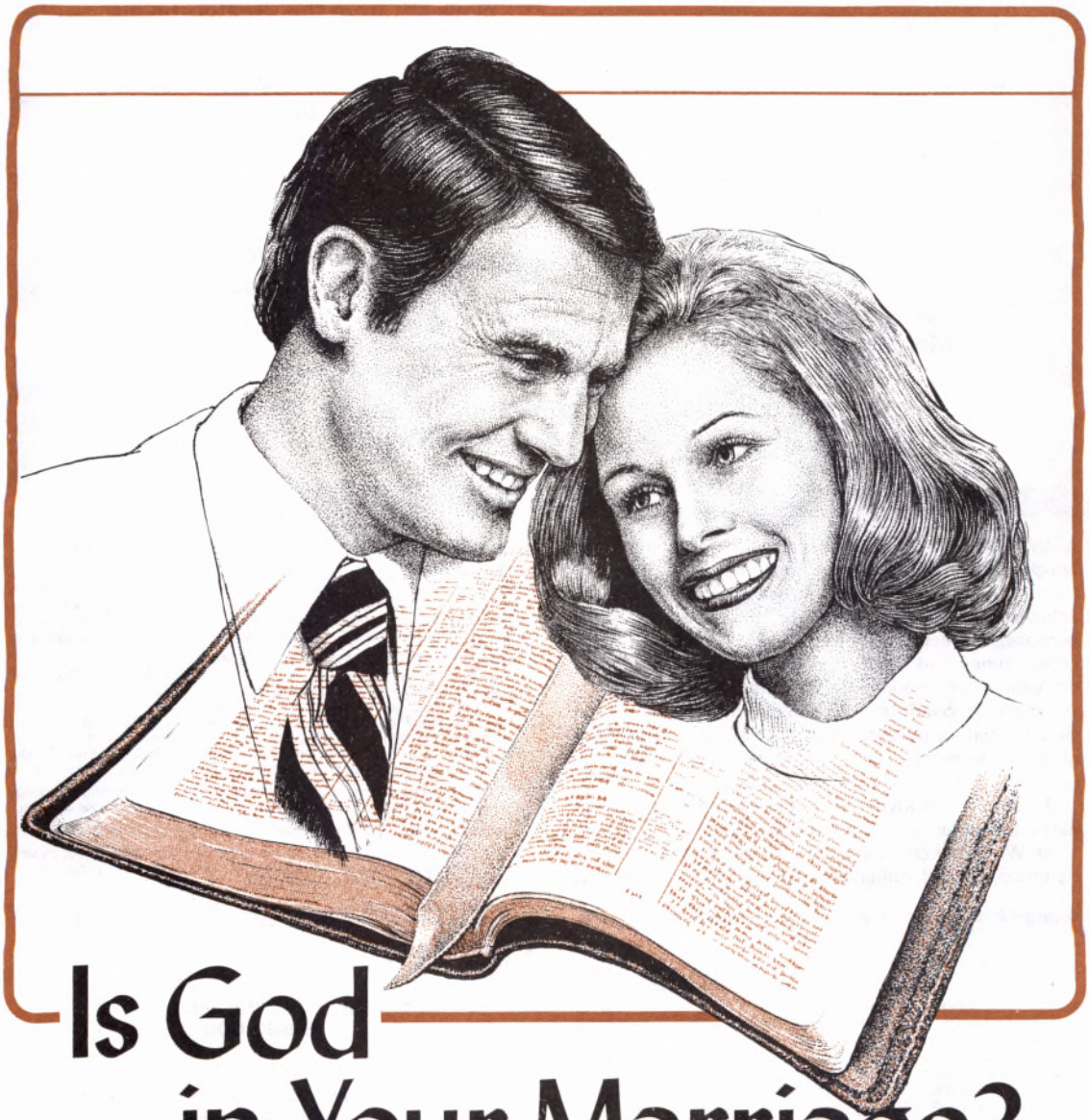
JULY 1, 1981

THE WATCHTOWER
Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom



Is God in Your Marriage?

THE WATCHTOWER®
Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom

July 1, 1981
Vol. 102, No. 13

IN THIS ISSUE

3 What Makes Them Do It?

4 "I Want To"

6 Jehovah—A Strong Tower

7 Insight on the News

8 Searching for "Sheep" in the Liberian Bush

12 Let God Be in Your Marriage

17 The God of Love Hates a Divorcing

23 Obadiah Gives Warning and Comfort from God

27 Athens—"City of Many Gods"

30 Questions from Readers

32 'She Knows All the Bible Answers'

OUR COVER: Marriage is a gracious gift from the Creator. So his view of it, as expressed in the Bible, should concern those desiring happy wedlock. What does it mean to have God in your marriage? To find out, see pages 12 to 22

A WATCHTOWER provides a vantage point from which the watchman can observe and warn of approaching danger. This magazine, published by Jehovah's Witnesses since 1879, serves a similar purpose. It keeps watch on world events in these critical times and calls attention to God's warning of his vengeance soon to be executed on those ruining the earth. It comforts all peoples with the hope that God's kingdom by Jesus Christ is about to bring in a global paradise of peace. It encourages all to exercise faith in the ransoming power of Jesus' shed blood, and points to the joyous prospect of everlasting life on earth under the sovereignty of the true God, Jehovah. "The Watchtower Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom" is nonpolitical, and adheres to the Bible as authority.

Copyright © 1981 by Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania. All rights reserved.

Ten cents (U.S.) a copy

Watch Tower Society offices — Yearly subscription rates for semi-monthly editions in local currency

America, U.S., Watchtower, Wallkill, N.Y. 12589	$2.50
Australia, 11 Beresford Rd., Strathfield, N.S.W. 2135	$3.00
Canada, Box 4100, Georgetown, Ontario L7G 4Y4	$3.00
England, Watch Tower House, The Ridgeway, London NW7 1RN	£4.00
Hawaii, 1228 Pensacola St., Honolulu 96814	$2.50
New Zealand, 6-A Western Springs Rd., Auckland 3	NZ$4.50
Nigeria, West Africa, P.O. Box 194, Yaba, Lagos State	₦2.50
Philippines, P.O. Box 2044, Manila 2800	₱17.50
South Africa, Private Bag 2, Elandsfontein, 1406	R3,60

(Monthly editions cost half the above rates.)

Remittances for subscriptions should be sent to the office in your country. Otherwise send your remittance to Watchtower, Wallkill, N.Y. 12589, U.S.A.

NOW PUBLISHED IN 106 LANGUAGES

SEMIMONTHLY EDITIONS AVAILABLE BY MAIL
Afrikaans, Arabic, Cebuano, Chichewa, Chinese, Cibemba, Danish, Dutch, English, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hiligaynon, Ibo, Iloko, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Malagasy, Maltese, Norwegian, Portuguese, Sesotho, Shona, Spanish, Swahili, Swedish, Tagalog, Thai, Xhosa, Yoruba, Zulu

MONTHLY EDITIONS AVAILABLE BY MAIL
Armenian, Bengali, Bicol, Bislama, Croatian, Czech, Efik, Ewe, Fijian, Ga, Greenlandic, Gujarati, Gun, Hebrew, Hindi, Hiri Motu, Hungarian, Icelandic, Kannada, Kikongo, Kikuyu, Kiluba, Lingala, Luvale, Malayalam, Marathi, New Guinea Pidgin, Pampango, Pangasinan, Papiamento, Polish, Romanian, Russian, Samar-Leyte, Samoan, Sepedi, Serbian, Silozi, Sinhalese, Slovenian, Solomon Islands-Pidgin, Tahitian, Tamil, Telugu, Tshiluba, Tsonga, Tswana, Turkish, Twi, Ukrainian, Urdu, Vietnamese

The Bible translation used in "The Watchtower" is the *modern-language* "New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures," unless otherwise indicated.

Notice of expiration is sent at least two issues before subscription expires.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS should reach us thirty days before your moving date. Give us your old and new address (if possible, your old address label). Write Watchtower, Wallkill, N.Y. 12589, U.S.A.

Second-class postage paid at Brooklyn, N.Y. and at additional mailing offices. Watchtower (ISSN 0043-1087) Printed in U.S.A.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Watchtower, **Wallkill, N.Y. 12589.**

Average Printing Each Issue: 8,900,000

Published by
Watch Tower Bible and Tract Society of Pennsylvania
117 Adams Street, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201, U.S.A.

Executive Offices
25 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, N.Y. 11201, U.S.A.

Frederick W. Franz, President — Grant Suiter, Secretary

What Makes Them Do It?

"OUTLANDISH letters." The crier at an auction had used those words to describe it. Soon one bidder—a tall, intelligent man—had it in his possession. "It" was only part of a book—a portion of the Septuagint Version of the so-called Old Testament. But it was enough to prompt the purchaser to embark on a study of the Greek language.

About two years later, the buyer happened to pass the same bookstore. Surprisingly, there he found the rest of the same book, and readily obtained it for a meager sum. The owner of the now-complete copy of the Septuagint Version of the "Old Testament" in Greek spent years translating it and thus produced "the first translation of the Septuagint into English." He also translated the "New Testament" from the original Greek. What made him do it?

We cannot be sure because the translator, Charles Thomson, apparently never wrote a preface that might have told us. Thomson was the secretary of the Congress of the United States from 1774 to 1789. In that capacity, he and the then president of the Congress, John Hancock, were the initial signers of the Declaration of Independence. After Thomson's resignation, he spent about 20 years translating the Holy Scriptures.

Comparatively few people have had the linguistic ability and motivation to translate the Word of God from the original Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek. But some have been moved to share the Bible's grand message with their fellow humans. By comparison with the billions of mankind, of course, the number of those who have spread Scriptural truth has been small indeed. Nevertheless, we can well ask, what makes them do it?

Yes, what motivates Jehovah's Witnesses to call at your door? Why are they eager to share with you the "good news" from God's Word? Whose example do they follow? That of Christ.

"I Want To"

WORD had already reached a certain Galilean city that Jesus Christ had cured the sick and expelled demons. There a man full of leprosy came to him.

The leper fell on his face and began entreating Jesus even on bended knee, saying, "If you just want to, you can make me clean." "At that," the Bible reports, Jesus "was moved with pity, and he stretched out his hand and touched him, and said to him: *'I want to.* Be made clean.' And immediately the leprosy vanished from him, and he became clean."—Mark 1:40-42; Luke 5:12, 13.

Here was a man afflicted with leprosy—a loathsome disease in those days. Fearing its dreaded contagion, people were customarily repulsed by lepers. But what did Jesus do? He reached out and touched the leper. He was not afraid. Rather, he was moved with compassion for the man.

As busy as Jesus was, he never failed to understand the feelings, needs and circumstances of individuals. There are many such precious examples of Jesus' showing personal interest in others. This attribute of Jesus endears him to us, comforts us and strengthens us. How he feels about persons who need help even today could not be more eloquently expressed than by what he said to the leper—"I want to."

In this, Jesus was brilliantly reflecting the personality of his Father, Jehovah God. As the God of eternity and perfection, he lacked nothing. Nevertheless, he chose to share his love and wisdom with others. Hence, he created in heaven and on earth conscious, intelligent life with a capacity to love. And not only does he provide generously for his creatures in a collective manner but he takes a close personal interest in us, listening to our prayers and examining our hearts individually. —Rom. 8:26, 27.

By taking an unselfish per-

sonal interest in others, Jesus' true followers give evidence that they are imitators of Jehovah God and they accomplish God's will, sometimes even unknown to them.

'I WANT TO CALL AGAIN'

Jesus commanded his disciples to preach the good news of God's kingdom. (Matt. 24:14; 28:19, 20; Acts 1:8) Because Jehovah's Witnesses take that commission very seriously, they call at every door, eager to share the Bible's message with those who will listen.

The most successful evangelizers are those who take a sincere personal interest in others in their territory. Such a personal interest will naturally cause proclaimers of the "good news" to listen to people in order to know as much as possible about them. A good doctor does not hand a prescription to a patient before he carefully examines the person. Likewise, if the Christian's heart is filled with a desire to help people, he, too, will want to get to know them. Only then will a witness of Jehovah be able to assist individuals effectively.

The best preparation Jehovah's Witnesses can make for the preaching work, therefore, is not so much memorizing some verbal presentations but *preparing their heart.* If our heart feels a genuine interest in the people we meet, we will never be lost for words. We will say and do things to help them spiritually.

Our taking a personal interest in others in our ministry keeps us thinking about the persons we meet, even after we leave their door. It makes us want to call again.

One of Jehovah's Witnesses in Connecticut (United States) told her mother about her experience one day in meeting a young lady in the house-to-house preaching activity. "With those big blue eyes, she looked at me and said, 'I don't believe in God,' " she told her mother. "But I feel there is something there, Mother, and I want to call on her again."

The Witness did return. A Bible study was started. Six months later, the young lady began sharing in the house-to-house preaching and soon thereafter was baptized as a Christian. Today, this former atheist is the wife of a traveling overseer of Jehovah's Witnesses.

Because of our imitating Jehovah and Jesus in taking a personal interest in others, people are drawn to us and to the truth of God's Word that we teach.

"CARE FOR ONE ANOTHER"

What binds the disciples of Jesus together in the Christian congregation is their loving interest in one another. (John 13:35; Gal. 6:10) The apostle Paul compared the Christian congregation to the human body in describing the interdependence and mutual interest among its members. He wrote:

"The eye cannot say to the hand: 'I have no need of you'; or, again, the head cannot say to the feet: 'I have no need of you.' . . . there should be no division in the body, but . . . its members should have the same care for one another." —1 Cor. 12:14-25.

The Greek expression for "have the same care for one another" literally means 'should be anxious over one another.' (*Kingdom Interlinear Translation*) This emphasizes the intensity of the personal interest that the members of the congregation should have in one another. Paul provides a cogent argument for this, saying: "If one member suffers, all the other members suffer with it; or if a member is glorified, all the other members rejoice with it."—1 Cor. 12:26.

By taking a personal interest in others, we bring out good in people. We see a potential for good in others and nurture it.

The Bible tells us that Barnabas took a personal interest in John, surnamed Mark, as a missionary companion. Bar-

nabas saw a good potential in Mark despite the difficulty he had caused Paul and Barnabas during their first missionary journey. As a result, Mark was helped to develop spiritually to become a splendid servant of God. (Acts 13:5, 13; 15:36-39; 2 Tim. 4:9-11) Mark was eventually blessed by God with the outstanding privilege of being inspired to write the Bible book bearing his name.

Likewise, in the United States, a Christian elder took a personal interest in a teenage boy in the congregation. He would invite the young man to come and help him with the building of a Kingdom Hall, a congregational meeting place. On their way home, they used to have refreshments and talk with each other. The boy has grown up now and is serving as a circuit overseer. But he still remembers this elder's personal interest in him as one of the highlights in his spiritual development.

As true Christians, we can experience a new spark of joy and purpose in life by taking a personal interest in others—persons with whom we share the Bible message, as well as our spiritual brothers and sisters in the congregation, including the young, the elderly, the sick, the widows, the orphans and our own family members. We can thus fill their life with happiness.

At the same time, we are confident that God will also reward us in many ways. As Jesus assured us: "There is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving." (Acts 20:35) So, then, let all genuine lovers of God imitate the heavenly Father in showing a personal interest in others. Jesus exemplified how when he said to the leper, "I want to."

Jehovah–A Strong Tower

SALVATION comes from trusting in Jehovah, as two fleshly sisters from southeast France experienced. One of them relates:

"It was 12:30 a.m. and both of us were peacefully sleeping. Suddenly, we were aroused by an unusual noise coming from the kitchen, and then a man appeared in the doorway. Panic-stricken, my sister cried out: 'Jehovah, Jehovah, please help us!' At these words the man ordered us to be quiet while threatening us with knife and rasp. Thanks to Jehovah our calm returned and we got dressed.

"The intruder had climbed onto our sixth-floor balcony and had cut his hand when smashing the kitchen window to break in. So I looked after his cut and made some food and coffee to help him over the remaining effects of alcohol. Also, I spoke to him about Jehovah, showing how we must trust in Him. He replied that he did not know Jehovah, even insulting his name. While he looked on, my sister read the Bible and I silently prayed. Seemingly irritated by such calm, he picked up a piece of broken windowpane, held it against my sister's throat, while keeping the knife on the back of her neck, and declared: 'Just a little pressure and the blood will flow!' I jumped up and said in a clear voice: 'You cannot frighten us, for we have Jehovah to uphold and deliver us. Even if you kill us we have the hope of the resurrection.' Staggered by these words, he desisted.

"It was about 2:45 a.m. when he said he would be leaving, and I accompanied him to the door. On his way out, he said: 'O.K. I get it. Jehovah is stronger than I am.' After having closed the kitchen shutters, we offered up a prayer of gratitude to Jehovah our God, who had not forsaken us." —Prov. 18:10.

INSIGHT ON THE NEWS

Human Rights and the Pope

● When Pope John Paul II visited several countries in Asia recently, a dominant theme of his speeches was human rights. "One can never justify any violation of the dignity of the human being, or of the basic rights which safeguard this dignity," he declared in Manila, the Philippines. From this, one might assume that the Church has always been a paragon of support for human rights. However, columnist Gordon Brook-Shepherd wrote in London's "Sunday Telegraph":

"The great religions of the world, including the Catholic Church, have given quite a few lessons themselves in inhumanity over the centuries. It was one of John Paul's distant predecessors, Pope Innocent IV, who, in 1252, authorised the use of torture both to obtain confessions from accused heretics and to persuade them to reveal the names of other heretics . . . The Spanish Inquisition (authorised by another Pope, Sixtus IV, in 1478) was the long and terrible culmination of 'violating human dignity' as far as the Catholic Church was concerned."

Of course, the Roman Catholic Church asserts that its own violations of human rights are a thing of the past. But in some of the countries where Catholicism is the dominant religion, can the Church claim in all honesty that its political influence has not been used even in recent times to hinder the freedom of certain minority religious groups?

'Sodom and Gomorrah Again'

● Under the label of tolerance and social justice, the city of San Francisco, California, has accepted admitted homosexuals into government and governmental agencies. For example, some 60 members of the police force are said to be homosexual or lesbian. In a report for Canada's Toronto "Star," religion editor Tom Harpur observed that "much of the tolerance comes, somewhat surprisingly perhaps, from organized religion —from the major Protestant, Anglican, Roman Catholic, and Jewish churches and synagogues."

Harpur goes on to commend San Francisco as a city "where the emphasis is on freedom to choose for oneself, on tolerance, a non-judgmental attitude toward others and the common quest for social justice." "On the other hand," he adds, if "morality is a matter of tight rules imposed by the many on the few, if it is based upon labelling others, or on a traditional, anxious fear of those who are different, this is Sodom and Gomorrah all over again."

As moral depravity continues to grow in acceptance worldwide, we can be sure the Creator soon will act, as he did with Sodom and Gomorrah, to deliver persons like "righteous Lot, who was greatly distressed by the indulgence of the law-defying people in loose conduct."—2 Pet. 2:6-8.

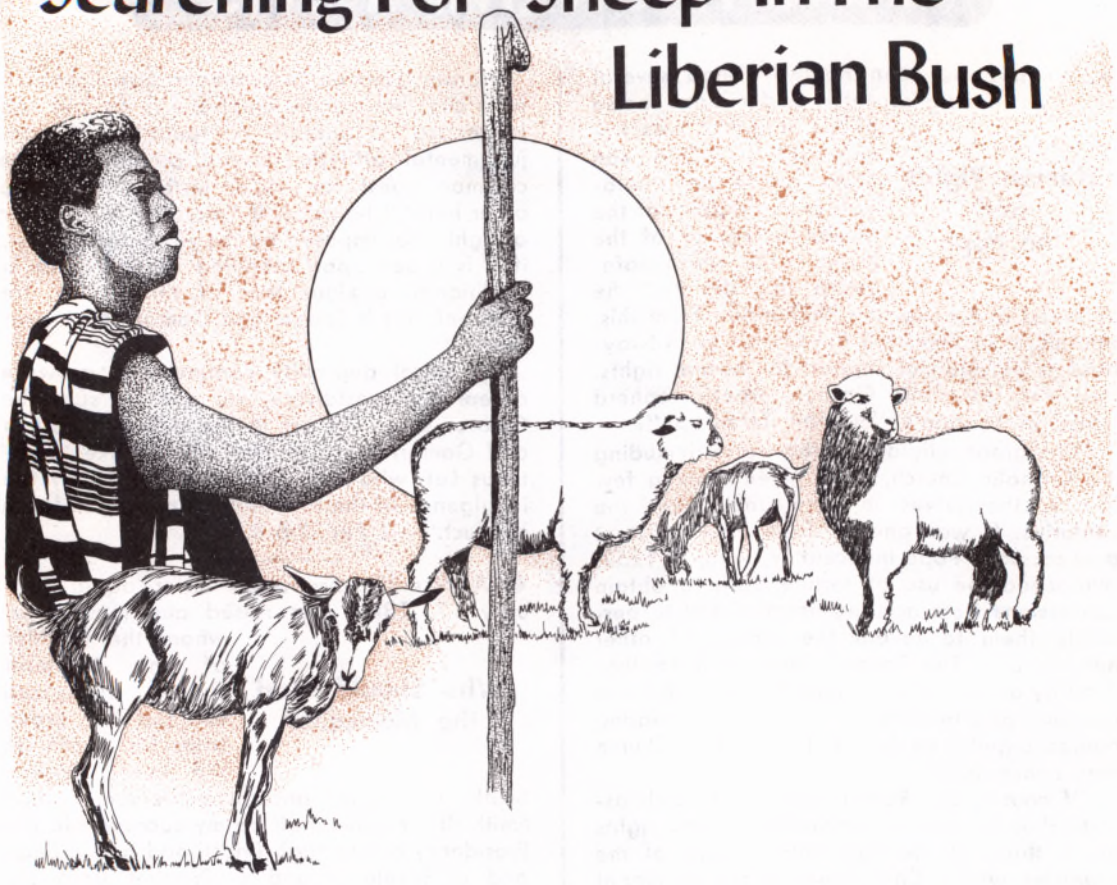
Who Should Lead the Mormons?

● A recently discovered letter dated January 17, 1844, has raised questions about whom the founder of the Mormon church authorized to lead the group *after his death.* In the letter, Joseph Smith, Jr., wrote concerning his son, Joseph Smith III: "For he shall be my successor in the Presidency of the High Priesthood and a Seer, and a Revelator and a Prophet unto the church which appointment belongeth to him by blessing and also by right."

This apparently gives Smith's authorization for church leadership to the Reorganized branch of the Mormon church, led by descendants of his son and having headquarters in Independence, Missouri. A much larger group is led by "apostolic" successors of Brigham Young, who guided persecuted Mormons to Utah in the 19th century. Though the authenticity of the document is not contested by the Utah church, officials say that it will not change their position on the current system of "apostolic succession."

Such an embarrassing situation as to leadership could not have developed if those who profess to be the "Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints" were truly followers of Jesus Christ, rather than of imperfect men. Jesus said: "Your Leader is one, the Christ." —Matt. 23:10.

Searching For "Sheep" In The Liberian Bush



A TALL Mandingo shepherd stands silently atop a "bug-a-bug" (termite) mound, a long blue gown protecting his body from the heat of the African sun. Under his watchful eyes, his flock enjoys the succulent grass growing beside the mangrove swamps and salt marshes of Sutter Creek. It is a mixed flock, the goats having smooth brown-and-white coats and the sheep being tall, lean and white.

As we pause to observe the flock, we are reminded of Jesus' parable of the sheep and the goats. He foretold that all the nations would be gathered before him and that he would separate sheeplike persons in line for everlasting life from goatlike ones deserving destruction. (Matt. 25:31-46) Hence, we may well ask: How is this separating work progressing? Have "sheep" been found in the Liberian bush?

JEHOVAH SEARCHES FOR HIS "SHEEP"

There are over 1,000 sheeplike servants of Jehovah in Liberia. Would you like to learn how God has found and tended his "sheep" in this country? Then why not join us as we visit a few places where they live and congregate?

Starting out in the capital city, Monrovia, we meet a young man studying the Bible at the Crown Hill missionary home. He once lived in the interior, far from any of Jehovah's Witnesses. How did he find them?

"I was not satisfied with my father's religion," he explains. "So I prayed to God for direction. A few days later, at a neighbor's house, I saw a copy of the book *The Truth That Leads to Eternal Life*. I borrowed it and read it. Convinced that I had found the answer to my prayer, I wrote to the office of the Watch Tower Society in Monrovia. But I was too anxious to wait for the reply; so I traveled to Monrovia, located the Witnesses and they started a Bible study with me." When an acquaintance asked him, "Who dragged you into Jehovah's Witnesses?" he replied, "No one but Jehovah himself."

About 100 miles (160 km) down the coast from Monrovia, we come to the city of Buchanan. Established in the 1830's by Americo-Liberians who had been slaves in America and had settled here among the native Bassa people, Buchanan today prospers as a port where iron ore from the Nimba mountains arrives by rail, is processed and then shipped out. As we enter the city we see a small green Kingdom Hall perched atop an embankment above the asphalt road. Shall we go inside?

We are greeted by 40 smiling faces. Kollie has a special reason to smile. He is one of the many baptized in recent years. "When I was attending high school in Kakata," he says, "some of my schoolmates used to talk to me about Jehovah, and they invited me to their Kingdom Hall; but I declined because I felt that their laws were too restrictive. However, after I graduated and moved to Buchanan, I began to notice that the lives of the Witnesses were turning out better than mine because they were more disciplined. So I wrote a letter to the congregation and asked for help. One of the elders started a study with me, and today I am happy to be a dedicated servant of Jehovah." Yes, by his holy spirit Jehovah has found such sheeplike ones and has directed them to his congregated flocks.

JEHOVAH FEEDS HIS "SHEEP"

Many who are now enjoying "good pasturage" among Jehovah's "sheep" once foraged for spiritual food in the churches of Christendom. Lovingly, Jehovah has led such persons to those who have heeded Jesus' admonition to "feed [his] lambs." —Ezek. 34:2, 14, 15; John 21:15.

Among those looking for spiritual food was Francis. He lives in one of the many houses crowded along the edge of Bushrod Island, in a part of Monrovia called Clara Town. How did he find spiritual food?

"I belonged to the Pentecostal Church," he explains, "but was disturbed by the fact that special seats were reserved for certain members. I wanted to understand the Bible, but the minister spent most of the time talking about money. He said that if we did not donate money to the church, we could not go to heaven. Then one day one of Jehovah's Witnesses left me a copy of *The Watchtower*. By reading it I saw differences between the teachings of the Bible and the practices of my church. The Witness returned and gave me regular assistance in understanding the Bible, and my knowledge increased as I began attending the meetings. My cousin joined me in the study, and we were both baptized."

Leaving Bushrod Island behind, our taxi takes us over the Montserrado River, past the business district and into Sinkor, the most modern section of Monrovia. Jehovah's Witnesses meet here in a beautiful Kingdom Hall. Here, too, we find someone who was searching for answers. He tells us:

"While in high school, I was disturbed by the attitude of my Bible instructors. For example, one book we studied presented Jesus as being ignorant and superstitious because he believed that demons exist and can possess humans. I longed to know whether the Bible was God's Word or the word of men. I was bothered, too, by the multiplicity of religions calling themselves Christian."

Later association with the Bahai religion "seemed to intensify the emptiness" that the young man felt inside. He continues:

"I accepted a teaching job in Ganta, where my mother lived. She was studying with Jehovah's Witnesses. In time, I, too, accepted a home Bible study but with the idea of proving to the Witness that he was being misled. After our first discussion, in which he amazed me with answers from the Bible to all my questions, I had to conclude that I was the one who was misled. . . . I decided to read some older Watch Tower publications to see if I could find any contradictions. But this literature only strengthened my faith in the Bible as God's Word and in the Witnesses as his people.

"Then I began making changes in my life. I stopped smoking, resigned from the Methodist Church and started sharing my faith with others, including my fiancée. She, too, accepted the truth in spite of family opposition and being expelled from school for maintaining Christian neutrality. We were married and got baptized in 1971."

Since then this couple has had the privilege of helping several others to become servants of Jehovah. The man now serves as an appointed elder in the congregation.

In Coming Issues

- **A Field Producing Wheat and Weeds**
- **Hidden in the Day of Jehovah's Anger**
- **Faith Healing—How Does It Work?**

JEHOVAH HEALS HIS "SHEEP"

Before Jehovah found them, many "sheep" had strayed far from the righteous principles of his Word. Please consider the following examples:

Living across Sutter Creek in Gardnersville is a husky Kru man, once such a rowdy that his friends nicknamed him "Fire Brigade." His wife, Zoe, has cooked some potato greens and rice. As we eat in the shade of a mango tree, he tells us:

"While in the police force, I was disappointed when my scholarship to train abroad as a pilot was canceled. I decided to go to a 'country doctor' [spirit medium] to get some 'medicine' [fetishes] to aid me in achieving my ambition. But this did not help. Then two Witnesses called on us and started a Bible study. Our interest grew as we learned of Jehovah's purpose to make this earth a paradise where justice and righteousness will prevail. But our conscience bothered us because we knew that we weren't living according to God's righteous standards. After learning the truth about wicked spirits, we destroyed the 'medicine' and other spiritistic objects we had. We decided to clean up our lives, but this took some time because Zoe was still legally married to her former mate. In time she was able to obtain a divorce; we were married and we got baptized the next month."

Next we will visit Jerome at Bong Mine. To get there, we take a car from Monrovia to Kakata, a distance of just over 40 miles (64 km). Along the way, we pass row after row of rubber trees. At Kakata we switch to a bus and an unpaved road. Scattered among the rubber farms and tropical bush are some typical Liberian villages—clusters of mud houses with palm thatch roofs. Finally, we arrive at the iron-mining camp and find Jerome by the creek, where he has just finished washing his clothes. While we wait for some other Witnesses to come home from

work, he tells us this about the way that Jehovah helped him:

"I used to like smoking and heavy drinking, and I had two women. One day, while I was drinking beer with some friends, a Witness talked with us about the Bible and offered us the *Truth* book. My friends tried to discourage me from accepting it, but I reasoned that if I could afford to waste so much money on beer, surely I could afford to spend [a small amount] for the book. They said that I would never see the Witness again. But he returned at an appointed time and started a Bible study with me.

"As I came to know Jehovah, I realized that the way I was living was not pleasing to him and that I would benefit economically by applying Bible principles in my life. With Jehovah's help, I was able to stop smoking and heavy drinking, and I broke off association with my girl friends. I am happy that, instead of wasting my life, I can now use it to help others learn about Jehovah God and his Son, Jesus Christ, doing so as a full-time proclaimer of the 'good news.' "

We return to Kakata for a circuit assembly where we hear the following experience related by a sister from Gbarnga: "When I used to sell clothes in the market in Yekepa, the other market women would complain that their boyfriends did not support them but, instead, took some of the money that they made from marketing. I would explain to them what the Bible says about honorable marriage and how applying Bible principles can bring peace and happiness to a family. But they just laughed at me. Then one day, while auxiliary pioneering, I met one of those market women. Her boyfriend had encouraged her to have an abortion, and she had almost died from it. She remembered the good things that I used to tell her and said that she wanted to study the Bible and change her life. This woman was baptized last year and recently got married to a Christian."

JEHOVAH'S BLESSINGS CONTINUE

We hope that you have enjoyed your visit to Liberia, and that it has helped you to appreciate how Jehovah has found and cared for his spiritual sheep here. But what about the future? We are confident that God will continue to bless our efforts as we diligently seek more of his "sheep."

In December 1979 there were 1,956 persons in attendance at our "Living Hope" District Convention and we rejoiced that 17 were baptized. Also, we have strong indications that there are additional "sheep" in need of help, for a total of 3,931 persons gathered throughout Liberia on March 31, 1980, to commemorate the death of Jesus Christ.—1 Cor. 11:23-26.

As the flock continues to grow in this land, there is also a need for expanded facilities to care for it. In May 1979 we were excited to learn that the Governing Body of Jehovah's Witnesses had authorized the branch committee in Liberia to incorporate a nonprofit society and purchase land upon which to build our own branch office and Bethel home. Since then, a very fine parcel of land has been purchased. Recently, further advancement was made when our building plans were approved by the local authorities. Now we keenly anticipate the time when we can begin the actual construction.

Truly, we have reason to rejoice when we consider how Jehovah has gathered and blessed his people here in Liberia. From the softly flowing waters of the Mano River to Cape Palmas in the south, and from the tropical rain forests in Nimba to the palm-dotted beaches of the Atlantic Ocean, Jehovah's "sheep" are being found. And we pray that he will continue to bless our zealous efforts to proclaim the good news of his kingdom and make disciples of sheeplike ones.

Let God Be in Your Marriage

THE need for Jehovah God to be in every undertaking of ours is stressed time and again in the Scriptures. Thus we read at Psalm 127:1: "Unless Jehovah himself builds the house, it is to no avail that its builders have worked hard on it. Unless Jehovah himself guards the city, it is to no avail that the guard has kept awake." The long history of the nation of Israel bears out the truth of that principle. When Israel let God be in their affairs by giving him exclusive devotion, their efforts to protect themselves from their enemies were successful. But when they abandoned his pure worship to follow other gods, their guards watched over their cities in vain. The same principle applies to our making a success of marriage.

"A threefold cord cannot quickly be torn in two." —Eccl. 4:12.

THE GRACIOUS GIFT OF MARRIAGE

[2] God's Word tells us that he is the Giver of "every good gift and every perfect present." (Jas. 1:17) Among such good gifts and perfect presents must be included the gracious gift, the blessing, of marriage. What a potential it has for bringing happiness! It truly is one of the greatest blessings the Creator has bestowed upon mankind. No wonder that when finally Eve was presented to Adam he exclaimed: "This is at last bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. This one will be called Woman, because from man this one was taken"! —Gen. 2:23.

[3] Adam could rejoice over the blessing of a loving companion, someone of his own kind with whom he could converse, work, plan—she was his perfect complement! Additionally, the connubial joys that go with marriage are indeed an evidence of our Creator's wisdom and love. Well did lawyer I. Linton point to the way God created man and woman as proof that man was not the product of a blind evolution. Linton wrote:

"The kindness and infinite skill of the God who declared it was not good for a man to be a bachelor, in putting into man's heart the love of woman and into woman's heart the love of man, in making them mentally, physically and emotionally so alike as to be companionable and yet so unlike as to supplement and be intriguing to each other, has always stirred my gratitude and my admiration as an unequivocal evidence of creative design; and the peace and happiness growing out of the marital relation when God is in it has given some idea of the skilful power of God to bring happiness into being." (*A Lawyer Examines the Bible*) Note, "when God is in it." This can be true if we let God be in our marriage.

[4] This gift and blessing of

1. What Scriptural principle stated at Psalm 127:1 can be applied to marriage?
2. Why can marriage be viewed as a gracious gift?
3. What did one lawyer have to say about God's gift of marriage?
4. Why can it be said that the blessing of marriage is an evidence of God's impartiality?

marriage is also an evidence of God's impartiality and of his justice. How so? In that these joys of marriage, when God is in it, do not depend upon such mundane things as material wealth, a higher education, great physical strength or beauty of form and feature. Neither are marital blessings limited to any race or nationality, nor are they dependent upon any climate. Whether couples live in the polar regions or in the tropics makes no difference.

LETTING GOD BE IN YOUR MARRIAGE

[5] Solomon wrote: "Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their hard work. . . . And a threefold cord cannot quickly be torn in two." (Eccl. 4:9, 12) A marriage can be likened to a cord tying a couple together and, when we let God be in it, it is truly a 'threefold cord not easily torn in two.' What does it mean to let God be in your marriage? Ostensibly, marriage partners are concerned with contributing to each other's joys and pleasures, to satisfying each other's needs. The husband is concerned with pleasing his wife and bringing her joy, comfort and security, and the wife is concerned with ministering to the needs of her husband and pleasing him the best she can, even as the apostle Paul notes. (1 Cor. 7: 33, 34) To let God be in your marriage means to be concerned with measuring up to his requirements for married couples. Stated in brief, they are: "Wives, be in subjection to your husbands, as it is becoming in the Lord. You husbands, keep on loving your wives and do not be bitterly angry with them."—Col. 3: 18, 19.

5, 6. What is included in having God in one's marriage?

[6] More than that, to let God be in our marriage means for both mates to have a warm personal relationship with Jehovah God, never neglecting prayer together. Share with him your joys, sorrows, disappointments, trials. Be concerned with giving him *as a Person* pleasure and gladness of heart. At Psalm 147:11 we read: "Jehovah is finding pleasure in those fearing him." And God tells us at Proverbs 27:11 that by being wise we can make his heart glad. So we want to be concerned, not just with his requirements for us, but also with how he feels about the way we heed them. Letting God be in our marriage will immeasurably strengthen it and assure us of success and

happiness. Yes, then it is "a threefold cord [that] cannot quickly be torn in two."—Eccl. 4:12.

THE REQUIREMENT OF KINDNESS

7 Among the things that God requires of all his earthly creatures, and which has special meaning for marriage mates, is that they be kind to one another. Jehovah God himself sets the example for us, even as his Word assures us that "he is kind [even] toward the unthankful and wicked." (Luke 6:35) In fact, over a hundred times we read in his Word of his "undeserved kindness," and almost twice as often of his "loving-kindness." To have this kindly God in our marriage we must heed the counsel at Colossians 3:12: "Clothe yourselves with the tender affections of compassion, kindness, lowliness of mind, mildness, and long-suffering."

8 How can we show kindness to our mates and thus let God be in our marriage? To be kind means to minister to the needs of another. It means to be thoughtful, considerate of each other's well-being. Since, as a rule, we do not like to be alone, one of the most basic and simple ways in which we, as a married couple, can be kind to each other is by sharing our presence, our company. By just being together, we can build each other up, make each feel needed and appreciated. In one marriage that broke up after many years the wife was prone to take long vacations apart from her husband.

9 Just being together is good, but better still is doing together as many things as possible. Do you read the Bible on a personal basis? Why not read it aloud to your spouse? Do you prepare for Christian meetings? To the extent practical, why not prepare the lessons together? Do you, the husband, have a part on the program? Why not rehearse it aloud with your wife playing the role of the audience? Sit together at meetings, as well as at other times. Share in the formal Christian preaching work together. All of these are further ways in which we can show kindness, strengthen our marriage and let God be in our marriage.

10 It is also a kindness for marriage mates to talk to each other, letting each other know what is in the heart and mind. Yes, this means not just exchanging information or ideas but also sharing the way each one feels about things. Give thought to mentioning upbuilding things in your conversation, in keeping with the proverb: "The tongue of the wise ones is a healing." (Prov. 12:18) A married couple not only is of one flesh, but also should be of one mind and heart, even as Jesus prayed that his followers might be one. (John 17:21) Communication is imperative for such oneness.

11 In particular is it a kindness to talk things over when there have been misunderstandings or hurt feelings. Jesus stated a principle regarding human relations that couples often overlook or neglect to their harm. Do you feel that you have been treated unkindly or wronged in some way? Then in the spirit of Matthew 18:15 summon up the courage to bring the matter up at an opportune time, doing so in a kind and tactful way. You might even take a lesson from Queen Esther, who tactfully prepared her husband before presenting a weighty matter to him. (Esther 5:1-8; 7:1-10) Or, is the shoe on the other foot, so to speak, and does it seem that you have offended your loved one? Then

7. Why is kindness required for us to let God be in our marriage?
8. What is one of the simplest and most basic ways in which marriage mates can be kind to each other?
9, 10. (a) What are some of the things Christian husbands and wives should want to do together? (b) In what other ways can marriage partners manifest kindness toward each other?
11. What fine Scriptural advice should couples follow when there are hurt feelings?

do not ignore it, but humbly, kindly and tactfully bring the matter up in the spirit of Matthew 5:23, 24. Thus peace, harmony and happiness may be restored.

[12] However, kindness includes not only talking, conversing with each other, but also respectfully listening. That means paying attention when the other mate speaks. Well has it been said that listening is an art. We want to listen not only to understand the meaning of the words but also to note the feeling with which they are said. More than that, to be good listeners we must take note of what is *not* said. Yes, husbands and wives should be good listeners. It is unkind to pay little attention when one's mate is talking. True, at times there may be a little difficulty because the one speaking might more or less just be thinking out loud instead of really trying to communicate. If this seems to be a problem, then get into the habit of prefacing your remarks by some direct address, such as "Dearie," "John," "Mary."

[13] Furthermore, one of the very best ways in which marriage partners can show mutual kindness is by heeding the apostolic injunction: "Become kind to one another, tenderly compassionate, freely forgiving one another just as God also by Christ freely forgave you." (Eph. 4:32) And in showing the mercy of forgiveness do not do so begrudgingly, but "he that shows mercy, let him do it with cheerfulness." (Rom. 12:8) Doing so is letting God be in your marriage, for we read that he 'forgives in a large way.' (Isa. 55:7) If we are forgiving when our mate transgresses, it is easier to expect forgiveness when we ourselves transgress. Not without good reason has it been said that 'a happy marriage is the union of two good forgivers.'

12. What can be said about the need for one marriage mate to listen when the other talks?
13. What is one of the best ways that marriage partners can show mutual kindness?

BEING HONEST WITH EACH OTHER

[14] God's Word shows that its great Author is also a just, a righteous, God. It says of Jehovah: "The Rock, perfect is his activity, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness, with whom there is no injustice; righteous and upright is he." (Deut. 32:4) For us to let God be in our marriage we must also be just, honest with each other. Basically this means to go by the Golden Rule: "Just as you want men to do to you, do the same way to them." —Luke 6:31.

[15] Honesty involves many things. Obviously, it involves money matters, which may present a challenge to both husbands and wives. However, it involves far more important things, in particular sex interest. It is easy for a husband to let his desire go wandering, especially in view of all the temptations facing him daily, from both unrighteous persons and the unclean media. Just as Jehovah God requires exclusive devotion on the part of his servants—his "name is Jealous"—so husbands and wives have the right to exclusive devotion as to the sex interest of their mates, and they are obligated to demonstrate such themselves. (Ex. 34:14) Proverbs 5:15-20 has very frank, forceful and pointed counsel for husbands in this regard. On the other hand, wives need to be careful to heed Paul's counsel at 1 Corinthians 7:3-5 and not use the marital due as a pawn to get what they want in the way of clothes, and so forth.

UNSELFISH LOVE—"A·GA'PE"

[16] Jehovah God is the personification of principled love, of unselfishness, *a·ga'pe* in Greek. That is why we read that "God is love." So to let God be in our marriage

14. What is another quality Christians must display to let God be in their marriage?
15. Particularly in what respect should husbands and wives be concerned over honesty with each other, and what circumstances tend to make this difficult?
16. For couples, who sets the example in displaying *a·ga'pe*, and why is it so essential?

there is the need to have not only the love based on natural attraction, sex interest (*e'ros*), and the affection based on kinship of mind and spirit (*phi·li'a*), but also the unselfish principled kind of love. This love will keep a marriage together, even if the other two kinds of love diminish. —1 John 4:8.

[17] The apostle Paul at 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 gives a fine description of how this love manifests itself: "Love is long-suffering and kind. Love is not jealous, it does not brag, does not get puffed up, does not behave indecently, does not look for its own interests, does not become provoked. It does not keep account of the injury. It does not rejoice over unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails." In view of those words of Paul, we cannot escape the conclusion that to be a good Christian means to be a good marriage mate. Conversely, to fail in marriage reflects unfavorably on one's being a Christian. Problems in marriage are to be viewed as challenges to cultivate the fruits of the spirit, chief of which is love. (Gal. 5:22, 23) And remember, "LOVE NEVER FAILS"!

[18] What does principled, unselfish love require of a wife? It requires that she recognize her husband as her head. (Eph. 5:22-24) This may not always be an easy thing to do, but love will help her; it will make it easier to put her husband's interests ahead of her own. For example, there are loving wives who, knowing that their husbands must follow a certain diet, simply do not prepare any dishes that their husbands cannot share with them. They know that doing so actually works no hardship on their own selves, in fact, might even be better for them.

[19] What does unselfish love require of a husband? It requires that he heed the counsel: "Husbands, continue loving your wives, just as the Christ also loved the congregation and delivered up himself for it. In this way husbands ought to be loving their wives as their own bodies." (Eph. 5:25, 28) What a great deal this asks of a husband! Just as he takes good care of his own body as to food, clothing, shelter, rest, recreation and spiritual interests, just so he should care for his wife. As he would not want to embarrass himself before others, neither should he embarrass his wife before others. Loving her as his own body would include dwelling with her according

17. What light does Paul's description of marriage throw on marital obligations?

18, 19. (a) What does *a·ga'pe* require of a wife? (b) *A·ga'pe* will cause a husband to treat his wife in what manner?

to knowledge, being kind and considerate as to the more intimate aspects of marriage. Never should it be that he could be charged with having violated his wife. —1 Pet. 3:7.

[20] What opportunities for happiness there are in the marital state! Jesus said "there is more happiness in giving than there is in receiving," and this principle also applies to married persons. (Acts 20:35) How many opportunities for giving husbands and wives have, giving of themselves, their time, their attention, their thoughts, their feelings, giving material things! And in their relationship also the principle applies: "He that sows sparingly will also reap sparingly; and he that sows bountifully will also reap bountifully." Heed all such counsel and you will let God be in your marriage.—2 Cor. 9:6.

[21] Yet time and again even professedly dedicated married Christians come short in these respects. Because of this it is necessary to deal in a forthright manner with the following subject: "The God of Love Hates a Divorcing."

20, 21. (a) The application of what other Scriptural principles will show that God is in one's marriage? (b) What is the next subject to be considered, and why?

The God of Love Hates a Divorcing

"You people must guard yourselves respecting your spirit, and with the wife of your youth may no one deal treacherously. For he [Jehovah] has hated a divorcing."—Mal. 2:15, 16.

A MAN who for many years had served as an elder in a Christian congregation began experiencing problems in his marriage. He committed adultery with a worldly woman, thinking that his wife would then divorce him and he would be free to marry a fellow believer. To his surprise, his wife was willing to forgive him and be reconciled. But, determined to be free, he obtained a legal divorce and then married another woman when the divorce became final. Upon doing so, however, he was disfellowshiped from the Christian congregation.

[2] How we wish that it could be reported that such a shocking course of action was a unique one among those who claim to be dedicated to Jehovah! But, sad to say, such is not the case. In fact, more and more it seems that some opt for selfish pleasure or the easy way out of an unhappy marital situation instead of sticking to Bible principles and looking to Jehovah God in prayer, consulting his Word and seeking help from the overseers in the congregation. It is hoped that what is here presented will cause all dedicated Christians to fortify their minds in this matter and will cause any who are considering taking such a selfish course to reconsider matters.

1, 2. (a) What reprehensible course was recently taken by one who had been an elder? (b) What follows is presented to counteract what trend?

[3] Much as this trend is to be regretted and deplored, it actually should not surprise us in view of all that we see in the world today. There is no question about the fact that more couples are getting divorces. In lands such as the United States and Russia, one marriage in three ends in a divorce, and in some countries the ratio is almost one out of every two. Some states have "no-fault" divorce, which doubtless plays its part in increasing divorces. Indeed, the number of divorces would be far greater were it not for the fact that more and more men and women live together without the benefit of marriage. For instance, reports reveal that in Brazil alone more than four million couples are living that way.

HOW JEHOVAH VIEWS DIVORCING

[4] How does Jehovah God view divorcing? Does he wink at it the way so many clergymen of Christendom do? Far from it! We read at Malachi 2:15, 16: " 'You people must guard yourselves respecting your spirit, and with the wife of your youth may no one deal treacherously. For he has hated a divorcing,' Jehovah the God of Israel has said; . . . 'And you must guard yourselves respecting your spirit, and you must not deal treacherously.' " Jesus Christ expressed a similar view. When the religious leaders of his day asked him about the lawfulness of divorce, Jesus replied: "Did you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and his mother and will stick to his wife, and the two will be one flesh'? So that they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has yoked together let no man put apart."—Matt. 19:4-6.

3. As to divorce, what is the attitude of the world in general?

4, 5. (a) How does Jehovah God regard treacherous divorcing? (b) How did Jesus express himself on the subject of divorce?

[5] Upon receiving this answer, those Pharisees asked: "Why, then, did Moses prescribe giving a certificate of dismissal and divorcing her?" Jesus replied: "Moses, out of regard for your hardheartedness, made the concession to you of divorcing your wives, but such has not been the case from the beginning. I say to you that whoever divorces his wife, except on the ground of fornication, and marries another commits adultery." (Matt. 19:7-9) What do these scriptures tell us? That neither Jehovah God nor his Son Jesus Christ takes lightly the violation of God's laws on marriage and divorce. Divorce tears apart what Jehovah God has joined together. He views marriage as a lifetime bond.

[6] That is why the seventh of the Ten Commandments stated: "You must not commit adultery." (Ex. 20:14) More than that, the law of Moses required the Israelites to stone to death any man that committed adultery with another man's wife, as well as the adulteress. (Lev. 20:10) Most fittingly, at Hebrews 13:4 the apostle Paul warns that Jehovah God will judge adulterers and fornicators.

[7] Strictly speaking, adultery is far more serious than fornication, which English lexicographers define as sex relations between persons not married. But adultery has the added factor of violating, or breaking, or adulterating, the marital bond. Thus the German word for adultery is *ehebruch,* which, literally translated, means a breaking of the marital tie.

WHY DOES JEHOVAH HATE A DIVORCING?

[8] Jehovah God hates a divorcing on unscriptural grounds because, first of all, it is sinning against him. He has a vested interest in the institution of marriage and

6. What did the law of Moses have to say about adultery?

7. Why is adultery more reprehensible than fornication?

8, 9. (a) What is one reason why God hates treacherous divorcing? (b) What is another reason for his doing so?

so any who go contrary to his will in regard to it are actually sinning against God. That adultery is sinning against God can be seen from what Joseph told Potiphar's wife when she tried to seduce him to become party to adultery: "How could I commit this great badness and actually sin against God?" (Gen. 39:9) And what did King David say to Jehovah in expressing repentance for his sin of adultery with Uriah's wife? "Against you, you alone, I have sinned, and what is bad in your eyes I have done."—Ps. 51:4.*

9 Another reason why Jehovah God hates divorcing is that he is interested in justice, in fair play. For example, at James 5:1-6 his Word strongly condemns those rich men who oppress their employees. Divorcing (not based on Scriptural grounds) almost invariably means dealing treacherously with one's mate, even as God stated by his prophet Malachi. It works an injury on the innocent mate. Just as in the Mosaic law Jehovah God repeatedly stated that he espoused the cause of the oppressed fatherless and widows, and would punish those who took advantage of these, so Jehovah God will judge adversely those who take advantage of legal loopholes to get rid of their mates so that they can marry others. —Deut. 10:17, 18; 27:19.

10 Actually, the adulterer might be said to become a hedonist. A hedonist? Yes, a hedonist is one who lives primarily for pleasure and selfish gratification. One who smokes tobacco, although knowing full well how harmful it is, can be said to be a hedonist. (Luke 8:14; Titus 3:3, *Kingdom Interlinear Translation*) Thus those who put the pleasures that a divorce and remarriage to another can bring ahead of their obligation to be pleasing to Jehovah God can be said to be hedonists. They truly are lovers of pleasures rather than lovers of God.—2 Tim. 3:1, 2, 4.

11 In addition to sinning against Jehovah God and against one's mate, the divorcing adulterer also sins against the congregation with which he is associated, for his course besmirches its good name. He also sins against the individuals in the congregation by his bad example. Thus in one New York City congregation a rather prominent woman took this wrongful course and shortly thereafter two other younger women were emboldened to follow her example. With good reason the apostle Paul warns against stumbling others. —Phil. 1:9, 10.

12 The Bible makes clear how Jehovah God and Jesus Christ feel about divorcing. They hate it! But how do you feel about it? What is your view of the sacred institution of marriage? Do you have God's view of it, or have you allowed yourself to be influenced, as the world in general has, by that malicious marriage wrecker, Satan the Devil? Do you tend to condone the behavior of those who have violated God's laws regarding marriage, adultery and divorce? Are you among those who, by flirting with persons of the opposite sex, are toying with sexual immorality? (Matt. 5:28; 15:19) Are you guarding your heart in these matters, or are you prone to indulge in pleasurable illicit fantasies?—Prov. 4:23.

13 Divorcing and adultery nearly always go hand in hand. Especially where a legal divorce is obtained without adultery on the part of either mate, the temptation is strong for the innocent one to become "a subject for adultery." (Matt. 5:32) And there is no doubt that adultery by either

* David also sinned against Uriah, but his sin against God was so great that his sin against Uriah seemed negligible by comparison.

10. Why can an adulterer be said to be a hedonist?

11. Besides sinning against God and one's mate, against whom does the adulterous divorcer sin?

12. What soul-searching questions should each married Christian ask himself?

13. What shows that deceit and adultery nearly always go hand in hand?

Unscriptural Divorce is sin against others

Jehovah

Individuals

Mate

Congregation

mate would not leave that one with a clean conscience before Jehovah God. How can it when it is spawned in deceit, even as we read: "As for the eye of the adulterer, it has watched for evening darkness, saying, 'No eye will behold me!' And over his face he puts a covering." (Job 24:15) How deceitful adultery makes one can be seen from the experience given at the beginning of this article.

[14] Helping us to view adulterous divorcing in the right light are the words of David at Psalm 36:1-4: "The utterance of transgression to the wicked one is in the midst of his heart; there is no dread of God in front of his eyes. For he has acted too smoothly to himself in his own eyes to find out his error so as to hate it. The words of his mouth are hurtfulness and deception; he has ceased to have insight for doing good. Hurtfulness is what he keeps scheming upon his bed. He stations himself on a way that is not good. What is bad he does not reject." How well that description fits the adulterous divorcer!

[15] Time and again those who have committed adultery have divorced their mates and, having remarried, have been disfellowshiped, only to be reinstated after a year or so. Evidently the elders handling such cases based their decision on what God's Word has to say about showing mercy. True, Jehovah God is merciful and so must elders be. However, to any man and woman who have cunningly planned such actions in order to marry each other it can only be said that even though the elders reinstated them that is by no means the end of the matter. Elders can base their decision only on the apparent repentance, but they are unable to read the heart fully. Not being able to judge the motive, they may reinstate the now married couple. But let that couple never forget Paul's words that *"God* will judge fornicators and adulterers." (Heb. 13:4) The final judgment in all such cases rests in the hands of Jehovah God, who knows all the circumstances. He does read hearts, even as Jeremiah 17:9, 10 states. He knows the motive and is aware of any deceit or malicious scheming on the part of persons who violate his law on marriage. Yes, "all things are naked and openly exposed to the eyes of him with whom we have an accounting." Surely such scriptures should make us pause and think.—Heb. 4:13.

[16] However, in this regard it must be observed that God's law does not require an innocent mate to obtain a divorce. Circumstances may make it a fine thing for the innocent one to forgive the guilty one, especially if that one is humbly and sincerely repentant. True, unfaithfulness on the part of one's mate might be quite a humiliating experience—that one's mate has looked elsewhere for pleasure and satisfaction. But many a loving wife and mother has put up with a selfish or even an unfaithful husband for the sake of her children.

REASONS AND REMEDIES

[17] Why do some fail in the test of keeping integrity by remaining faithful to their marriage covenant? No doubt there are a number of reasons. Could one reason be that Christian witnesses of Jehovah have no fear of eternal torment, knowing that there is no such place as a burning hell? A Lutheran pastor once told a young Witness that if he did not believe in a burning hell he would commit all sorts of badness. No doubt many in Christendom feel the same way about it. As genuine Christians,

14. How do the words at Psalm 36:1-4 well fit the adulterous divorcer?
15. Those who adulterously divorce and remarry should seriously consider what Scriptural principles?
16. Why might an innocent mate choose not to divorce the guilty one?
17. What may well be one reason why some have presumed adulterously to divorce and remarry?

we have freedom from the fear of eternal torment, but we do not want to "use this freedom as an inducement for the flesh," do we?—Gal. 5:13.

[18] Today, the world has gone sex mad. Promiscuity is the order of the day. There is no doubt about there being an increasing of lawlessness. (Matt. 24:12) A Christian is thrown in the way of temptation at his or her place of employment, being surrounded by persons who are not governed by Bible principles and who may appear physically attractive. So one must continually be on guard, exercising self-control and keeping contacts with those of the opposite sex, other than one's marriage mate, on a businesslike basis. Also to be guarded against is the media—newspapers, magazines, television and motion pictures. Do not, by means of TV, in effect invite into your home fornicators, adulterers and suchlike individuals. Nor should we overlook the fact that overindulgence in rich food and liquor may cause a Christian, and especially a brother, to become more easily aroused. Practice self-control in all aspects of life! "Hate what is bad." "Abhor what is wicked."—Ps. 97:10; Rom. 12:9.

[19] Then again, it may well be that some marriage mates did not use the best judgment in choosing each other. They may find that they are not as compatible as they would like to be, or they may be disappointed in the more intimate aspects of marriage. In that case, it is a matter of making the best of the situation, thus honoring and vindicating Jehovah's arrangement. The Bible speaks approvingly of the one 'who has sworn to what is bad for himself and yet does not change.' (Ps. 15:4) Simply stated, it is a matter of taking the bitter with the sweet. This calls to mind an elder who was widely known and very well liked by many of his brothers and sisters. He had married before he became a Witness and his unbelieving wife did all she could to make life miserable for him. Once asked about it, he replied, "She made a man out of me." To keep putting up with her, he had to learn to be long-suffering and exercise great self-control. And he had the satisfaction of knowing that he was heeding the apostle Paul's advice.—1 Cor. 7:12-16.

[20] However, it does appear that at times a divorce on the ground of adultery could have been avoided had the "innocent" mate shown more empathy, wisdom, affection, understanding. A wife may gradually give less and less thought to pleasing her husband physically, mentally, emotionally, aesthetically and spiritually, thus causing him to look elsewhere for satisfaction in one or more of these areas. Thus reluctance on the part of his wife to give him the marital due caused one full-time minister to turn to her sister for gratification. Of course, regardless of how a wife may have failed in this respect, there is absolutely no justification for adultery on the part of the husband.

[21] Truly it is with good reason that the God of love hates a divorcing. Treacherous divorcing is sinning against God, against one's mate, against the Christian congregation with which one is associated and against the individuals within it, as this action may well cause some to be stumbled. But how fine it is that Jehovah's Witnesses in general are not persons inclined toward divorcing! They are known as a people who earnestly strive to apply God's counsel regarding marriage. This makes them happier persons. And their strong, happy marriages are often noticed by others, drawing some to the truth.

18. What conditions make it necessary to be on guard continually in the matter of one's thoughts and actions in regard to sex?
19. How should matters be viewed by those whose marriage leaves something to be desired?
20. What are some circumstances that might contribute toward one's adulterously divorcing one's mate?
21. (a) Why is it wrong to divorce one's mate treacherously? (b) But, as to treacherous divorcing, what can be said about Jehovah's Witnesses in general?

Obadiah Gives Warning And Comfort From God

"THE vision of Obadiah." That is how the shortest book of the inspired Hebrew Scriptures begins. It contains both a warning of calamity for the land and the people of Edom (to the southeast of the Dead Sea) and a message of comfort for servants of God. Its opening words include the following:

"This is what the Sovereign Lord Jehovah has said regarding Edom: 'There is a report that we have heard from Jehovah, and there is an envoy that has been sent among the nations, "Rise up, you people, and let us rise up against her in battle." ' "—Obad. 1.

The name "Obadiah" means "servant of Jah [Jehovah]"; and that is all we know about the writer of this prophetic book. However, the book of Obadiah is indeed beneficial for worshipers of God today. Jehovah's dealings with Edom, as portrayed by Obadiah, furnish a warning example of how the Creator will one day rid the earth of all who hate God and his people. On the other hand, Obadiah cheers worshipers of God not only with the promise of freedom from oppression but with that of endless prosperity.

Appropriately, Obadiah's message is called a "vision." (Obad. 1) The Scriptures often refer to prophets as 'seers.' (1 Sam. 9:9; 2 Sam. 15:27; 1 Chron. 9:22) Even when nothing visible was seen by the prophet, prophetic communications often were called visions.—Dan. 9:24; Nah. 1:1.

HAUGHTY EDOM BROUGHT LOW

According to Obadiah, God would rouse up nations to wage destructive warfare against the Edomites. Since Obadiah's report about this originated with "the Sovereign Lord Jehovah," its fulfillment was certain.

The Edomites might have been inclined to ridicule such a prediction of calamity for their nation. The territory of Edom was mountainous. Earlier settlers of that area were called "Horites," meaning cave dwellers. (Gen. 14:6; Deut. 2:12, 22) Their location high up in mountains difficult to approach made the Edomites feel overly secure from enemy attack.

In view of this, God declared through Obadiah: " 'Look! Small is what I have made you among the nations. You are despised very much. The presumptuousness of your heart is what has deceived you, you who are residing in the retreats of the crag, the height where he dwells, saying in his heart, "Who will bring me down to the earth?" If you should make your position high like the eagle, or if among the stars there were a placing of your nest, down from there I would bring you,' is the utterance of Jehovah."—Obad. 2-4.

The presumptuous Edomites were to be made "small" in both numbers and dignity. God would bring them to ruin no matter how high they might place their dwellings, or how remote these might be.

THOROUGHLY "SEARCHED OUT"

Jehovah next indicates how thoroughly Edom's enemies would devastate that nation: "If it were thieves that came in to you, if despoilers came in by night, to what extent would you have been silenced? Would they not steal as much as they

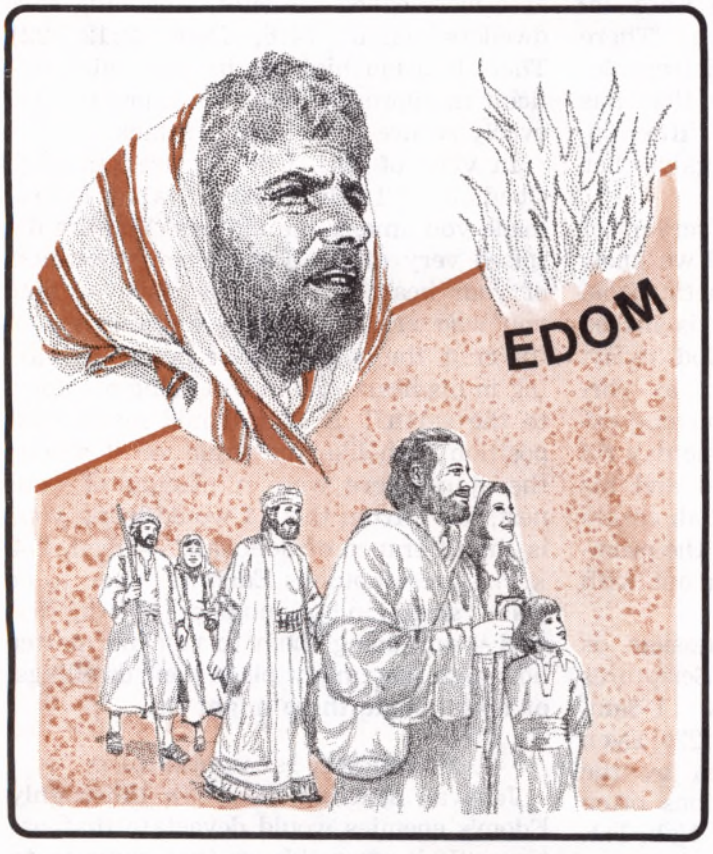
wanted? Or if it were grape gatherers that came in to you, would they not let some gleanings remain?" —Obad. 5.

Usually thieves steal only 'as much as they want,' rather than stripping a house bare. Similarly, grape gatherers would always leave some grapes behind. But with Edom things were to be different.

Obadiah explains: "O the extent to which those of Esau have been searched out! How his concealed treasures have been sought out!" (Obad. 6) Enemies of the Edomites were to comb through every cave and hidden retreat. They would not leave behind any concealed treasures.

NO HELP FOR EDOM

When enemy nations would begin war preparations against Edom, naturally that nation would seek help from peoples who pretended to be close allies. However, when the Edomites would send messengers to them seeking help and protection against invading forces, the messengers would be sent "as far as the boundary" of those lands where they sought help. They would be escorted out with no promise of assistance. The same treatment could be expected by Edomites fleeing across the borders of surrounding lands to escape death. They would either be refused entry or be expelled. (Obad. 7) Even among the Edomites themselves none would be sufficiently wise or mighty to avert disaster. —Obad. 8, 9.



Obadiah's message—a warning of destruction for Edom and a promise of restoration for God's people

THE REASON

The reason for such calamity for Edom is given in these words: "Because of the violence to your brother Jacob, shame will cover you, and you will have to be cut off to time indefinite. In the day when you stood off on the side, in the day when strangers took his military force into captivity and when outright foreigners entered his gate and over Jerusalem they cast lots, you also were like one of them." —Obad. 10, 11.

The Israelites descended from Jacob and the Edomites from his twin brother, Esau. Because Jacob acquired the right of firstborn from his

brother, Esau began to nurse murderous hatred toward Jacob. (Gen. 25:27-34; 27:30-45) Throughout their history the Edomites continued to manifest such hatred toward Israel. (Num. 20:14-21; 2 Ki. 8:20-22; 2 Chron. 21:8-10; 28:16-20; Ps. 83:4-8) During the ninth century B.C.E., through the prophet Amos, Jehovah denounced Edom "on account of his pursuing his own brother with the sword, and because he ruined his own merciful qualities, and his anger keeps tearing away forever; and his fury—he has kept it perpetually."—Amos 1:11.

More than two centuries later an especially vicious display of such hatred occurred when the Babylonians under King Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem and its temple. Looking back on this event, the inspired psalmist wrote: "Remember, O Jehovah, regarding the sons of Edom the day of Jerusalem, who were saying: 'Lay it bare! Lay it bare to the foundation within it!' " —Ps. 137:7.

Through Obadiah, God denounced Edom for such a hostile spirit, saying: "And you ought not to watch the sight in the day of your brother, in the day of his misfortune; and you ought not to rejoice at the sons of Judah in the day of their perishing; . . . And you ought not to stand at the parting of the ways, in order to cut off his escapees; and you ought not to hand over his survivors in the day of distress." (Obad. 12-14) Edom's treachery to Israel went even to the point of chasing down individuals running for their lives and handing them over to the enemy. But by acting that way the Edomites displayed ignorance of a vital fact. How?

'THE DAY OF JEHOVAH IS NEAR'

Jehovah went on to say: "For the day of Jehovah against all the nations is near. In the way that you have done, it will be done to you. Your sort of treatment will return upon your own head. For in the way that you people have drunk upon my holy mountain, all the nations will keep drinking constantly. And they will certainly drink and gulp down and become as though they had never happened to be."—Obad. 15, 16.

Edom joined enemies of God's people in celebrating with drunkenness and revelry the defeat and plundering of Israel. Now it would be their turn to 'drink the cup' of God's anger. Not only the Edomites, but all nations hostile to God's chosen nation would one day become "as though they had never happened to be."

EDOM BECOMES AS "STUBBLE"

Jehovah promised that the offspring of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob would gain possession of the land that later came to be called Palestine. (Gen. 15:7, 17-21) They did, but were exiled from it by the Babylonians, leaving the land a desolate waste.

Through Obadiah Jehovah guaranteed that the Israelites would repossess it, for God said through the prophet: "And in Mount Zion is where those escaping will prove to be, and it must become something holy; and the house of Jacob must take possession of the things for them to possess. And the house of Jacob must become a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau as stubble; and they must set them ablaze and devour them. And there will prove to be no survivor to the house of Esau; for Jehovah himself has spoken it." —Obad. 17, 18.

No longer would Israel be divided into the two-tribe kingdom made up of Judah and Benjamin (sometimes called "Jacob" in the Bible) and the northern kingdom of 10 tribes (at times called "the house of Joseph"). These words predict restoration to unity of all 12 tribes of Israel. In contrast, Edom was to disappear. The Israelites were to devour those descendants of Esau as fire eats up stubble.

Did such a devastation of Edom actually take place? Yes, and in fulfillment of God's pronouncement through Obadiah both Gentiles (verse 1) and Israelites (verse 18) played a part in it. Consider, please, some evidence confirming the fulfillment of what had been foretold.

Ancient inscriptions relate the conquest of Edom during the sixth century B.C.E. by Babylonian forces under King Nabonidus. According to C. J. Gadd, a scholar on the subject of Babylonian history and literature, the troops of Nabonidus that conquered Edom and Tema included Jewish soldiers. Commenting on this, John Lindsay writes in an article entitled "The Babylonian Kings and Edom": "Thus, in part at least, the words of the prophet found a fulfilment when he wrote of Yahweh saying 'I will lay my vengeance upon Edom *by the hand of my people Israel*' (Ezek. 25:14). We have also a partial fulfilment of the words of Obadiah who said that Edom's 'allies', 'confederates', 'trusted friends' would 'deceive', 'prevail against' and 'set a trap under' them. Here we may see a reference to the Babylonians who, although in the days of Nebuchadrezzar were willing to allow them a share in Judah's loss, under Nabonidus curbed once and for all the commercial and mercantile ambitions of Edom (cf. Obad. 1 and 7)."—*Palestine Exploration Quarterly,* January-June 1976, page 39.

This fits well with Biblical evidence concerning the time of Edom's fall. As already noted, Edom was an independent nation when Jerusalem fell to Nebuchadnezzar's forces. However, the book of Malachi, written about the middle of the fifth century B.C.E. (some 100 years after the campaign into Edom by Nabonidus), relates that God had already made Edom's "mountains a desolated waste and his inheritance for the jackals of the wilderness."—Mal. 1:3.

"AND THE KINGSHIP MUST BECOME JEHOVAH'S"

The Israelites were to repossess land from which they had been expelled during their exile in Babylon. In addition to this, the book of Obadiah describes an extension of territory for Israel in all directions. They would spread south into the Negeb, east into Edom's former homeland and west into the Shephelah and Philistine land. Extension to the northwest would reach throughout the Phoenician coastland as far north as Zarephath between Tyre and Sidon. Northeastward they would extend throughout all the area formerly occupied by the 10-tribe kingdom of Israel, including Ephraim, Samaria and the area of Gilead east of the Jordan River. Rather than being confined in a distant foreign land, exiles of Jerusalem from even as far as Sepharad (believed to be in Asia Minor) would return and take possession of a territorial inheritance expanded southward into the Negeb where the Edomites had formerly usurped land. —Obad. 19, 20.

The book of Obadiah ends on an encouraging note, declaring: "And saviors will certainly come up onto Mount Zion, in order to judge the mountainous region of Esau; and the kingship must become Jehovah's." (Obad. 21) In the days following the death of Joshua, God raised up judges to "save" Israel from oppression and to regain territory taken over by the enemy, and Obadiah depicts the repatriated Israelites as acting in a similar capacity. —Judg. 2:16.

Happily, in an extended sense, this prophecy guarantees that one day all enemies of God will be annihilated and divine rule will extend earth wide. (Ps. 22:27, 28) That message of warning and comfort from the true God deserves the widest possible dissemination. Are you having a regular part in sharing it with others?

Athens—"City Of Many Gods"

ZEUS, Hera, Artemis, Apollo, Ares—probably you have heard of at least one of these gods and goddesses. Remains of their statues can be found in Athens, the "city of many gods." However, the most prominent of all the ancient Greek deities was Athena, the so-called goddess of wisdom. She gave Athens its name, and her temple, the Parthenon, is one of its most remarkable landmarks.

Looking at the numerous remains of gods in stone all over Athens, a visitor to this bustling metropolis of almost 2.5 million inhabitants might well think of the words spoken here by the Christian apostle Paul. After walking through the city's streets, he said: "I behold that in all things you seem to be more given to the fear of the deities than others are."—Acts 17:22.

AN OVERALL VIEW

Suppose we begin with an overall view of Athens. By taxi, we travel along a very narrow road leading sharply upward to the starting point of a funicular railway. A few minutes later, we arrive at the top of Mount Lycabettus, a steep, cone-shaped hill that affords magnificent views of the city. According to tradition, St. George's Chapel, on the brow of the hill, is built on the spot where an altar to Zeus once stood. While we have some refreshments outside a restaurant, we enjoy the view.

Evening is drawing on. The sultry heat that has hung over the city during the day gradually diminishes. To the southwest and connected with Athens by miles of suburbs we see Piraeus. Through this main port and industrial center of Greece the country's riches such as olives, grapes and other fruits find their way to many parts of the world. From our high vantage point, we also notice that Athens is surrounded by mountains and is filled with monuments, museums and churches.

As it grows darker, our attention is suddenly captured.

On the other side of the valley in which Athens lies, 1,500 floodlights are flashed on, bathing the Acropolis. A breathtaking sight, indeed!

FROM THE AGORA TO THE AREOPAGUS

A visit to the Acropolis is a must the next day. We park our car on one of the crowded streets near the Acropolis and set out on foot. Below to the left we see what remains of the ancient Agora, or marketplace. Not only was it a location for transacting business but it was also a place to debate and conduct civic affairs. Indeed, the Agora was the center of public life. That is why the apostle Paul spent time there about 50 C.E., when visiting Athens on his second missionary tour. "Every day in the marketplace" (the Agora) he came upon people "who happened to be on hand." Their inquisitive attitude is reflected in the words: "In fact, all Athenians and the foreigners sojourning there would spend their leisure time at nothing but telling something or listening to something new."—Acts 17: 17, 21.

Paul himself soon became involved in a discussion with certain Epicurean and Stoic philosophers, and it was not long before "they laid hold of him and led him to the Areopagus, saying: 'Can we get to know what this new teaching is which is spoken by you?' " (Acts 17:18, 19) Today the Agora is an interesting place in the center of Athens, an area to which picnickers and painters flee from the bustle of the camera-carrying tourists on the Acropolis.

While we allow our attention to be absorbed by this modern scene, we will not forget that Paul's situation was extremely dangerous. He was suspected of being "a publisher of foreign deities," and the law provided that 'no person shall have any separate gods, or new ones; nor shall he privately worship any strange gods unless they be publicly allowed.' Small wonder, then, that the apostle was seized and taken to the Areopagus to be questioned. In any case, the Bible account about the Areopagus induced us to go searching for the hill of that name.

We succeed in finding our way, and a short walk takes us to the foot of the Areopagus, or Mars Hill, northwest of the Acropolis. It is an exciting moment. Perhaps we are standing on the very spot where Paul once stood and gave his memorable witness recorded at Acts 17:22-31. In the side of the small hill we find Paul's famous speech inscribed on a bronze plaque. The time has come to open our Bibles and relive what happened here 19 centuries ago.

EARLY PREACHING IN ATHENS BEARS FRUIT

Paul's eloquent testimony before learned men of Athens is an excellent lesson in tact and discernment. At the same time, he made a fine legal point, an appropriate argument to answer the accusation of introducing a new deity. The apostle showed that he was preaching about the very Creator of heaven and earth, the One who does not dwell in temples of human construction. Paul tactfully told his listeners that he was publishing to them the "Unknown God," to whom they themselves had made an altar and were unknowingly giving godly devotion. The apostle brought this "Unknown God" nearer to them by quoting from the writings of Aratus, a Cilician poet, and from the *Hymn to Zeus* by Cleanthes. Thus Paul could tell the Athenians that some of their own poets had said "We are also his progeny" and, therefore, all men owe their existence to Him.

Paul went on to show that this God will judge the inhabited earth in righteousness by a man that he has appointed. And, as a guarantee of this, God resurrected him from the dead. At that point,

Paul's talk was cut short, for "when they heard of a resurrection of the dead, some began to mock, while others said: 'We will hear you about this even another time.'" What happened then?

Paul went out from their midst, but his masterful argument had led to more than these two different reactions. There was also a third group, for "some men joined themselves to him and became believers, among whom also were Dionysius, a judge of the court of the Areopagus, and a woman named Damaris, and others besides them." (Acts 17:32-34) Hence, early Christianity grew in the "city of many gods."

REFLECTIONS ON THE CITY'S HISTORY

The Acropolis rises just a short distance from the Areopagus. We climb the impressive marble steps of the Propylaea (or, Foregates), the splendid ascent to the Parthenon, the crown of the Acropolis. On our right is the temple of the Wingless Victory, but the goddess has disappeared from it. We pass through the imposing colonnades of the Propylaea, which, though partly worn away, still give an overwhelming impression that this once was a massive structure. Arriving at the top of the steps, we see the immense remains of the Parthenon. When was it built, and what led to its construction?

The origin of Athens is shrouded in the past, although archaeology sheds some light on its very early history. In the seventh century B.C.E., the city was ruled by the Eupatridae, an aristocracy that wielded political power and controlled the Areopagus, the chief criminal court at the time. In the next century a legislator named Solon laid the foundation for a democracy. Thus Athens became the center of the first state with a democratic form of government.

The rise of the Medo-Persian Empire proved a severe threat to Greece and, as the prophet Daniel had foretold, the fourth king of Persia would "rouse up everything against the kingdom of Greece." (Dan. 11:2) The tide of war went back and forth until finally the 'fourth king,' Xerxes of Persia, roused up his entire empire and invaded Greece in 480 B.C.E. He got as far as Athens and burned down the Acropolis fortress. The Athenians, however, wrecked the Persian fleet at Salamis, forcing the Persians to withdraw. Athens gained leadership in Greece by virtue of its strong navy.

The golden age of Athens began. During that time of great prosperity under the able leadership of Pericles, the city became the cultural leader of the ancient world. Athens flourished as an educational center filled with professors, lecturers and such philosophers as Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. Four schools of philosophy were established there: the Platonic, the Peripatetic, the Epicurean and the Stoic. (Acts 17:18, 19) At that time, too, many beautiful buildings and temples were constructed, among them the Parthenon, the principal monument of ancient pagan religion.

THE SCRIPTURES VERSUS PHILOSOPHY

At the time that Jesus and his apostles were on earth Athens was still important on account of its schools of philosophy. From its cradle in Greece, philosophy spread to other parts of the world. In fact, Paul had to warn even the Christian congregation in Colossae, Asia Minor: "Look out: perhaps there may be someone who will carry you off as his prey through the philosophy and empty deception according to the tradition of men, . . . and not according to Christ." Paul was preaching Christ, and as the apostle said: "Carefully concealed in him are all the treasures of wisdom and of knowledge."—Col. 2:3, 8.

When writing to the Greek Corinthians, Paul came out very strongly against human wisdom. In defense of true Chris-

tianity, he put human philosophy in its proper place, saying: "If anyone among you thinks he is wise in this system of things, let him become a fool, that he may become wise. . . . 'Jehovah knows that the reasonings of the wise men are futile.'" (1 Cor. 3:18-20) Yes, not only do their reasonings prove futile but the works of their hands perish too. Just look at the Acropolis. Gone is the gold-decked image of Athena. Only part of the Parthenon still stands. And what about the Erechtheum, the joint shrine of Athena and Poseidon? Little remains of its former proud beauty.

As we leave the Acropolis and walk down the steps of the towering Propylaea, we remember the words of the apostle Paul to the court of Athens: "We ought not to imagine that the Divine Being is like gold or silver or stone, like something sculptured by the art and contrivance of man." —Acts 17:29.

GENUINE CHRISTIANITY STILL ALIVE

On this excursion, were you able to catch something of the spirit of ancient and modern Athens? To sense this spirit completely, of course, it is necessary to associate with the people. Many visitors have found that the Athenians are truly hospitable. It certainly is no coincidence that the Greek word for stranger also means guest, as Greeks are very hospitable to strangers.

It is, then, not surprising that true Christianity, which is characterized by such a spirit, should once again have taken root in Athens and all over Greece. Why, in Athens alone more than 7,000 witnesses of Jehovah are associated with 110 congregations! In all Greece, there are 20,000 Jehovah's Witnesses. Although they, like Paul, are regarded as 'publishers of foreign deities,' they continue to proclaim the "Unknown God," Jehovah, to the inhabitants of Athens and all Greece.

Our visit is over, and we retrace our steps. Looking back from a distance, we have our last glimpse of the Acropolis. The setting sun turns the marble crown of the city into radiant gold. What a sight! But especially are we delighted that so many are now enjoying true spiritual enlightenment in Athens, the age-old "city of many gods."

QUESTIONS from READERS

● Can a dedicated and baptized Christian take up professional boxing and still remain in good standing with his congregation?

If a Christian were to become a professional boxer, this would put him in conflict with God's counsel. Let us consider some of that Biblical advice.

The Scriptures clearly show that dedicated Christians are to produce the fruitage of God's holy spirit, which is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, kindness, goodness, faith, mildness and self-control. (Gal. 5:22, 23) Professional boxing flies in the face of all such fruitage. The Bible counsels us to be "peaceable with all men" and not to fight but to be "gentle toward all." (Rom. 12:18; 2 Tim. 2:24) *Similarly, at* James 3:18 we read that "the fruit of righteousness has its seed sown under peaceful conditions for those who are making peace." Moreover, we are told to 'love our neighbors as ourselves' and that love works no "evil," and therefore no harm or hurt, to one's neighbor.—Rom. 13:9, 10.

Professional boxing cannot be considered simply an innocent sport. It is a well-known fact that boxers go into the ring with a strong urge to hurt their opponents. For the time being, they may even have a murderous feeling toward them. This spirit may be sensed

by observers, as can often be seen from the way spectators react at a boxing match. Time and again they are heard shouting, "Kill him! Kill him!"

So it is no wonder that from time to time the press reports that a boxer has been mortally injured in the boxing ring. In boxing there is always the risk that one of the fighters might become a manslayer, and, as the apostle John states, "you know that no manslayer has everlasting life." (1 John 3:15) Bearing on this is the opinion of one veteran boxing official that boxing is "legalized murder" and should be prohibited by law. It has also been described as "assault with malicious intent." And still another sordid aspect of professional boxing is the kind of people involved in running the sport. Often it is in the control of the underworld criminal element.

In view of these facts, what should be the attitude of the congregation elders toward a dedicated and baptized Christian who takes up professional boxing? First, they would want to counsel such a brother in keeping with the Scriptural principles enunciated above. (Gal. 6:1) They should kindly, yet firmly, present the reasons why such boxing is not compatible with being a dedicated follower of Jesus Christ, the "Prince of Peace." (Isa. 9:6) They could show him that a Christian is to "do hard work, doing with his hands what is good work." Earning money as a professional boxer by battering an opponent in a boxing ring can hardly be termed "good work."—Eph. 4:28.

The individual should also be reminded that while professional boxing might provide him with a comfortable livelihood, Christians do not need to stoop to such means, for God's Word assures us, at Hebrews 13:5, 6: "Let your manner of life be free of the love of money, while you are content with the present things. For he has said: 'I will by no means leave you nor by any means forsake you.' So that we may be of good courage and say: 'Jehovah is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?' "

Therefore, such a person should be given a reasonable period of time to discontinue his unchristian profession or occupation. His failure to do so would mean that the elders would have no alternative but to exclude him from the congregation.—1 Cor. 5:11-13.

● At Matthew 4:1 it is said that "Jesus was led by the spirit up into the wilderness to be tempted by the Devil." Does this refer to God's holy spirit?

It was Jehovah's holy spirit that directed Jesus into the wilderness, following his baptism. Jesus fasted, and this would be a *time* for prayer and meditation. (Compare Matthew 4:2; Mark 1:35; Luke 5:16.) Likely Jehovah used this time to communicate with his only-begotten Son, to give instructions, further enlightenment and warm assurance, preparing him for what lay ahead.

Jehovah could foreknow that the leading of his Son into the wilderness in connection with His own purpose would also eventuate in a test from the Devil. Yet the temptation that came at the close of Jesus' 40-day stay in the wilderness was not something that God arranged. Rather, it was merely allowed.

It is significant that Jesus' experience paralleled that of Moses. That prophet was on the mountain for 40 days when receiving the Law covenant and instructions pertaining to his role as mediator. (Ex. 24:18; 34:28) Jesus, the prophet greater than Moses, must have received instructions in the wilderness regarding the new covenant into which his followers would be taken as spiritual Israelites and of which he would serve as mediator. (Deut. 18:18, 19; Luke 22:20, 28-30) And just as Moses faced a crucial test of his loyalty and integrity on coming down and seeing the Israelites worshiping a golden calf and wanting to go back to Egypt, Jesus also was put to a severe test at the close of his 40-day experience.—Ex. 32:15-35.

"WATCHTOWER" STUDIES FOR THE WEEKS

August 2: Let God Be in Your Marriage. Page 12. Songs to Be Used: 75, 15.

August 9: The God of Love Hates a Divorcing. Page 17. Songs to Be Used: 115, 49.