

October 1, 1988

The Watchtower

Announcing Jehovah's Kingdom

**THE
SIGN**
HAVE YOU SEEN IT?



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THE PURPOSE OF *THE WATCHTOWER* is to exalt Jehovah God as the Sovereign of the universe. It keeps watch on world events as they fulfill Bible prophecy. It comforts all peoples with the good news that God's Kingdom will soon destroy those who oppress their fellowmen and that it will turn the earth into a paradise. It encourages faith in the now-reigning King, Jesus Christ, whose shed blood opens the way for mankind to gain eternal life. *The Watchtower*, published by Jehovah's Witnesses continuously since 1879, is nonpolitical. It adheres to the Bible as its authority.

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The Sign Not Just Past History

IN Jerusalem, in the Middle East, there is a fascinating historic site that demands the attention of thinking people today. It is the elevated area where there stood "a temple of immense wealth," in the words of the first-century Roman historian Tacitus. No trace of the temple buildings remains, but the platform does. It bears testimony to the truthfulness of a prophetic sign that affects you.

Archaeologists have made many discoveries to the south of the temple platform. "One of the most interesting finds," states J. A. Thompson in *The Bible and Archaeology*, "was a number of huge blocks of Herodian masonry evidently cast from the top of the Temple wall at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70."

The destruction of Jerusalem and its temple was foretold *37 years before it happened*. No less than three historians recorded Jesus Christ's words that "not a stone upon a stone will be left here and not be thrown down." (Luke 21:6; Matthew 24:1, 2; Mark 13:1, 2) A conversation followed that affects everyone today, including you.

"Teacher," his disciples asked him, "what will be *the sign* when these things are destined to occur?" According to Jesus, the period leading up to the temple's destruction would be marked by wars,

earthquakes, food shortages, and pestilences. "This generation," he added, "will by no means pass away until all things occur."—Luke 21:7, 10, 11, 32.

Did that generation experience fulfillment of "the sign"? Yes. The Bible refers to "a great famine" as well as three earthquakes, two of them 'great earthquakes.' (Acts 11:28; 16:26; Matthew 27:51; 28:1, 2) According to secular history, other earthquakes and food shortages occurred during that period. It was also a time of wars, two of which were fought by Roman armies against the inhabitants of Jerusalem. The second siege of Jerusalem resulted in terrible famine and pestilence, leading up to the destruction of the city and its temple in the year 70 C.E. The site in Jerusalem where the temple used to be stands as mute witness to those terrible first-century events.

'Interesting,' someone might say, 'but how does it affect me?' In that the sign is not just past history. It was only *partially* fulfilled in the first century. For example, Jesus also foretold a time when mankind would be in great fear because of "signs in sun and moon and stars" and "the roaring of the sea." This feature of the sign would mark the nearness of "the kingdom of God"—a government that will bring permanent deliverance from world distress.—Luke 21:25-31.

Such things did not happen in the first century. Today, 1,900 years later, mankind still awaits deliverance from wars, earthquakes, food shortages, and pestilences. Therefore, the sign must have a second *complete* fulfillment. Bearing this out, the book of Revelation contains prophetic pictures that correspond with the sign, and yet it was written after Jerusalem's destruction. (Revelation 6:1-8) Thus, the important question arises: Has the sign been seen in our day?

The Sign

HAVE YOU SEEN IT?

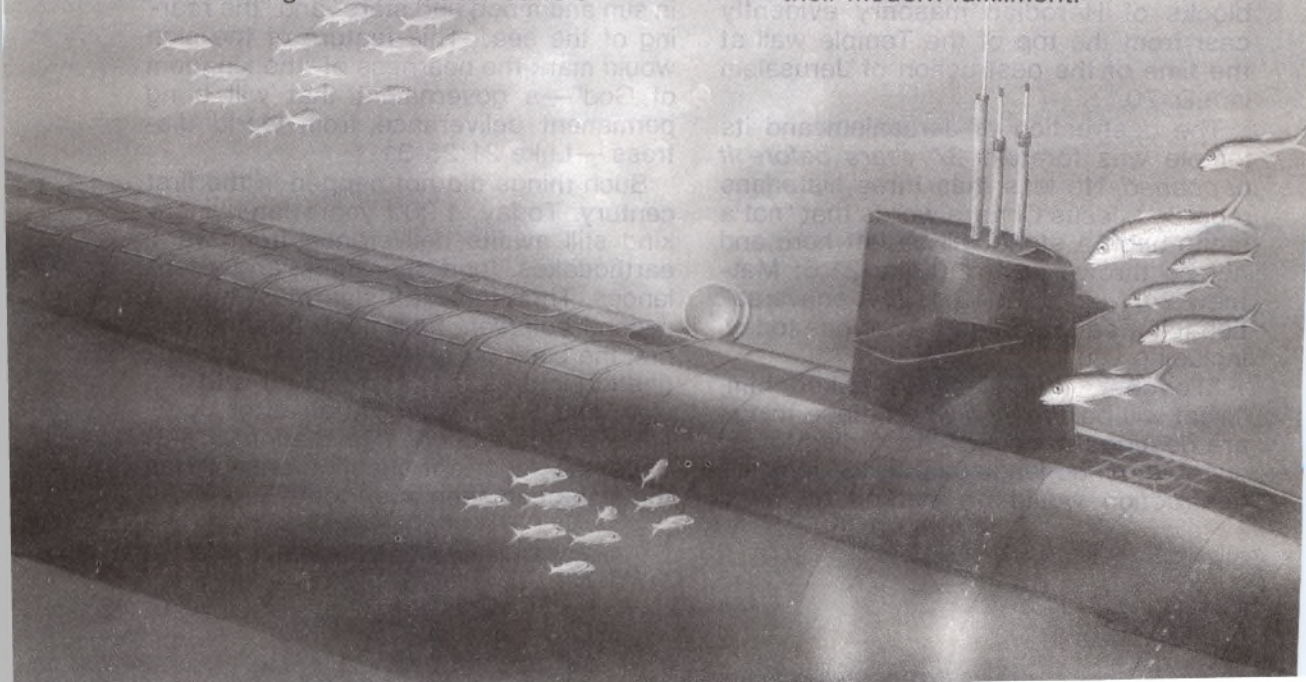
"FAR beneath the surface of the sea, a long, round-nosed submarine hangs steady, unmoved by the great waves that rush over the sea's stormy surface. A hatch in the submarine's deck opens and a rocket more than 30 feet long and 4 1/2 feet thick darts out and up towards the surface. The rocket starts its journey propelled upward by compressed air, but upon reaching the surface of the sea, its engine ignites and the rocket bursts from the water with a roar."

That description of a submarine-launched ballistic missile, from the book *Rockets, Missiles and Spacecraft*, by Martin Keen, gives meaning to an ancient prophecy foretelling a time of world distress due to "the roaring of the sea." (Luke 21:25) How great is the threat from ballistic missile submarines?

According to the book *Jane's*

Fighting Ships 1986-87, Britain, China, France, the Soviet Union, and the United States have 131 ballistic missile submarines in active service. No city lies beyond their reach, and the warheads usually land within a mile of the target. Some carry sufficient warheads "to obliterate any country within 5,000 miles," according to *The Guinness Book of Records*. Even worse, some have claimed that the warheads in just one ballistic missile submarine could cause a nuclear winter that would imperil all life on earth! The control of distant submarines is also a problem. It is feared that a rash act in one submarine could unleash a fatal nuclear war.

Many have linked such frightening prospects to Jesus' prophetic sign. Could it be that our generation is experiencing the fulfillment of that sign? The facts answer yes. And this means that deliverance from the threat of nuclear war is near. (Luke 21:28, 32) With such an optimistic prospect, we invite you to consider evidence of the sign's fulfillment. Some outstanding features of the sign are next set out here along with their modern fulfillment.



"Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom." (Luke 21:10)

Since 1914 over 100,000,000 people have died from wars. World War I started in 1914 and involved 28 countries, not counting the several European colonies of that day. Few countries remained neutral. It cost over 13,000,000 lives with more than 21,000,000 wounded

soldiers. Then came World War II, which was much more destructive. And since then? In the article "Wars of the World," the South African newspaper *The Star* quoted the London Sunday *Times* as saying: "A quarter of the world's nations are currently caught up in conflicts."



Courtesy of German Railroads Information Office, New York.



"And there will be great earthquakes." (Luke 21:11)

In their book *Terra Non Firma*, Stanford University professors Gere and Shah list details of 164 "significant earthquakes of the world" spanning over three thousand years into the past. Of this total, 89 struck since 1914, taking an estimated

1,047,944 lives. This list included only major earthquakes, and since publication of *Terra Non Firma* in 1984, destructive earthquakes have occurred in Chile, the Soviet Union, and Mexico, resulting in thousands more deaths.

"There will be . . . pestilences." (Luke 21:11)

In 1918 a deadly pestilence struck mankind. Called the Spanish flu, it spread to every inhabited place except the island of St. Helena and killed more people than were brought down in the four years of war. Medical science has made great advances since that time, and yet there is a paradox. Explains *The Lancet*: "The persistence of the sexually transmitted diseases (STD) as the commonest group of

notifiable infections is a paradox of modern medicine. . . . Control of the sexually transmitted diseases seemed at one time to be within our grasp but has eluded us in recent years."

There are other pestilences that modern medicine has also been unable to control, such as cancer and coronary artery heart disease. The latter, according to *S[outh] A[frica] Family Practice*, "is a new



Eric Schwab/WHO

phenomenon. . . . It is a consequence of post first world war society." In Britain, heart disease and hypertension "are the principal cause of mortality," according to the book *Cardiovascular Update—Insight Into Heart Disease*. It adds that

"very little progress has yet been made towards their control."

In developing countries, millions suffer from malaria, sleeping sickness, bilharzia, and other diseases. One of the world's worst killers is diarrhea. Explains the mag-

azine *Medicine International*: "It has been estimated that 500 million episodes of diarrhoea [per] year are likely to occur among the infants and small children of Asia, Africa and Latin America, with between 5 and 18 million deaths."

"There will be . . . food shortages." (Luke 21:11)

Food shortages normally accompany war. World War I was no exception. Terrible famines followed in its wake. And since? Reports a special paper *The Challenge of Internationalism—Forty Years of the United Nations (1945-1985)*: "While there were about 1,650 million malnourished persons in 1950 there were 2,250 mil-

lion in 1983; in other words, an increase of 600 million or 36 per cent more." A devastating famine followed Africa's recent drought. "In one year," states the magazine *Newsweek*, "as many as 1 million Ethiopian peasants and 500,000 Sudanese children died." Thousands from other countries also perished.



Jerry Frank/United Nations



U.S. Air Force photo

"There will be fearful sights and from heaven great signs. Also, there will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth anguish of nations, not knowing the way out because of the roaring of the sea and its agitation, while men become faint out of fear and expectation of the things coming upon the inhabited earth." (Luke 21:11, 25, 26)

World War I introduced terrible new weapons. From the heavens, airplanes and airships rained down bombs and bullets. Even more terrifying was the destruction that rained down on helpless civilians in World War II, including that of two atom bombs.

The sea also became the scene of new horrors. When World War I started, sub-

marines were considered very insignificant, but by the end of World War II, they had sunk over ten thousand vessels. "Sinking merchant ships, including [passenger] liners, without warning seemed to be part of the new and terrifying practice of 'total war,'" states Norman Friedman in his book *Submarine Design and Development*.

Today many consider ballistic missile submarines to be the world's capital ships. Deadly weapons are also carried in cruise missile submarines, aircraft carriers, and other warships. According to the book *Jane's Fighting Ships 1986-87*, there are now 929 submarines, 30 aircraft carriers, 84 cruisers, 367 destroyers, 675 frigates, 276 corvettes, 2,024 fast attack craft, and thousands of other military vessels in the active service of 52 nations. Add to this countless small but deadly mines. Never has there been such dangerous "agitation" of the sea by man.

Man has also reached into the region of "sun and moon and stars." Ballistic missiles streak into space before hurtling down on their targets. Spacecraft have penetrated the solar system and be-

yond. The nations have become heavily dependent on man-made satellites orbiting the earth. Navigational and meteorological satellites enable them to aim strategic missiles with deadly accuracy. Extensive use is also made of communications and spy satellites. "Satellites," states Michael Sheehan in his book *The Arms Race*, "have become the eyes, ears and voices of the superpowers' armed forces."

A recent example was the air attack on Libya. Reports *Aviation Week & Space Technology*: "U.S. . . . satellite photos were used in attack preparations and post attack assessments. The Defense Meteorological Satellite Program provided weather data for the attack and military communications spacecraft were involved in command and control." Be-

cause of the vital role performed by military satellites, both superpowers possess antisatellite weapons. The basing of weapons in space is the open intention of one superpower in a program popularly called Star Wars. Whether the superpowers actually engage in space war or not, time alone will tell.

Meanwhile, as foretold, "men become faint out of fear and expectation of the things coming upon the inhabited earth." Crime, terrorism, economic collapse, chemical pollution, and radiation poisoning from nuclear power plants, together with the mounting threat of nuclear war, are all causes of "fear." The British magazine *New Statesmen* reports that "over half" that country's teenagers "feel that nuclear war will occur in their lifetimes, and 70 per cent believe that it is inevitable one day."

The Sign—What Does It Mean?

Millions, after examining the sign in the light of 20th-century history, have become convinced of its fulfillment. (See also Matthew, chapter 24 and Mark, chapter 13.) The 1914 generation is indeed a marked one. It is the one involved in the second fulfillment of Jesus' words: "*This generation will by no means pass away until all things occur.*" (Luke 21:32) The "all things" include deliverance from

mankind's perplexing problems.

Jesus assured his followers: "As these things start to occur, raise yourselves erect and lift your heads up, because *your deliverance is getting near.* . . . When you see these things occurring, know that the kingdom of God is near." God's Kingdom, a superhuman world government, will transform this earth into a global paradise. Hence, as surely as

the sign has come true so deliverance will come too. —Luke 21:28, 31; Psalm 72:1-8.

Perhaps you have not considered the prophetic sign before. We encourage you to continue examining God's Word. Doing so will enable you to understand more about God's purposes for mankind. Thus you will learn what Jehovah God requires of those whom he will 'deliver' into the coming earthly Paradise.—Psalm 37:10, 11; Zephaniah 2:2, 3; Revelation 21:3-5.

Keep Ready!

AFTER warning the crowds about covetousness, and cautioning his disciples about giving undue attention to material things, Jesus encourages: "Have no fear, little flock, because your Father has approved of giving you the kingdom." He thus reveals that only a relatively small number (later identified as 144,000) will be in the heavenly Kingdom. The majority of the ones who receive eternal life will be earthly subjects of the Kingdom.

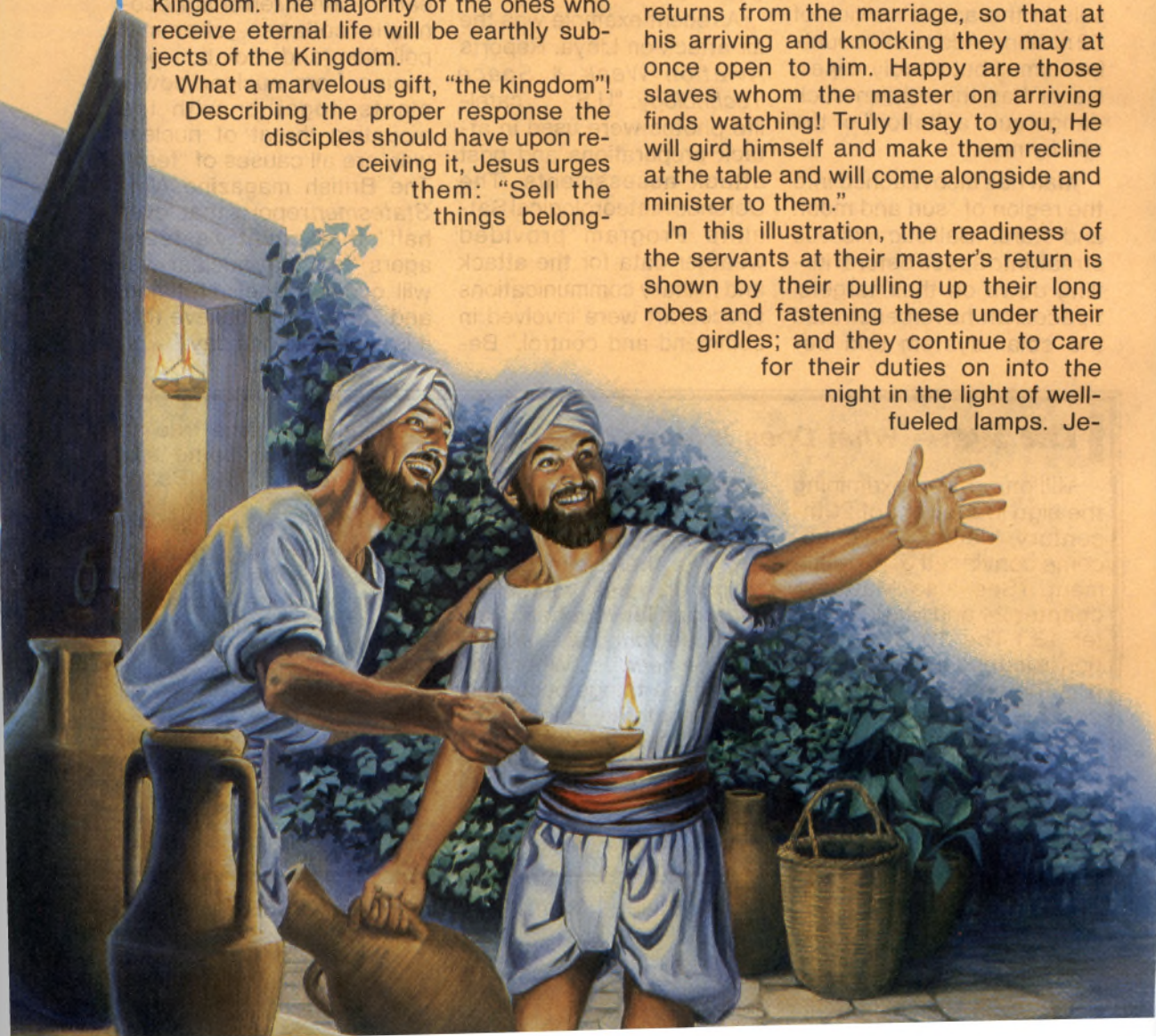
What a marvelous gift, "the kingdom"!

Describing the proper response the disciples should have upon receiving it, Jesus urges them: "Sell the things belong-

ing to you and give gifts of mercy." Yes, they should use their assets to benefit others spiritually and thus build up "a never-failing treasure in the heavens."

Jesus next admonishes his disciples to keep ready for his return. He says: "Let your loins be girded and your lamps be burning, and you yourselves be like men waiting for their master when he returns from the marriage, so that at his arriving and knocking they may at once open to him. Happy are those slaves whom the master on arriving finds watching! Truly I say to you, He will gird himself and make them recline at the table and will come alongside and minister to them."

In this illustration, the readiness of the servants at their master's return is shown by their pulling up their long robes and fastening these under their girdles; and they continue to care for their duties on into the night in the light of well-fueled lamps. Je-



Jesus explains: 'If the master arrives in the second watch [from about nine in the evening to midnight], even if in the third [from midnight to about three in the morning], and finds them ready, happy are they!'

The master rewards his servants in an unusual way. He has them recline at the table and begins serving them. He treats them, not as slaves, but as loyal friends. What a fine reward for their continuing to work for their master throughout the night while waiting for his return! Jesus concludes: "You also, *keep ready*, because at an hour that you do not think likely the Son of man is coming."

Peter now asks: "Lord, are you saying this illustration to us or also to all?"

Rather than answer directly, Jesus gives another illustration. "Who really is the faithful steward," he asks, "whom his master will appoint over his body of attendants to keep giving them their measure of food supplies at the proper time? Happy is that slave, if his master on arriving finds him doing so! I tell you truthfully, He will appoint him over all his belongings."

The "master" obviously is Jesus Christ. The "steward" pictures the "little flock" of disciples as a collective body, and the "body of attendants" refers to this same group of 144,000 who receive the heavenly Kingdom, but it highlights their work as individuals. The "belongings" that the faithful steward is appointed to care for are the master's royal interests on earth, which includes the Kingdom's earthly subjects.

Continuing the illustration, Jesus points

to the possibility that not all members of that steward, or slave, class will be loyal, explaining: "If ever that slave should say in his heart, 'My master delays coming,' and should start to beat the menservants and the maidservants, and to eat and drink and get drunk, the master of that slave will come on a day that he is not expecting him . . . , and he will punish him with the greatest severity."

Jesus goes on to note that his coming has brought a fiery time for the Jews, as some accept and others reject his teachings. Over three years earlier, he was baptized in water, but now his baptism into death is drawing ever closer to a conclusion, and as he says: "I am being distressed until it is finished!"

After directing these remarks to his disciples, Jesus again addresses the crowds. He laments their stubborn refusal to accept the clear evidence of his identity and its significance. "When you see a cloud rising in western parts," he observes, "at once you say, 'A storm is coming,' and it turns out so. And when you see that a south wind is blowing, you say, 'There will be a heat wave,' and it occurs. Hypocrites, you know how to examine the outward appearance of earth and sky, but how is it you do not know how to examine this particular time?"

Luke 12:32-59.

- ♦ How many make up the "little flock," and what do they receive?
- ♦ How does Jesus emphasize the need for his servants to be ready?
- ♦ In Jesus illustration, who are the "master," the "steward," the "body of attendants," and the "belongings"?

Appreciation for Our Brothers

"With unhypocritical brotherly affection . . . , love one another intensely from the heart."—1 PETER 1:22.

LOVE is the hallmark of true Christianity. During the last meal that Jesus shared with his apostles, he emphasized this, stating: "I am giving you a new commandment, that you love one another; just as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love among yourselves." (John 13:34, 35) Many people first became convinced that Jehovah's Witnesses are practicing true Christianity when they attended a meeting at the Kingdom Hall or went to a larger assembly. They observed love in action, and by this they knew that they were among Christ's true disciples.

² All of us rejoice that this distinctive sign of genuine Christianity is observable among Jehovah's people today. Nevertheless, like the early Christians, we realize that we should constantly seek further ways of manifesting appreciation for our brothers. Paul wrote to the congregation in Thessalonica: "May the Lord cause you to increase, yes, make you abound, in love to one another." (1 Thessalonians 3:12) How can we increase in our love for one another?

1. What convinced many people that Jehovah's Witnesses practice true Christianity?
2. What did the apostle Paul say with regard to love, the distinctive sign of Christianity?



Love and Brotherly Affection

³ In a general letter addressed to Christian congregations in Asia Minor, the apostle Peter wrote: "Now that you have purified your souls [or, lives] by your obedience to the truth with unhypocritical brotherly affection [*phi-la-del-phi'a*] as the result, love [form of *a-ga-pa'o*] one another intensely from the heart." (1 Peter 1:22) Peter shows that it is not enough to purify our lives. Our obedience to the truth, including the new commandment, should

3. In addition to leading a clean life, what did the apostle Peter say was necessary for Christians?

result in un hypocritical brotherly affection and intense love for one another.

⁴ Are our love and appreciation for our brothers inclined to be expressed only to those we like? Do we tend to be generous toward these, closing our eyes to their shortcomings, while being quick to notice the faults and failings of others with whom we feel no natural affinity? Jesus said: "If you love [form of *a-ga-pa'o*] those loving you, what reward do you have? Are not also the tax collectors doing the same thing?"—Matthew 5:46.

⁵ In his book *New Testament Words*, Professor William Barclay makes the following comments on the Greek word translated "affection" and that rendered "love": "There is a lovely warmth about these words [*phi-li'a*, meaning "affection," and the related verb *phi-le'o*]. They mean to look on someone with affectionate regard. . . . By far the commonest N[ew] T[estament] words for *love* are the noun *agapē* and the verb *agapan*. . . . *Philia* was a lovely word, but it was definitely a word of warmth and closeness and affection. . . . *Agapē* has to do with the *mind*: it is not simply an emotion which rises unbidden in our hearts; it is a principle by which we deliberately live. *Agapē* has supremely to do with the *will*. It is a conquest, a victory, and achievement. No one ever naturally loved his enemies. To love one's enemies is a conquest of all our natural inclinations and emotions. This *agapē* . . . is in fact the power to love the unlovable, to love people whom we do not like."

⁶ On the pretext that the Scriptures al-

4. What questions should we ask, and what did Jesus say in this connection?

5. What distinction does a Bible scholar make between the Greek word meaning "love" and that meaning "affection"?

6. (a) What searching questions should we ask ourselves? (b) According to Peter, why can we not limit our brotherly affection to those to whom we are naturally attracted?

low for our having warmer feelings for some brothers than for others, are we inclined to rationalize our feelings? (John 19:26; 20:2) Do we think we can express a cold, reasoned "love" to some because we have to, while we reserve warm brotherly affection for those to whom we are attracted? If so, we have missed the point of Peter's exhortation. We have not sufficiently purified our souls by our obedience to the truth, for Peter says: "Now that by obedience to the truth you have purified your souls *until you feel sincere affection towards your brother Christians*, love one another whole-heartedly with all your strength."—1 Peter 1:22, *The New English Bible*.

"Unhypocritical Brotherly Affection"

⁷ The apostle Peter goes even further. He says that our brotherly affection must be un hypocritical. The word translated "un hypocritical" comes from the negative form of a Greek word that was used for stage actors who spoke with their faces covered by masks. This enabled them to impersonate several different characters during a play. The word then took on the figurative sense of hypocrisy, dissimulation, or pretense.

⁸ How do we feel deep down in our hearts toward some of the brothers and sisters in the congregation? Do we greet them at meetings with a forced smile, quickly looking away or passing on? Worse still, do we try to avoid having to greet them at all? If so, what can be said of our "obedience to the truth" that should have purified our souls to the point of our feeling sincere affection toward our fellow Christians? By using the word "un hypocritical," Peter is saying that our affection for our brothers must not be put on for show. It must be genuine, heartfelt.

7, 8. What is the origin of the word translated "un hypocritical," so why did Peter use this term?

"Intensely From the Heart"

⁹ Peter adds: "Love one another *intensely* [literally, "outstretchedly"] from the heart." It requires no stretching of the heart to show love to those for whom we have a natural liking and who reciprocate. But Peter tells us to love one another "outstretchedly." When expressed among Christians, *a-ga'pe* love is not merely an intellectual, reasoned love, such as we should have for our enemies. (Matthew 5:44) It is an intense love and requires effort. It involves stretching our hearts, widening them out so that they can enfold people we would not normally be attracted to.

¹⁰ In his *Linguistic Key to the Greek New Testament*, Fritz Rienecker comments on the word translated "intensely," or "outstretchedly," in 1 Peter 1:22. He writes: "The fundamental idea is that of earnestness, zealousness (doing a thing not lightly . . . but as it were w[ith] straining) (Hort)." Straining means, among other things, "to stretch to maximum extension." Loving one another intensely from the heart therefore means exerting ourselves to the utmost in our efforts to have brotherly affection for *all* our Christian companions. Are some of our brothers and sisters cramped for room in our tender affections? If so, we should widen out.

"Widen Out"

¹¹ The apostle Paul apparently felt the need for this in the congregation in Corinth. He wrote to the Christians there: "Our mouth has been opened to you, Corinthians, our heart has widened out. You are not cramped for room within us, but you are cramped for room in your own

9, 10. What did Peter mean when he said that we should love one another "intensely," or "outstretchedly"?

11, 12. (a) What counsel did the apostle Paul give to the Christians in Corinth? (b) How did Paul set a fine example in this regard?



Try to discover lovable qualities in those to whom you are not naturally attracted

tender affections. So, as a recompense in return—I speak as to children—you, too, widen out."—2 Corinthians 6:11-13.

¹² How can we widen out our hearts to include all our brothers and sisters? Paul set a fine example in this respect. He obviously sought the best in his brothers, and he remembered them not for their failings but for their good qualities. The closing chapter of his letter to the Christians in Rome illustrates this. Let us examine Romans chapter 16 and see how it reflects Paul's positive attitude toward his brothers and sisters.

Warm Appreciation

¹³ Paul wrote his letter to the Romans from Corinth about the year 56 C.E., during his third missionary journey. He apparently entrusted the manuscript to a Christian woman named Phoebe, a member of the nearby Cenchreae congregation, who was traveling to Rome. (*Read verses 1, 2.*) Notice how warmly he recommends her to the brothers in Rome. In some way or other, she had defended many Christians, including Paul, perhaps during their travels via the busy seaport of Cenchreae. Being an imperfect sinner, like all other humans, Phoebe doubtless had her weaknesses. But rather than warning the Roman congregation against Phoebe's shortcomings, Paul instructed them to "welcome her in the Lord in a way worthy of the holy ones." What a fine, positive attitude!

¹⁴ From verse 3 to verse 15, Paul sends greetings to over 20 Christians mentioned by name and to many others mentioned individually or collectively. (*Read verses 3, 4.*) Can you sense the brotherly affection Paul felt for Prisca (or, Priscilla; compare Acts 18:2) and Aquila? This couple had exposed themselves to dangers for Paul. Now he greeted these fellow workers with gratitude and sent them an expression of thanks on behalf of the Gentile congregations. How Aquila and Priscilla must have been encouraged by these heartfelt greetings!

¹⁵ Paul became a devoted Christian apparently within a year or two of Christ's death. By the time he wrote his letter to the Romans, he had been used by Christ

as a prominent apostle to the nations for many years. (Acts 9:15; Romans 1:1; 11:13) Yet, notice his generosity and humility. (*Read verse 7.*) He greeted Andronicus and Junias as "men of note among the apostles [sent ones]" and admitted that they had been serving Christ longer than he had. No trace of petty jealousy there!

¹⁶ We know little or nothing of such early Christians as Epaphroditus, Ampliatus, and Stachys. (*Read verses 5, 8, 9.*) But simply by the way Paul greeted all three of them, we can be certain that they were faithful men. They had so endeared themselves to Paul that he called each of them "my beloved." Paul also had kind words for Apelles and Rufus, referring to them respectively as "the approved one in Christ," and "the chosen one in the Lord." (*Read verses 10, 13.*) What fine compliments to pay these two Christians! And knowing Paul's frankness, we can be sure that they were not mere formality. (Compare 2 Corinthians 10:18.) Incidentally, Paul did not forget to greet the mother of Rufus.

¹⁷ That brings us to Paul's appreciation for his sisters. In addition to Rufus' mother, Paul mentioned no less than six other Christian women. We have already seen how kindly he spoke of Phoebe and Prisca. But notice with what warm brotherly affection he greeted Mary, Tryphaena, Tryphosa, and Persis. (*Read verses 6, 12.*) One can feel that his heart went out to these hardworking sisters who had "performed many labors" for their brothers. How upbuilding it is to see Paul's heartfelt appreciation for his brothers and sisters, *in spite of their imperfections!*

13. How did Paul express his appreciation for Phoebe, and why?

14. What kind things did Paul say about Prisca and Aquila?

15. How did Paul show his generosity and humility when greeting Andronicus and Junias?

16. (a) In what loving terms did Paul speak of other Christians living in Rome? (b) Why can we be sure that these greetings were examples of "unhypocritical brotherly affection"?

17. How did Paul express deep appreciation for his sisters?

Not Suspicious of Our Brothers' Motives

¹⁸ Why not imitate Paul and try to find something nice to say about every brother and sister in the congregation? For some, you will have no problem at all. For others, it may take a little searching. Why not try to spend some time with them in order to get to know them better? You will surely discover lovable qualities in them, and, who knows, they may get to appreciate you more than in the past.

¹⁹ We should not suspect our brothers' motives. All of them love Jehovah; otherwise they would not have dedicated their lives to him. And what is it that protects them from going back into the world, following its easygoing ways? It is their love for Jehovah, his righteousness, and his Kingdom under Christ. (Matthew 6:33) But they are all, in various ways, having to put up a hard fight to remain faithful. Jehovah loves them for this. (Proverbs 27:11) He accepts them as his servants in spite of their faults and failings. This

18. How can we endeavor to imitate Paul, but what may be necessary?

19. Why should we not suspect our brothers' motives, and how does Jehovah set us a fine example of love?

Points for Review

- ☐ What is the distinctive sign of true Christianity?
- ☐ Why are both love and brotherly affection necessary?
- ☐ How can we love one another "intensely," or "outstretchedly"?
- ☐ In Romans chapter 16, how did Paul show appreciation for his brothers and sisters?
- ☐ Why should we not be suspicious of our brothers' motives?

being the case, who are we to refuse to take them into our tender affections? —Romans 12:9, 10; 14:4.

²⁰ The only ones of whom Paul warns us to be suspicious are "those who cause divisions and occasions for stumbling," and those who act "contrary to the teaching that you have learned." Paul tells us to keep our eyes on such ones and avoid them. (Romans 16:17) The congregation elders will have tried to help these. (Jude 22, 23) So we can rely on the elders to inform us if certain ones need to be avoided. Otherwise, we should consider all our brothers as being deserving of un-hypocritical brotherly affection, and we should learn to love them intensely from the heart.

²¹ Satan, his demons, and his entire worldly system of things are against us. Har-Magedon is ahead of us. It will be triggered by the attack of Gog of Magog. (Ezekiel, chapters 38, 39) At that time, we will need our brothers more than ever. We may find ourselves in need of help by the very ones we do not particularly appreciate. Or these very ones may be in dire need of our help. Now is the time to widen out and increase our appreciation for all our brothers.

²² Appreciation for our brothers includes, of course, proper respect for the congregation elders. In this regard, the elders themselves should be fine examples by showing proper appreciation not only for all the brothers but also for their fellow elders. This aspect of the subject will be considered in the following article.

20. (a) According to Paul's letter to the Romans, of whom alone should we be suspicious, and whose lead can we safely follow in this regard? (b) Otherwise, how should we consider all our brothers?

21, 22. (a) What lies ahead of us? (b) What situations may arise, so what is it high time to do? (c) What will be considered in the next article?

"Keep Holding Men of That Sort Dear"

"Recognize men of that sort."

—1 CORINTHIANS 16:18.

THE sort of men that the apostle Paul held particularly dear were those who were willing to expend their strength unreservedly for Jehovah and their brothers. Of one such fellow worker, Paul wrote: "Give him the customary welcome in the Lord with all joy; and keep holding men of that sort dear, because on account of the

1. What sort of men did the apostle Paul hold particularly dear, and what did he write about one such Christian?

Lord's work he came quite near to death, exposing his soul to danger."—Philippians 2:29, 30.

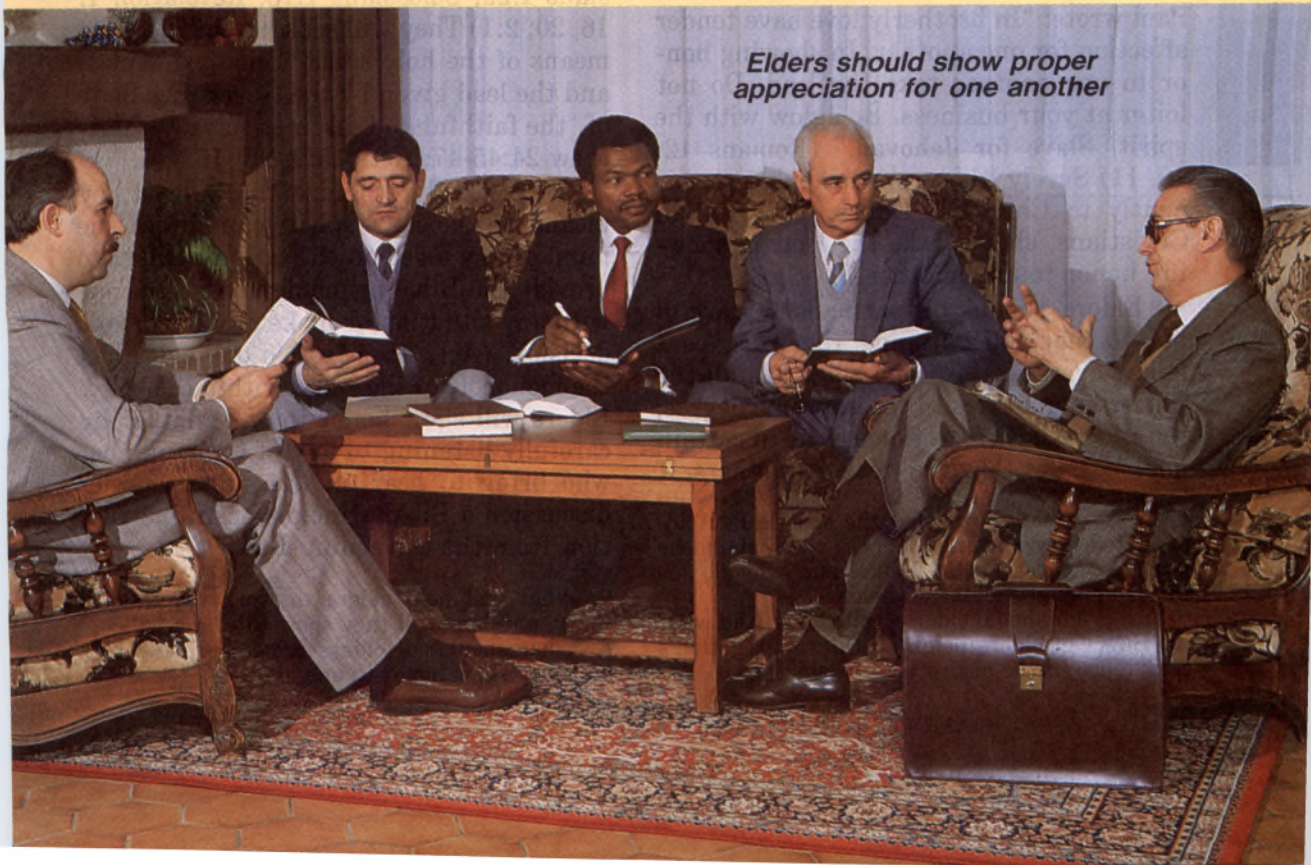
² Today, in over 55,000 congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses, there are many fine Christian men whom we should particularly appreciate because of their hard work among their brothers. Showing that we should hold such men dear, Paul stated: "We request you, brothers, to have regard for those who are working hard among you and presiding over you in the Lord and admonishing you; and to give them more than extraordinary consideration in love because of their work. Be peaceable with one another."—1 Thessalonians 5:12, 13.

³ Proper appreciation for all our brothers and sisters, and particularly for

2. To whom do we owe special consideration, and why?

3. (a) What will help us to be peaceable with one another? (b) In what respect should elders set the example?

Elders should show proper appreciation for one another



hardworking elders, is undoubtedly an important factor in peaceable living within our congregations. In this, as in all areas of Christian living, the elders should be "examples to the flock." (1 Peter 5:2, 3) However, while elders can properly expect to be appreciated by the brothers for their hard work, they should also set the example in showing due consideration for one another.

"Showing Honor to One Another"

⁴ The apostle Paul set a fine example in this regard. As we saw in the preceding article, he looked for the good things in his brothers and sisters. And not only did he encourage Christians to love and respect hardworking elders but he also showed due appreciation for these himself. He obviously held men of that sort dear.—Compare Philippians 2:19-25, 29; Colossians 4:12, 13; Titus 1:4, 5.

⁵ In his letter to Christians in Rome, Paul wrote: "In brotherly love have tender affection for one another. In showing honor to one another take the lead. Do not loiter at your business. Be aglow with the spirit. Slave for Jehovah." (Romans 12:10, 11) Surely, these words apply preeminently to Christian elders. They, of all Christians, should take the lead in showing honor to one another.

⁶ Elders should be particularly careful not to make disparaging remarks about fellow overseers. No one elder has all the Christian qualities to the supreme degree, for all are imperfect. Some excel in certain qualities, but they are weaker in others. If

4, 5. (a) What shows that the apostle Paul appreciated hardworking elders? (b) What did he write to Christians in Rome, and why do his words apply particularly to elders?

6. (a) What should elders avoid doing, and why? (b) How can elders heighten the congregation's confidence in the entire body of elders?

elders have proper brotherly love and tender affection for one another, they will play down the weaknesses of one another. In their conversations with the brothers, they will point up their fellow elders' strong points. By thus taking the lead in showing honor to one another, they will heighten the congregation's confidence in the body of elders as a whole.

Working Together as a Body

⁷ After speaking of the "gifts in men" that Christ made to his congregation on earth with a view to the readjustment of the brothers and for ministerial work, the apostle Paul wrote: "Let us by love grow up in all things into him who is the head, Christ." (Ephesians 4:7-15) Recognizing that Christ is the active Head of the congregation, and that elders must submit to his right hand of authority, is a unifying factor within each body of elders. (Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:18; Revelation 1:16, 20; 2:1) They will seek his direction by means of the holy spirit, Bible principles, and the lead given by the Governing Body of "the faithful and discreet slave."—Matthew 24:45-47; Acts 15:2, 28; 16:4, 5.

⁸ Elders will recognize that Christ, by means of the holy spirit, can direct the mind of any elder on the body of elders to provide the Bible principle needed to cope with any situation or make any important decision. (Acts 15:6-15) No one elder has the monopoly of the spirit within the body. Elders will show honor to one another by carefully listening to any of their number who bring to bear on the subject under discussion a Bible principle or an instruction from the Governing Body.

7. What will help elders to work together in unity, and how will they show this?

8. What should all elders remember, and how will they show honor to one another?

⁹ Christian modesty, meekness, and humility will prevent any elder from trying to dominate over his brothers and impose his opinion. (Proverbs 11:2; Colossians 3:12) A Christian overseer may have very strong and sincere views on a certain matter. But if he sees that his fellow elders have Scriptural and theocratic reasons for differing with him, he will 'conduct himself as a lesser one' and show himself "reasonable" by yielding to the majority view.* (Luke 9:48; 1 Timothy 3:3) He will follow the fine example set by the first-century governing body, who, after a Scriptural discussion, and under the lead given by Christ through the holy spirit, came to "a unanimous accord."—Acts 15:25.

¹⁰ The appointment of a body of elders in each congregation to take the lead is based on the example set by the early Christian congregation. (Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 4:14; Titus 1:5; compare the footnote to the word "elders" at Titus 1:5 in *The Jerusalem Bible*.) Summing up the wisdom of this arrangement, the book *Organized to Accomplish Our Ministry* (page 37) states: "Some elders will be more outstanding in one quality than in another, whereas others of the body will excel in those qualities in which some may be weak. The effect then is that, generally speaking, as a whole, the body will have

* A footnote in the *New World Translation Reference Bible* indicates that the word "reasonable" at 1 Timothy 3:3 translates a Greek term that literally means "yielding."

9. (a) What spiritual qualities will help an overseer to avoid being overbearing with his fellow elders? (b) How will an elder show himself to be "reasonable," and how did the first-century governing body set the example in this respect?

10. (a) What proves that the appointment of a body of elders in each congregation is a Bible-based arrangement? (b) How does the book *Organized to Accomplish Our Ministry* explain the advantages of this arrangement?

within itself all the fine qualities that are necessary for exercising proper oversight of the congregation of God."

Mutual Respect Among Bodies of Elders

¹¹ Thus, a body of elders is a Scriptural entity of which the whole represents more than the sum of its parts. When they meet and pray for Jehovah's direction through Christ and the holy spirit, they can make decisions that would not have been arrived at if they had been consulted individually. When the elders gather together, their various qualities go into play and produce results that reflect Christ's direction of matters.—Compare Matthew 18:19, 20.

¹² That Christ dealt with bodies of elders as such is indicated by the messages he sent to "the seven stars," or "angels of the seven congregations" in Asia Minor. (Revelation 1:11, 20) The first of those messages was sent to the congregation in Ephesus via its 'angel,' or body of anointed overseers. Some 40 years earlier, the apostle Paul had the body of elders in Ephesus travel to Miletus for a special meeting with him. He reminded them to pay attention to themselves and to shepherd the congregation.—Acts 20:17, 28.

¹³ Bodies of elders should pay particular attention to keeping a fine, positive spirit among themselves and within their congregation. (Acts 20:30) Just as an individual Christian manifests a certain spirit, likewise bodies of elders and entire congregations can develop a particular spirit. (Philippians 4:23; 2 Timothy 4:22;

11, 12. (a) Why can a body of elders accomplish more than its members acting individually? (b) How did Christ Jesus and the apostle Paul deal with bodies of elders as such, and what counsel was given?

13. Why should elders pay attention to the spirit they show within their local body of elders and in their collective relationship with other bodies of elders?

Philemon 25) It sometimes happens that elders who respect one another within their own congregation show a lack of accord with another body of elders. In cities where several congregations meet in the same hall, a disagreement sometimes develops between bodies of elders over meeting schedules, territory boundaries, Kingdom Hall installations, and so forth. The same principles of modesty, meekness, humility, and reasonableness that govern the elders within each body should govern the relationship between bodies of elders. The apostle Paul counseled: "Let all things take place for upbuilding." —1 Corinthians 14:26.

Proper Respect for Traveling Overseers

¹⁴ Another Bible-based arrangement that is in operation among the congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses is their being visited regularly by itinerant elders, called circuit or district overseers. (Acts 15:36; 16:4, 5) These, outstandingly, are "older men who preside in a fine way." No less than other elders, they should be "reckoned worthy of double honor, especially those who work hard in speaking and teaching." —1 Timothy 5:17.

¹⁵ In his third letter the apostle John criticized Diotrephes because he refused to "receive the brothers with respect." (Verse 10) These brothers were traveling Christians who went forth "in behalf of [Jehovah's] name." (Verse 7) They had apparently been sent forth as evangelizers to preach the good news and build up the congregations in the towns they visited. John instructed that these hardworking itinerant preachers should be "sent on their way in a manner worthy of God."

14. What other category of elders deserves to be held dear, and why?

15. What counsel did the apostle John give concerning traveling evangelizers?



Show love and respect for traveling overseers

(Verse 6) The apostle added: "We, therefore, are under obligation to receive such persons hospitably, that we may become fellow workers in the truth." (Verse 8) They were to be received with respect.

¹⁶ Similarly today, the traveling overseers sent forth by the Governing Body to preach the good news and help the congregations should be received hospitably and with respect. These brothers and their wives (if they are married, as many of them are) have been willing to give up living in a fixed abode. They travel from

16. How can all Christians today follow the example of Gaius in the "faithful work" he did for first-century evangelizers, and why is this proper?

place to place, often depending on the hospitality of the brothers for their food and a bed to sleep on. To Gaius, who lovingly took in traveling evangelizers in the first century C.E., John wrote: "Beloved one, you are doing a faithful work in whatever you do for the brothers, and strangers at that." (3 John 5) Likewise today, those who travel 'in behalf of Jehovah's name' deserve to be held dear and to be shown love and respect.

¹⁷ Elders, in particular, should show proper respect for these visiting representatives of the Governing Body. They are sent to the congregations because of their spiritual qualities and their experience, which is usually more extensive than that of many local elders. Some of these traveling overseers may be younger in years than certain elders in the congregations they visit. But that is not a valid reason to refuse them proper respect. They may feel the need to temper the local elders' haste in recommending a brother as ministerial servant or elder, remembering Paul's warning to Timothy. (1 Timothy 5:22) While the visiting overseer should give due consideration to the arguments put forward by the local elders, the latter should be willing to listen to him and benefit from his wide experience. Yes, they should "keep holding men of that sort dear."—Philippians 2:29.

"Recognize Men of That Sort"

¹⁸ In his first letter to the Corinthians, Paul wrote: "Now I exhort you, brothers: you know that the household of Stephanas is the firstfruits of Achaia and that they

17. How should congregation elders show proper respect for visiting representatives of the Governing Body?

18, 19. (a) How did Paul express his appreciation for his fellow workers? (b) What example shows that Paul did not harbor resentment against his brothers?

set themselves to minister to the holy ones. May you also keep submitting yourselves to persons of that kind and to everyone cooperating and laboring. But I rejoice over the presence of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus, because they have made up for your not being here. For they have refreshed my spirit and yours. Therefore recognize men of that sort."—1 Corinthians 16:15-18.

¹⁹ What a fine, generous attitude Paul had toward his brothers, some of whom were not widely known. But Paul loved them because they were "cooperating" and "laboring" hard in their efforts to minister to the holy ones. Paul also set a noble example of letting bygones be bygones. Although John Mark had disappointed him during his first missionary journey, Paul later warmly recommended him to the congregation in Colossae. (Acts 13:13; 15: 37, 38; Colossians 4:10) When imprisoned in Rome, Paul requested Mark's presence because, as he said, "[Mark] is useful to me for ministering." (2 Timothy 4:11)

Points for Review

- ☐ What sort of men did Paul hold particularly dear, and who deserve our special consideration today?
- ☐ How should elders show that they honor one another?
- ☐ Why can a body of elders accomplish more than its members acting individually?
- ☐ In what areas will a body of elders show that they honor another body of elders?
- ☐ What category of overseers deserves to be held particularly dear, and how can this proper respect be shown?

No petty harboring of resentment there! ²⁰ Today among God's people, there are many devoted overseers who, like Stephanas, are ministering to their brothers. To be sure, they have their faults and failings. Nevertheless, they are "cooperating" with "the faithful and discreet slave" and its Governing Body, and "laboring" hard

20. How should Christians in general, and elders in particular, show that they appreciate faithful overseers and that they "keep holding men of that sort dear"?

in the preaching work and in helping their brothers. We should 'keep submitting ourselves to persons of that kind,' appreciating them for their qualities, not seeking out their shortcomings. Elders should take the lead in showing due appreciation and respect for their fellow elders. Elders ought to cooperate with one another in a spirit of love and unity. All will recognize the value of such faithful brothers and "keep holding men of that sort dear."
—Philippians 2:29.



Our Rewarding Life as Missionaries in Africa

As told by John Miles

THE scene is a game reserve in northwestern Zimbabwe. My wife, Val, and I are driving toward the famous Victoria Falls. No, we are not tourists. We are missionaries and have been sent here to work among the local African people. As we round a curve, there, standing at the side of the road, is a huge elephant. I stop the engine and lean out the window to snap a picture. I'm about to take another when Val screams:

"He's coming for us!"

Quickly I start the engine, but it stalls.

What a predicament! The elephant ends his charge and rears up to trample us. Just in time the engine restarts and we swerve into the bushes. Fortunately, there are no stones or trees to stop our escape. We decide to give Mr. Jumbo the right-of-way and proceed by a different route.

Another scene. This time we are in the mountain kingdom of Lesotho, southern Africa. It is Sunday afternoon in the capital, Maseru. We are returning home after enjoying a Christian gathering with local fellow believers. Suddenly, we are at-

tacked by two young robbers. One punches me and the other jumps on my back. I shake him off, and he turns on Val, grabbing hold of her bag. Val calls aloud: "Jehovah! Jehovah! Jehovah!" Immediately, the man lets go of her bag and with a dazed look he backs away. The one punching me also backs away—his fists beating the air. We hurry on, greatly relieved to meet fellow believers at the bus stop.—Proverbs 18:10.

Each of the above incidents lasted only a few moments, but they are among the many unforgettable memories of our past 32 years as missionaries in Africa. How did we get here? Why did we become missionaries? Has it been a rewarding life?

An American Farmhand Learns the Truth

It all started in 1939 when I met Val Jensen in Yakima, Washington, U.S.A. At that time, I worked on a farm and Val was employed as a housekeeper. She would often talk to me about the Bible. One thing that impressed me was her explanation that hell isn't a hot place. (Ecclesiastes 9:5, 10; Acts 2:31; Revelation 20:13, 14) Although I didn't go to church, I knew what the clergy taught about hell, and what Val showed me from the Bible sounded more reasonable.

Val's father and mother had become Jehovah's Witnesses in 1932. Val also started to study the Bible, and she was baptized in September 1935. After we had become acquainted, Val invited me to go to meetings at the Kingdom Hall. I accepted and enjoyed the association with the people I met there, that is, whenever farming would allow me time to go. Farm life still came first in my life. Gradually, though, I began to view the meetings more seriously, and the local Witnesses invited me to share in house-to-house preaching.

To do this in my hometown seemed like a supreme test to me. But I passed it.

Two memorable things happened in 1941. In March, I was baptized as a dedicated witness of Jehovah, and later Val and I got married. Then, in October 1942, we started in the full-time preaching work as pioneers in southeastern North Dakota.

We will never forget what happened the following year. It was a milestone in the history of Jehovah's Witnesses. On February 1, 1943, missionary training commenced for the first class of what was then called the Watchtower Bible College of Gilead. Two months later we attended the "Call to Action" assembly in Aberdeen, South Dakota. The blessings of missionary service in foreign lands were described, and the desire to attend Gilead and become missionaries was aroused in our hearts.

Working Toward the Goal of Missionary Service

Nine years were to pass before we attained our goal. During that time, we had other fine privileges of service, as well as some setbacks. After pioneering for a year and a half in North Dakota, we applied for a pioneer territory in Missouri. This was approved, and we settled in the city of Rolla. Our territory included the whole of Phelps County where there was only one active Witness. We spent three enjoyable years there and shared in the establishment of a congregation.

Then we were faced with a problem that dampened our hopes of becoming missionaries. Our resources were depleted. Poor management and lack of faith that Jehovah would provide caused us to stop pioneering. It was our intention that this should be for only a few months, but it was a year and a half before we started pioneering again. This time we were determined not to repeat our previous

mistakes. Our new assignment was with a congregation in the town of Reardan in eastern Washington State. Part-time work was difficult to find, so we needed to rely heavily on Jehovah to provide our daily needs.—Matthew 6:11, 33.

Our territory included several small towns in the vicinity. One day we had to make an 80-mile return trip to visit people with the Kingdom message. We had insufficient gas but didn't let this stop us. On our way out of town, we stopped at the post office, and what do you think we found? There, waiting for us was a letter from my cousin who had just started to study the Bible with the Witnesses. It contained a check for enough money to fill our tank and more. "We were going to make this donation to Boys Town," they wrote, "but decided you needed it more than Father Flanagan." How right they were!

Experiences like these highlighted the truthfulness of Jesus' promise: "Seek continually [God's] kingdom, and these things [material needs] will be added to you." (Luke 12:31) This was valuable training that would help us to continue in the face of other problems.

One winter, we had only a small supply of coal. Would we allow the situation to change our determination to keep on pioneering? We put the matter to Jehovah in prayer and went to bed. At six o'clock the next morning, there was a knock on our door! It was a brother and his wife who, returning from a trip to relatives, had decided to pay us a visit. We stirred up the fire, put on the last piece of coal, and made a pot of coffee. While we enjoyed their company, the brother suddenly asked, "How are you fixed for coal?" Val and I looked at each other and started laughing. Coal was the *one* thing we needed immediately. They gave us ten dollars,

which in those days would pay for at least half a ton of coal.

On another occasion a circuit assembly was due, and we had only five dollars on hand. Also, the licensing of our car was due immediately after the assembly. We decided to put first things first and attended the assembly. Thanks to the generous spirit of the brothers, we returned to our assignment with \$15. The license cost \$14.50!

We enjoyed our pioneer service in eastern Washington, and a number of families with whom we studied the Bible eventually became loyal witnesses of Jehovah. After two years in that assignment, however, I received a letter from the Watch Tower Society stating that I had been recommended to serve as a traveling minister, that is, one who visits and encourages congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses in a circuit. "If appointed, will you accept this assignment?" the Society asked, adding: "Please advise immediately." Needless to say, my answer was yes. Starting in January 1951, we spent one and a half years in a vast circuit covering the western half of North Dakota and the eastern half of Montana.

During this period, we received another surprise—an invitation to attend the 19th class of Gilead! Would our desire be fulfilled at last? Alas, another letter followed saying that the class had been filled with brothers from other countries. That was a setback, but we were not dropped! A few months later, we received an invitation to the 20th class into which we were accepted in September 1952.

From Gilead to Africa

How we appreciated Jehovah's goodness in bringing us together with more than one hundred students from many parts of the earth—Australia, New Zealand, India, Thailand, the Philippines, Scandina-

via, England, Egypt, and Central Europe! This helped us see the extent to which Jehovah was having the Kingdom message preached.—Matthew 24:14.

The time at Gilead passed quickly, and we graduated in February 1953. Together with four others, we were assigned to Northern Rhodesia (now Zambia) in Africa. The Society, though, kindly permitted us to stay in the United States for the international convention that was to be held at Yankee Stadium later that year in July. During the months prior to the convention and for a while afterward, I served as a circuit overseer in eastern Oklahoma.

In November 1953, Val and I, together with six other missionaries, boarded a cargo ship destined for Africa. We landed at Durban, South Africa, and traveled north by train to Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). Here two left us to take up their assignments in Salisbury (now Harare), while the rest of us continued to Kitwe, Northern Rhodesia.

Val and I were assigned to the mining town of Mufulira where there were a few interested families but no congregation. Jehovah blessed our house-to-house preaching work. We started many Bible studies, and soon a number of interested ones began to attend Christian meetings. After several months we were called to fill vacancies at the Watch Tower Society's branch office in Luanshya. Later, we were given another assignment to serve as missionaries in Lusaka. While there, I served from time to time as a circuit overseer for the small number of English-speaking congregations.

A Rewarding Life in the Bush

Then, in 1960, we were transferred to Southern Rhodesia where I was assigned to serve as a district overseer among the black brothers. In part, this involved vis-

iting congregations and overseeing circuit assemblies and district conventions. Most of these congregations were in the rurals, so we had to learn to live in the bush. We felt that if our brothers could live in the bush, so could we.

The branch office of the Watch Tower Society equipped us with a one-and-a-half-ton pickup truck. The back was covered with sheet metal with double doors for loading. The windows between the cab and the van were just large enough to climb through, and they were covered with plastic curtains. Our household equipment consisted of a built-in bed with a foam-rubber mattress. We had box cupboards and a paraffin pressure stove. We also had a portable wardrobe and tent.

Shortly after starting our assignment in the western part of the country, I was bitten by some unknown insect. It caused my leg to swell and brought on a high fever. To make things worse, the weather turned bad and it began to rain heavily. I was perspiring so much that the bedding had to be changed frequently. About midnight, Val decided I should see a doctor. She drove toward the main road, but the vehicle got stuck in the mud. The only effect of Val's efforts to move it forward or backward was to give me a good shake-up. When she was convinced that there was nothing more she could do, she wrapped herself in the last dry blanket and joined me in the van with the rain still pelting down.

Morning brought relief. I was feeling better, the rain had stopped, and the brothers who arrived to prepare for the assembly pushed our vehicle out of the mud. In Bulawayo other kind brothers took me to the hospital, and after treatment I was able to return and carry on with assembly arrangements.

It was during this period, while traveling between congregations, that we had

the encounter with the elephant. We also encountered many smaller creatures. Some of our tent visitors, besides flies and mosquitoes, were harvest ants. In a very short time, these could make holes in any clothing or fabric that was left lying on the ground. The various kinds of lizards and hunting spiders that visited us were harmless, but the cobra that came in was quickly put out. And the scorpions were also unwelcome. Val describes their sting as feeling as though a red-hot nail had been hammered into you with a sledgehammer. She ought to know. She has been stung four times!

Perhaps these things make bush life sound anything but rewarding, but we did not view it that way. To us, it was an open-air, active, healthy life, and the spiritual blessings far outweighed any physical discomforts.

It was always faith strengthening to see the effort made by rural brothers to attend meetings. One congregation was made up of two groups living 14 miles apart with only a path connecting them. Their "Kingdom Hall," halfway between the groups, was a large tree for shade with stones for seating. Brothers from each group walked 7 miles each way to attend their meetings twice a week. We also recall the elderly couple who walked 75 miles with their suitcases and blankets to attend a circuit assembly. These are just two examples of how African brothers appreciate the admonition 'not to forsake the gathering of themselves together.'—Hebrews 10:25.

In some areas the local inhabitants became suspicious of our motive, some even resenting our staying in their

vicinity. On one occasion, I set up our tent near the assembly site in a spot surrounded by tall grass. After the assembly session had ended and we had been in bed a couple of hours, I was awakened by a noise outside. By the use of my flashlight, I could make out the form of someone standing behind a small tree.

"What do you want?" I called out. "Why are you hiding behind that tree?"

"Sh-h-h brother," came the reply, "we heard some people saying they were going to set fire to this grass. So we have organized a guard for you during the night."

They had not told us of the danger in order not to disturb our sleep. Yet they were willing to lose their sleep in order to safeguard us! When the assembly finished on Sunday afternoon, they arranged to have one car drive in front of us and one behind us until we were out of the danger area.

It was also rewarding to see the value these humble people place on the Bible. One congregation we served was in an area where villagers raised peanuts. During the week, we traded literature and Bibles for boxes of unshelled peanuts.



John Miles with his wife, Val

When our visit ended, we loaded our equipment, literature, and peanuts and started to travel to the next assembly venue. Shortly after leaving the area, we were asked to stop because someone was trying to catch us. We stopped and waited. It turned out to be a very old lady carrying a box of peanuts on her head. By the time she reached us, she was so exhausted that she fell to the ground and had to lie there until she could catch her breath. Yes, she wanted a Bible! We had to unpack practically everything, but it was a pleasure to satisfy her desire. One more Bible in loving hands—and one more box of peanuts in our van!

It was also wonderful to see how Jehovah raised up circuit overseers to visit the many congregations in the African bush. At that time it was difficult for the Society to find qualified brothers who did not have family obligations. So it was not uncommon for a traveling overseer to go from congregation to congregation, either by bus or on bicycle, with his wife and two or three children, suitcases, blankets, and literature. These brothers and their families really worked hard and uncomplainingly to serve the congregations. It was a great privilege to serve with them.

In the 1970's civil war began to cause problems for the brothers, and the issue of neutrality was putting many of them to severe tests of loyalty. (John 15:19) The Society thought it best to change my assignment so as not to aggravate the situation for the brothers unnecessarily. So, in 1972, I was called to serve at the branch office in Salisbury. This gave me opportunity to help with the building of a new branch office. Sometime later I was assigned as circuit overseer for the widely scattered English-speaking congregations. This required traveling the length and breadth of Zimbabwe. In some areas the situation was so dangerous that we

had to travel in convoys organized by the government and watched over by the army with plane and helicopter support.

Our Move to the Roof of Africa

Then came another major change of assignment. We were to serve in Maseru, the capital of Lesotho. This is a mountainous country, sometimes called the roof of Africa, and it has many places of scenic beauty.

Although we appreciate and enjoy scenery, that was not our purpose in coming here. We are here to help find "the desirable things" spoken of at Haggai 2:7. This is a small country with a population of only one and a half million. When we arrived in 1979, 571 Witnesses, on the average, were sharing in preaching "this good news of the kingdom" each month. (Matthew 24:14) The congregation in Maseru grew to the point where it had to be divided into two. More recently, in April 1988, we were overjoyed at reaching a new peak of 1,078 Kingdom proclaimers.

Meanwhile, the work continues to progress in our former missionary assignments of Zambia and Zimbabwe. When we first arrived in Africa some 35 years ago, there was a total of 36,836 Kingdom proclaimers in those two countries. Today, the figure is 82,229. The privilege of sharing in a small way in these increases has been a marvelous reward to us.

"Taste and see that Jehovah is good," wrote the psalmist David. (Psalm 34:8) Our "taste" of missionary service has convinced us of the truthfulness of these words. In fact, ever since 1942 when we started in full-time service together, our lives have been filled with blessings as we have experienced Jehovah's abundant goodness. There is yet much work to do. How thankful we are to Jehovah that we still have a measure of strength and health to use in his service!



Remember Christian Principles

WHEN a child starts attending school, among the first things he learns are reading and writing. These vital subjects prepare him for more advanced material, such as social studies, science, and languages. If the child fails to get a thorough grasp of reading and writing, his whole future education is adversely affected.

Learning how to worship God is somewhat similar. When we study the Bible, we find that there are numerous basic truths, or principles, that have to be mastered. Once we have grasped these, we can go on to deeper matters. If, however, we do not thoroughly understand and believe these first principles, our worship will be

flawed. We will not be able to make sound decisions, and our faith will be easily shaken.

The basic principles of the Bible are not difficult to understand. (See chart.) However, neither are they mere platitudes or matters of intellectual interest. They are living, vital truths, and wise Christians learn to love them. Jehovah says: "To my words do pay attention. To my sayings incline your ear. May they not get away from your eyes. Keep them in the midst of your heart. For they are *life* to those finding them and health to all their flesh." —Proverbs 4:20-22; Ezekiel 18:19, 20, 23.

Nevertheless, in spite of the importance

Principles are basic truths or fundamental laws from which other truths or laws can be derived. Following are some examples:

□“You must love Jehovah your God with your whole heart and with your whole soul and with your whole mind.”—Matthew 22:37.

□“All things, therefore, that you want men to do to you, you also must likewise do to them.”—Matthew 7:12.

□“Friendship with the world is enmity with God.”—James 4:4.

□“Whether you are eating or drinking or doing anything else, do all things for God’s glory.”
—1 Corinthians 10:31.

□“We, though, who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those not strong, and not to be pleasing ourselves.”—Romans 15:1.

□“Let us always offer to God a sacrifice of praise, that is, the fruit of lips which make public declaration to his name.”—Hebrews 13:15.

□“Let us consider one another to incite to love and fine works, not forsaking the gathering of ourselves together.”—Hebrews 10:24, 25.

□“Man must live, not on bread alone, but on every utterance coming forth through Jehovah’s mouth.”—Matthew 4:4.

of these principles, Jesus warned that only a few would grasp them and live by them. He said: “Narrow is the gate and cramped the road leading off into life, and few are the ones finding it.” (Matthew 7:14) This is not because the principles are somehow hidden. Jehovah *wants* men and women to live by them and thus inherit life. (2 Peter 3:9) He has caused wisdom, knowledge, and discernment to be recorded in the Bible, which is widely available to all. And his Witnesses encourage their neighbors to seek for this life-giving information. In this way, literally, “true wisdom itself keeps crying aloud in the very street.” (Proverbs 1:20; 2:1-9) But there are other forces at work.

Satan has blinded the eyes of most of mankind to true principles. (2 Corinthians 4:4) Additionally, man’s spirit of independence makes him prefer to go his own way rather than look to a Higher Power for guidance. In the apostle Paul’s day, even some who had learned the basic principles lost sight of them. Hence, he wrote: “You

again need someone to teach you from the beginning the elementary things of the sacred pronouncements of God.”—Hebrews 5:12.

Moreover, Jesus warned: “Many will say to me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and expel demons in your name, and perform many powerful works in your name?’ And yet then I will confess to them: I never knew you! Get away from me, you workers of lawlessness.” (Matthew 7:22, 23) Why do people who think they are serving Jesus find themselves rejected? Because their “powerful works” are not based on Bible principles. It is as if they tried to study history or science without first learning to read. Their works are flawed, not grounded in truth. Hence, they are “workers of lawlessness.”

Is Your Worship Acceptable?

Can we be sure that Jesus will not one day say to us, ‘Get away from me, you worker of lawlessness’? Yes, if our

worship is thoroughly grounded in Bible principles. It *can* be if we closely examine the Bible, particularly the words of Jesus. Jesus did walk on the narrow, cramped road to life—in fact, he *was* “the way and the truth and the life.” (John 14:6) If we apply his sayings and follow closely in his footsteps, we will be on the same road.—John 6:68; 1 Peter 2:21.

Jesus’ immediate followers also walked that narrow, cramped road to life. Therefore, when Jesus died he committed into their hands the work of teaching others to worship God. He also warned that he would return and expect a reckoning from them as to how they had conducted themselves during his absence.—Matthew 24:46; 25:14-23; 28:19, 20.

Eventually, the number of those claiming to follow Christ climbed into the hundreds of millions. But in most cases, the worship by these vast throngs was not based on Bible principles. Thus, when Jesus was installed as heavenly King in 1914 and then ‘arrived’ to have a reckoning with those who claimed to be his followers, what did he find? Millions of professed Christians were engaged in the most terrible war in mankind’s history up to that point.

Yes, the vast majority of “Christians”

were acting completely contrary to basic Bible principles. However, there was a group of real Christians trying hard to follow godly principles and also teaching them to any who would listen in the war-mad world. These were gathered together and in time were joined by a great crowd of like-minded persons. (Matthew 24:31; Revelation 7:4, 9, 10) They are still following life-giving principles, telling others about God’s great purposes, associating together as one flock, and trying hard to conform to the “perfect will of God.”—Romans 12:2.

A Vital Scriptural Principle

This has not been easy. For one thing, these true Christians have had to fight their own imperfect, sinful nature. And they have to live in a world that is completely opposed to the values and principles they try to live by. In fact, the apostle John said: “The whole world is lying in the power of the wicked one.” (1 John 5:19) That is why God’s true worshipers today have to keep close in mind a vitally important principle explained by Jesus: “They [Christians] are no part of the world.”—John 17:16.

Jehovah does not force individuals to serve him, but those who choose to do so need to make some sober decisions. For example, they need to be reconciled to the fact that they can never be popular in this world. (Matthew 24:9) The disciple James warned: “Whoever . . . wants to be a friend of the world is constituting himself an enemy of God.” (James 4:4) And the apostle Paul said: “What fellowship do righteousness and lawlessness have?” and “What portion does a *faithful* person have with an unbeliever?” Then he quoted Jehovah’s own words: “Get out from among them, and separate yourselves, . . . and quit touching the unclean thing.”—2 Corinthians 6:14-17; Ephesians 5:11.

In Our Next Issue

- **The Sign—Proof That the New World Is Near?**
- **What Will the Lord’s Day Mean for You?**
- **Mental Distress—When It Afflicts a Christian**

How can we 'separate ourselves'? Of course, not by removing ourselves physically from the world. But we can avoid becoming 'unevenly yoked with unbelievers.' We can avoid the 'bad associations, which spoil useful habits.' (1 Corinthians 15:33) And we can separate ourselves from the *spirit* of the world, the spirit of self-seeking, dishonesty, materialism, and a frantic quest for pleasure. (2 Timothy 3: 1-5) A heartwarming assurance is given to those who thus separate themselves from the desires of this world: "He that does the will of God remains forever."—1 John 2: 15-17.

Those Who Follow Basic Principles

Is it possible today to follow Bible principles and walk the narrow road that leads to life? Yes, even children can do it. For example, two young children in Brazil were so well behaved at school that their teacher requested their mother to come and discuss the reason why. The mother explained that it was because they were following Bible principles with respect to obedience toward parents and others in authority. (Ephesians 6:1-3) At the end of the school term, they were given an opportunity to explain to the entire class the benefits that come from such a godly course.

Jesus stated the principle: "Even when a person has an abundance his life does not result from the things he possesses." (Luke 12:15) A prospering doctor in Japan learned this and, to the amazement of his colleagues, put it into practice. He left his lucrative position and went out to a small town where he could be of spiritual help to the townspeople. This sacrifice of material benefits did not rob him of his happiness. Rather, both he and his wife are now finding greater joy in bringing the Word of life to others.

The Bible says: "A drunkard and a glut-

ton will come to poverty." (Proverbs 23: 21) This is a clear warning against addiction. We are also warned against the misuse of drugs: "The works of the flesh are . . . idolatry, practice of spiritism [*phar-ma-ki'a*, "druggery" in the original Greek]." (Galatians 5:19, 20) Additionally, the apostle Paul urges: "Let us cleanse ourselves of every defilement of flesh and spirit."—2 Corinthians 7:1.

Smoking tobacco and using other addictive drugs clearly go against these Bible principles and are thus "lawlessness." (Matthew 7:23) Any servants of God who pollute themselves with such substances will find that their worship is not acceptable to God. Hence, many hundreds of thousands have taken the step of ceasing to use these drugs, and as a result, they have received both spiritual and physical benefits. Of course, it is not always easy to break away from these unclean habits.

A young man in Michigan, U.S.A., learned about God and his principles from some ministers who called at his door. He liked what he heard but realized that his habit of smoking marijuana and tobacco was not consistent with worship of Jehovah. He says: "I didn't have any trouble putting away drugs, which I had enjoyed. But it took me at least six months to quit smoking cigarettes." He was helped by fellow Christians and by prayer. Now, living a clean life according to Bible principles, he is enjoying a clean conscience, a relationship with God, and Christian fellowship. In fact, he says that until he became a Christian, he never knew what a friend was.

Following righteous principles is truly the course of wisdom. And wisdom is even more valuable than fine gold. Take this course yourself, and it will bring praise to Jehovah and will work to your own eternal blessing.—Psalm 19:7, 10; Proverbs 16:16.

Questions From Readers

■ Since Daniel had said that he would not accept gifts from King Belshazzar for interpreting the handwriting on the wall, why was he found wearing the clothing and necklace afterward?

Just before the Medes and the Persians overthrew Babylon, King Belshazzar and his court were in the midst of a feast. During the feast, he took the vessels that were from Jehovah's temple and used these for drinking wine, praising the Babylonian gods. But the party was abruptly interrupted when a superhuman hand wrote strange things on the wall. —Daniel 5:1-5.

The wise men and astrologers of Babylon were unable to interpret the writing, even though Belshazzar promised to give a gold necklace and governmental prominence to anyone who could read and explain the strange handwriting. —Daniel 5:7-9.

When the Hebrew named Daniel was finally brought in, the king repeated his offer—to clothe Daniel with purple, to put a gold necklace on him, and to make

him the third ruler in the kingdom. The prophet honorably replied: "Let your gifts prove to be to you yourself, and your presents do you give to others. However, I shall read the writing itself to the king, and the interpretation I shall make known to him." —Daniel 5:17.

So Daniel did not need to be bribed or paid to provide the interpretation. The king could keep his gifts or bestow them on someone else. Daniel would provide the explanation, not for a reward, but because he was empowered to do so by Jehovah, the true God, whose judgment on Babylon was impending.

As we read at Daniel 5:29, after Daniel had read and interpreted the words as he said he would, the king ordered that the rewards be given to Daniel anyway. Daniel himself did not put on the cloth-

ing and the necklace. They were put on him by order of the absolute ruler, King Belshazzar. But this does not conflict with Daniel 5:17, where the prophet made it clear that his motive was not a selfish one.

Jesus later said that "he that receives a prophet because he is a prophet will get a prophet's reward." (Matthew 10:41) That hardly applied to Belshazzar, since he was not treating Daniel kindly or respectfully because he respected this faithful man as a prophet of the true God. King Belshazzar was willing to give the same gifts to anyone able to solve the mystery of the handwriting, even some pagan astrologer. The king got the appropriate reward, the one that was in line with the prophetic writing on the wall: "In that very night Belshazzar the Chaldean king was killed and Darius the Mede himself received the kingdom." —Daniel 5:30, 31.

A Look at Greece

The earliest known inhabitants of Greece were called Ionians. It is believed that this name came from their ancestor Javan (Hebrew, *Ya-wan*), a son of Japheth and therefore a grandson of Noah. (Genesis 10:1, 2) In the Christian Greek Scriptures of the Bible, Greece is called *Helas*. It is a rugged and rocky land, with some heavily wooded mountains. Long ago the Greeks became skilled seafarers.

The ancient Greeks had many gods, described as having human form and great beauty. These gods supposedly ate, drank, and slept; and though they were considered holy and immortal, they also seduced and raped and were capable of deceit and crime. Such myths may actually be distorted memories of the time before the Flood when angelic sons of God rebelliously came to earth, cohabited with women, produced powerful offspring called Nephilim, and filled the earth with violence. —Genesis 6:1-8, 13.

In the fourth century B.C.E., Philip of Macedon, father of Alexander the Great, set about unifying the formerly independent Greek city-states, bringing them under Macedonian control. In the second century B.C.E., Greece became a Roman province, and Grecian culture spread to Rome.

The widespread use of *koiné* Greek contributed to the rapid expansion of the Christian good news throughout the Mediterranean area.

The apostle Paul visited Macedonia and Greece during his second and third missionary tours. He formed Christian congregations in Philippi, Thessalonica, Corinth, and Beroea. Silas, Timothy, Titus, and other early Christians also taught here. Today, Greece has more than 320 congregations of Jehovah's Witnesses and upwards of 23,000 proclaimers of God's Kingdom.

Kingdom Proclaimers Report

The Good News Prospers in Cyprus Despite Opposition

THE apostle Paul preached the good news of the Kingdom in Cyprus. (Acts 13:4-12) That was in 47-48 C.E. Today, the good news is being preached in this beautiful island by 1,154 Jehovah's Witnesses, and in April of this year, 2,570 attended the Memorial service, which shows that there are many honesthearted and God-fearing persons in the island. But while many of the people welcome the peaceful Bible message presented by Jehovah's Witnesses, the Greek Orthodox clergy, just like the Jewish clergy in Jesus' day, oppose the work. (John 15:20) The Cyprus branch office writes: "As never before, the Greek Orthodox Church is showing its determination to disturb our preaching activity." Then the report describes how the clergy harass the brothers in their house-to-house ministry and try to provoke them so as to get them involved in an argument. They

then accuse them of causing a disturbance, but the brothers refuse to be provoked and walk away.

Indeed, the clergy opposition often backfires, as the following experience shows: "A few months ago, a woman started studying the Bible with Jehovah's Witnesses, and recently her husband joined in. Then a theologian visited this couple, hoping to convince them to give up their Bible study. The theologian tried to explain the Trinity to them. After a while the husband interrupted and said: 'I don't understand how Jesus, now in heaven in a physical body, as you claim, could at the same time be one with God who is in spirit form.' The theologian's reply was: 'Well, you don't have to understand everything.' The interested person said: 'But I understand that Jesus is the Son of God and not God himself. I don't want to hear any more

about the Trinity.' At this the theologian stood up and angrily said: 'You are too advanced with your Bible study. You can't change.'"

Now the wife is attending all the meetings and was baptized at the "Trust in Jehovah" District Convention. The husband continues his study and is attending some meetings.

"Thus, despite their efforts, the clergy are not achieving their goal," states the report from the Cyprus branch office. "Rather, what we observe is that more interested persons are now attending meetings than before. At the same time, the brothers are more determined to bring the good news to honesthearted ones." Jehovah is backing his loyal ones as he promised he would at Jeremiah 1:19: "They will be certain to fight against you, but they will not prevail against you, for 'I am with you,' is the utterance of Jehovah, 'to deliver you.'"





Listen to the Bible Read

Receive cassettes of the Bible in handy albums

"I have come to treasure the cassettes," writes a woman from Germany. "The reason?" she asks. "I was involved in a minor car crash and fractured my skull. So I have for the past 8 days laid in the hospital with a headache that prevented me from reading, sitting up, etc.

"I lay at night in the dark, when it was especially difficult to sleep, and watched a film in my head as I listened to Genesis, Exodus . . . I am now getting acquainted with the apostles Peter and John through their letters, always loved, but now appreciated in every detail as I play them over and over.

"I thank you from the bottom of my heart that my hours of pain and loneliness were not so unbearable because of your forethought and diligence in looking after our spiritual interests."

